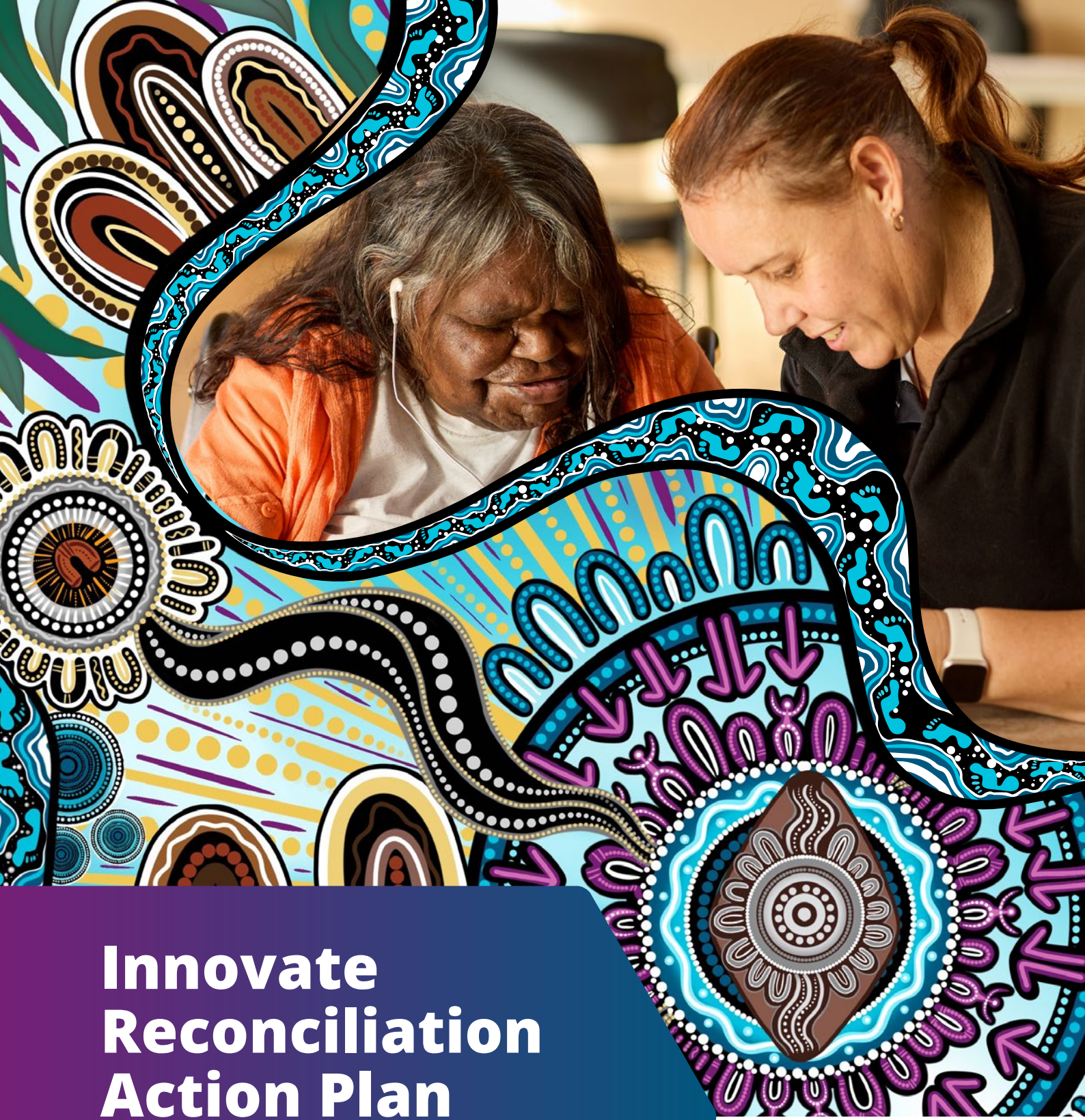


Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

November 2026 – November 2028

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised photographs in this resource may contain images of deceased persons.

Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE

Contents

Our vision for reconciliation	2
Message from the Commissioner	4
Message from the Indigenous Staff Network	6
Message from the Indigenous Champion	10
Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia	12
Our business	14
Our RAP	17
Developing this RAP	18
RAP Working Group	19
About the artist	19
About the artwork	21
Relationships	22
Respect	28
Opportunities	32
Governance	36
Contact	42

Welcome to Country

National Aged Care Provider Conference 2026.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country and Islands throughout Australia and their connections to land, water and community. We pay our respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cover photo by Bec Hannaford, 2025

Our vision for reconciliation

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's vision for reconciliation is an aged care system where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel safe, respected, heard and confident in the care they receive. This sits at the heart of the Commission's purpose: To regulate and operate a complaints scheme to make sure people who use aged care are safe, receive good care and have their rights upheld.

We know reconciliation is built through relationships, trust and action. It means listening deeply, working alongside First Nations peoples, acknowledging the truths of our shared history, and using what we learn to improve how we work.

Reconciliation Australia's 5 dimensions of reconciliation – race relations, equality and equity, unity, institutional integrity and historical acceptance – guide us in making reconciliation a part of our decisions, our regulation, our workplaces and our partnerships.

Reconciliation is a core part of how we care, how we listen, and how we walk forward together.

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC cultural weaving workshop, Melbourne July 2026.



Message from the Commissioner



Touch football

Charleston Eastment representing the Commission at the 2026 NAIDOC Week Australian Public Service (APS) Touch Football Carnival in Canberra.

I am delighted to present the Commission's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026-2028, my first as Commissioner.

This RAP sets out our commitments to progress our reconciliation journey, build strong relationships and show respect for the cultures, histories, knowledge and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It outlines how we will partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, communities and organisations. It shows how we will give life to our commitments, including through our governance.

Our commitment to reconciliation covers the work we do and the way we do it. It's about how we provide a respectful and culturally safe workplace, where our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues choose to work because they feel supported and uplifted. It's about how we partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and businesses, whether they are aged care providers or suppliers, peak bodies or other community stakeholders. And it's about how we, as the aged care regulator, make sure that older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights are upheld and they receive culturally safe, trauma-aware and healing-informed care.

Through this RAP we are setting ambitious goals to support people to age with dignity and connection and stay strong in their culture. We will strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and our First Nations stakeholders, including providers, workers and Elders. We will create a safe place for storytelling and embed knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, perspectives and histories into everything we do.



I extend my deep thanks to our RAP Working Group, our Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of the Indigenous Staff Network for their efforts in developing our RAP 2026-2028. Reconciliation is the responsibility of us all, and I look forward to continuing this journey with you.

Liz Hefren-Webb
Commissioner

Message from the Indigenous Staff Network



The Indigenous Staff Network (ISN) is a place where community lives and connection thrives. It is a culturally safe space where our First Nations staff can gather, yarn and share in one another's journeys. Grounded in respect, safety and community, the ISN ensures a place where we find strength in our voices, comfort in our shared experiences and, ultimately, connect with our Mob.

The ISN plays an important role in how the Commission operates. It makes sure that First Nations perspectives inform programs, projects and decisions. The ISN identifies opportunities to contribute, collaborate and share knowledge. By listening and sharing knowledge on our terms, we are creating a continuous loop of connection that supports outcomes that are meaningful and culturally informed.

Through the ISN and support from our colleagues in the Friends of the Indigenous Staff Network, First Nations voices, cultural knowledge and lived experiences help make the Commission stronger and more culturally capable. They support our shared goal of providing safer, more responsive care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people.

Indigenous Staff Network

Members gather for planning days in Brisbane, November 2025.

"For me, there is a real sense of pride in identifying as First Nations. It means feeling safe enough to bring my whole self to work and being able to proudly tick that box. It's a small act, but it's my way of saying we're still here – always were, always will be."



Amanda Goode
Indigenous Liaison Officer

"Being part of the ISN brings Mob together and unites us as one. It's important that we support one another, strengthen our connections, and create a workplace where everyone feels valued and supported."



Dave Willis
Indigenous Graduate

"Being part of the ISN means connection, strength and creating space for Mob to feel seen, heard and supported. It is about uplifting one another, sharing knowledge and building pathways for future generations to thrive. To me, the network represents community, culture and the importance of walking together, celebrating our successes, supporting one another through challenges, and ensuring our voices continue to be represented, valued and respected."



Amy Minchin
Executive Officer, Digital

"Being part of this network gives me an additional sense of purpose and a genuine sense of belonging. I have been involved in Indigenous staff networks before, but I have never come across such a vibrant and enthusiastic Mob as we have here at the Commission. The support and sponsorship from the Executive Leadership Group to help drive these initiatives is especially meaningful and reinforces the value placed on our voices and contributions."



David Scott
Assistant Director,
First Nations
Operational Policy

Message from the Indigenous Champion

I am proud to support the Commission's RAP. We developed this plan with the leadership and commitment of our Indigenous Staff Network. It was inspiring to see so many of our people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, coming together and working towards reconciliation.

Reconciliation is a lifelong journey. It's an ongoing commitment to listening, learning and working together to create a more equitable future. Through this RAP, the Commission is strengthening relationships with First Nations older people and supporting their connection to family, community and Country. We are empowering First Nations employees by creating safe spaces for truth-telling, and embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives across our work.



This RAP shows we are committed to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and upholding the Aged Care Quality Standards. We recognise that culturally safe and responsive care is important for First Nations older people. As the national regulator, we will walk alongside the aged care community, supporting and encouraging providers to strengthen cultural safety, improve outcomes and provide care that respects the needs, rights and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their family.

As the Indigenous Champion, I will actively support the strategies that encourage our external stakeholders to contribute to reconciliation outcomes.

The success of this RAP depends on all of us. Reconciliation is not the work of a few – it is the responsibility of every staff member. Together, we can make sure the Commission is a place where we value, respect and empower First Nations people and where our commitment to reconciliation is visible in everything we do.

Gary Rake
Indigenous Champion and Deputy Commissioner, Regulatory Operations



Garma Festival

Garma Festival 2026 held at Gulkula. From top left: Gary Rake, Tayla Blewitt-Gray, Philip Wright, Tim Yap and Tobias Voss.

Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia



Reconciliation Australia commends the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) 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 over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. ACQSC continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 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 ACQSC will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to ACQSC 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 ACQSC 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, ACQSC will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

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

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

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



IAP Graduation 2026

From the left: Philip Wright, Robert Reynolds, Meacy Christie, Lana Saunders and Vanessa Mason.

Our business

Our purpose is to make sure people who use aged care are safe, receive good care and have their rights upheld through regulation and a complaints scheme. Our vision is that older people's expectations of choice, dignity and respect are upheld through the delivery of safe, quality and rights-based aged care.

The Commission is the national regulator of Australian Government-funded aged care services. We protect and improve the safety, wellbeing and quality of life of people using aged care. This includes dealing with complaints and feedback about the care they receive.

We build confidence and trust in aged care by encouraging best practice and a culture of safety and quality in the sector. We hold providers responsible if they do not meet the expected standards of care.

We work with aged care providers, workers, older people and their supporters to make sure that everyone understands and upholds older people's rights.

The *Aged Care Act 2024* (Aged Care Act), which started on 1 November 2025, puts older people at the centre of their aged care experience. It is the main law that sets out how the aged care system works. It replaces the *Aged Care Act 1997* and the *Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018*.

The Commission, Commissioner and Complaints Commissioner all have roles under the Aged Care Act. These roles give them power to regulate aged care services and deliver the government's priorities for the aged care system.

Our role is to:

- protect and enhance the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of older people
- work with older people to improve the quality of care and services
- build confidence and trust in aged care.



Photo by Bec Hannaford, 2025

Our workforce consists of more than 2,000 staff working across 9 sites in every state and territory. This includes the capital cities of Adelaide (Tarndanya), Brisbane (Meanjin/Magandjin), Canberra (Kamberri), Darwin (Garramilla), Hobart (nipaluna), Melbourne (Naarm), Perth (Boorloo), and Sydney (Waran/Warrang). Sixty-one of our staff identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

Through our safeguarding, engagement and education, provider registration and complaints functions, our staff work with:

- older people
- providers
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- Elders
- families
- communities
- advocates
- workers
- sector partners
- others involved in aged care.

These functions give us opportunities to listen to and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, uphold their rights, promote culturally safe and quality care, and strengthen trust and confidence in the sector. These relationships guide the way we regulate, support continuous improvement, and contribute to a more culturally safe, responsive and equitable aged care system.



Our RAP

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to access aged care that is safe, respectful and culturally appropriate, and supports their quality of life. We recognise the ongoing impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and system-wide inequities on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We know that truth-telling, healing and partnership are essential to creating lasting change.

The Commission is committed to continuing our reconciliation journey. Reconciliation is key to understanding the strengths, cultures and diverse experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is essential to making sure we consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences and views when we make decisions and apply them in our work across the sector.

Our first Innovate RAP was a strong starting point for the Commission. It helped us achieve many successes including:

- increased cultural awareness and engagement across our workforce
- stronger governance structures
- more cultural learning opportunities
- deeper relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders
- an integrated and developed long-term First Nations strategy.

While we have made significant progress, we know there is more work to do to make reconciliation a part of our everyday practice, strengthen accountability and reporting across all levels of the organisation, and maximise the impact of our regulatory functions.

Photo by Bec Hannaford, 2025

Developing this RAP

This second Innovate RAP builds on the foundations we established through past reconciliation initiatives. It shows our ongoing commitment to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older peoples.

It presents our plans to strengthen relationships, respect, opportunities and governance through:

- **actions** – our high-level commitments
- **deliverables** – the specific actions we will take
- **timeframes** – when we will complete each action
- **accountabilities** – who is responsible for each action.

We developed this RAP over 12 months through listening and collaborating with the ISN, the RAP Working Group, key stakeholders and sector partners. We used insights from co-design sessions, the RAP Impact Survey, Australian Public Service (APS) Census results, and what we learnt from previous RAP commitments, to identify priorities and opportunities to guide our reconciliation journey over the next 2 years.

Throughout this process, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, stakeholders and partners highlighted how important it is for us to:

- deepen relationships
- embed cultural capability more consistently
- improve accountability
- reduce cultural load
- use our role to promote culturally safe aged care.

We also developed the commitments and initiatives in the RAP to respond to priorities in:

- the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- the APS Cultural Capability Framework
- our Corporate Plan 2026–27
- our People Strategy 2026–29
- our Regulatory Strategy
- our Positive Footprints Integrated Strategy, which will assist the Commission in becoming a culturally capable regulator.

This supports a coordinated organisation-wide approach to reconciliation.

Recognising that reconciliation is built on trust, we will continue to listen, learn and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and change our approach where we need to. By assessing and improving how we work we aim to deliver practical and sustainable outcomes that help create an aged care system where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people receive care that is safe, respectful and culturally responsive.



RAP Working Group

The RAP Working Group is responsible for overseeing, supporting and monitoring the way we put the RAP into practice. They provide strategic leadership, keep us accountable and help make sure the RAP aligns with our operational requirements.

The RAP Working Group is chaired by our Indigenous Champion, the Deputy Commissioner, Regulatory Operations. Members include Deputy Commissioner, Sector Capability and Regulatory Strategy (as Deputy Chair), self-identified members of the ISN and our RAP Champions.

The RAP Champions are senior leaders of our core functions including Complaints, Corporate, Regulatory Operations and Sector Capability and Regulatory Strategy. They work with their teams to:

- embed reconciliation commitments into business-as-usual activities
- promote accountability
- support a coordinated, organisation-wide approach to reconciliation
- reduce the cultural load on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

We support shared decision-making through a strong First Nations governance structure that supervises and guides our reconciliation and regulatory priorities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the RAP Working Group provide cultural advice. They help make sure RAP initiatives are culturally safe, meaningful and respond to community views.

The internal Positive Footprints Collaborators Group, established to progress and monitor initiatives within the Commission's Positive Footprints Integrated Strategy, complements the RAP Working Group by providing strategic oversight of the implementation of First Nations regulatory priorities. They integrate culturally safe practices across our regulatory functions.



About the artist

Chern'ee Sutton is a proud Kalkadoon woman and Aboriginal artist from Mount Isa, Queensland, Australia. She is passionate about sharing her culture and history with the rest of the world through her art. Her unique style, which combines traditional Aboriginal heritage with a contemporary twist, has caught the eyes of collectors around the world including royalty and is on the 2018 Commonwealth Games mascot, Borobi. Chern'ee's artwork is hanging in The Royal Collection in Buckingham Palace, Queensland Parliament House and Queensland State Library. She has exhibited in London, Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong, Sydney and Melbourne.

About the artwork

This artwork, called *Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's Journey*, was developed to share the journey of how the Commission protects and improves the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of First Nations people receiving aged care services.

In this artwork, the largest community symbol represents the Commission. The shield in the centre of this community symbol represents the Commission protecting and improving the safety, health, wellbeing, and quality of life for people receiving aged care services.

The people, U symbol and Dharris around the main community symbol represent how the Commission is committed to building ongoing relationships with First Nations older people, communities, workers, and service providers. The kangaroo and emu footprints around the main community symbol represent the Commission always moving forward and never backwards. The large blue ring and sun rays around the main community symbol represent the Commission's vision: For older Australians to trust and have confidence that aged care services protect and enhance their safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life. Everyone has the right to safe and compassionate care. The Commission preserves this right and ensures that people who use aged care services are treated with dignity and respect.

The 3 smaller grey community symbols represent how the Commission improves the quality of older people's lives by:

- making sure access to aged care is culturally safe – represented by the small community symbol with the two U symbols
- ensuring Elders and First Nations people are respected – represented by the small community symbol with the light rays around it
- empowering older people to have a voice and exercise their rights – represented by the small community symbol with the speech bubble.

The travelling lines connecting the small community symbols to the large community symbol represent the communities around Australia that the Commission interacts with and travels to. The dotted circles in the background of the top right and bottom left represent the Commission's values: impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful, ethical and stewardship. The footprints throughout the artwork represent the aged care journey and the U symbols represent all the older people that the Commission looks after and helps. The leaves, waterholes and mountains throughout the artwork represent all the communities that older people call home.

Words by Chern'ee Sutton

Relationships

Relationships are key to reconciliation. They support our role as the national rights-based regulator of aged care. By strengthening cultural capability, creating a culturally safe and inclusive workplace, and ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives inform decision-making, we build the foundations for respectful engagement, shared accountability and meaningful reconciliation across the organisation.

These foundations will help us to build and maintain strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations, and our partners in the aged care sector. Through these relationships, we strengthen our understanding of the rights, experiences and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, support culturally informed regulation and engagement, and contribute to a more culturally safe, responsive and equitable aged care system.

Action 1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.1 Continue to meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for ongoing engagement.	March, June, Sept, Dec (annually)	Director, First Nations Operational Policy
1.2 Review, update and implement an Engagement Strategy, co-designing it with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Dec (annually)	Assistant Commissioner, Education, Engagement and Communications
1.3 Continue to build relationships with sector partners, including the First Nations Aged Care Commissioner and Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's First Nations Section, to support policies to regulate aged care services.	Nov (annually)	Director, First Nations Operational Policy
1.4 Establish and document partnerships with Traditional Owners and Custodians invited to Commission events.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation



Action 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.1 Expand our internal NRW program of activities to help staff better understand and get involved in reconciliation.	27 May – 3 June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
2.2 Support our staff to take part in external NRW events and activities.	27 May – 3 June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
2.3 Increase senior leader participation in and support of NRW events and activities.	27 May – 3 June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
2.4 Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations through annual NRW activities and partnerships.	27 May – 3 June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	27 May – 3 June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation

Action 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence in the aged care sector.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.1 Co-design and implement an internal Engagement Strategy to streamline reconciliation across our workforce and capability programs.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
3.2 Continue to communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	June (annually)	Director, External Communications
3.3 Continue to build awareness of the RAP through staff induction.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
3.4 Identify opportunities across our regulatory functions to ensure co-design supports the implementation of our Positive Footprints Integrated Strategy.	Nov 2028	Assistant Commissioner, Knowledge Management and Operational Policy
3.5 Strengthen partnerships with other RAP organisations to share knowledge and advance reconciliation outcomes.	Nov 2027	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation



Action 4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4.1 Review our people policies and procedures to support a culturally safe, inclusive and respectful workplace.	Nov (annually)	Chief People Officer, People and Culture
4.2 Monitor and report on actions that support a culturally safe workplace through the Commission's Respect at Work Policy, including measures to address racism, lateral violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, Work Health Safety
4.3 Deliver updated learning that uplifts staff understanding of discrimination, inclusion and cultural safety.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
4.4 Continue to promote positive race relations by sharing resources and information on our intranet and Learnhub training platform.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
4.5 Equip our senior leaders on the most recent conversations and research surrounding the effects of racism.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation



Action 5. Engage with internal First Nations staff and external stakeholders to co-design cultural safety programs and policies in all aspects of Commission operations.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5.1 Work with peak bodies, ACCOs, older people and their representatives to co-design community profiles that support culturally responsive regulation.	Nov 2028	Deputy Commissioner, Regulatory Operations
5.2 Undertake a cultural safety audit to assess our practices, policies and workplace culture. Address identified opportunities for strengthening cultural safety and inclusion for First Nations staff.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
5.3 Organise regular yarning circles and other culturally safe spaces for First Nations staff to share stories, ideas and experiences.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
5.4 Provide cultural safety training sessions for staff every 3 years nationally, including relevant refresher courses in between.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
5.5 Continue to improve the cultural safety of the Commission's Intake and Complaints services through co-design and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Nov 2028	Assistant Commissioner, Intake and Complaints
5.6 Develop and implement a culturally safe approach to collecting, managing and using data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.	Nov 2028	Director, Customer and Strategy – Data, Analytics and Intelligence

Respect

Respect is fundamental to reconciliation. It underpins how we engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise the historical and ongoing impacts of policies and practices that have affected participation in aged care, and the importance of cultural authority, lived experience and cultural knowledge in informing our work.

Through a responsive co-design approach, the Commission seeks to incorporate lived experience and subject matter expertise into the development of policies, programs and regulatory activities. We will strengthen cultural capability across the organisation through mandatory cultural learning, individual performance commitments and ongoing learning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Together, these initiatives support a culturally responsive workforce, strengthen inclusion, and contribute to the delivery of safe, quality and culturally appropriate aged care services.

Action 6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural capability uplift.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6.1 Assess our cultural learning needs against the APS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework to inform planning and priorities.	Jan 2027	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
6.2 Consult Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform a cultural learning roadmap.	Jan 2027	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
6.3 Implement a cultural learning roadmap aligned with the Cultural Capability Framework, including measures to assess effectiveness and inform continuous improvement.	April 2027	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
6.4 Develop and maintain a register of cultural learning and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	March (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
6.5 Expand opportunities for senior leadership and members of the RAP Working Group and ISN to participate in formal cultural learning and cultural immersion experiences.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
6.6 Embed mandatory cultural learning into our induction package and staff performance development agreements.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
6.7 Promote and encourage formal and informal cultural training opportunities.	Feb (annually)	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation

Action 7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7.1 Increase staff understanding of cultural protocols and days of significance, including Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
7.2 Review and update our First Nations Cultural Protocols to include best practice guidance for staff on trauma aware and healing informed practices.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
7.3 Assess and document how we embed cultural capability into workforce standards, training and quality assurance processes for our field staff.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
7.4 Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the start of important meetings.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation



Action 8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8.1 Coordinate and deliver a NAIDOC Week program that encourages staff participation and celebrates First Nations cultures, histories and achievements.	July (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
8.2 Support the RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
8.3 Promote workplace arrangements, including cultural leave, that support staff to take part in NAIDOC Week activities.	July (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
8.4 Increase the awareness of NAIDOC Week and share information internally about what it means.	July (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation

Action 9. Remove barriers to participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the regulation and improvement of aged care services.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9.1 Co-design and promote culturally safe resources and opportunities that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in our regulatory services, including the complaints process.	Feb (annually)	Assistant Commissioner, Intake and Complaints
9.2 Monitor and respond to the impact of aged care reforms on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and providers, including adapting resources and communications.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Commissioner, Engagement, Education and Communications

Opportunities

Creating equal opportunities for First Nations people is central to our work and to supporting better outcomes for older people. We are strengthening our workforce capability by prioritising First Nations recruitment, career development, leadership pathways and retention. We are supporting culturally competent recruitment through the Affirmative Measures program, yarning circles and employment pathways, such as the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program (IAP), the Graduate Program, and First Nations representation on recruitment panels. These actions support our vision for a culturally safe, inclusive and capable workplace where our First Nations staff feel valued and thrive.

Beyond our workforce, we are helping to improve social, cultural and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes strengthening relationships with First Nations owned and operated businesses through inclusive procurement practices, forming meaningful partnerships, and embedding culturally safe and responsive approaches across our work.

Through our regulatory, engagement and stewardship roles, we will improve access to and confidence in the aged care system, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equitable opportunities to participate in, influence and benefit from the sector.

Action 10. Improve the attraction, retention, development and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by making the Commission's employment practices more culturally responsive and creating clearer career pathways.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10.1 Collect insights into the experiences, aspirations and development needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform workforce initiatives, career pathways and retention strategies.	Jan 2027	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
10.2 Involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in reviewing and designing workforce initiatives that support recruitment, retention and career development.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, Recruitment
10.3 Continue to expand culturally competent recruitment approaches, including using First Nations recruitment agencies and social media, to make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are aware of employment opportunities.	Nov (annually)	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
10.4 Provide opportunities for current and future First Nations leaders to access professional development.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation
10.5 Strengthen entry and career pathways for prospective First Nations employees through affirmative measures recruitment and government employment programs.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Recruitment
10.6 Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff opportunities to develop recruitment and interviewing skills through participation on selection panels and recruitment processes.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Recruitment
10.7 Promote the Commission as an employer of choice for prospective First Nations employees by showcasing culturally responsive recruitment approaches, flexible work arrangements and cultural leave provisions.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Workforce Planning
10.8 Explore opportunities to establish mentoring and coaching initiatives to support the career development and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	June 2027	Assistant Director, Learning Implementation

Action 11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11.1 Continue to promote the Commission's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy and increase measures to support transparent reporting.	Nov (annually)	Director, Financial Governance
11.2 Maintain Supply Nation membership.	Nov 2028	Director, Financial Governance
11.3 Monitor and review the procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Nov (annually)	Director, Financial Governance
11.4 Continue to make sure procurement practices and policies align with broader government initiatives. Keep exploring ways to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Nov (annually)	Director, Financial Governance
11.5 Continue to explore and develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Sept (annually)	Director, Financial Governance

Action 12. Achieve 5% representation of Commission staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12.1 Monitor progress towards the Commission's 5% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce representation goal and implement workforce initiatives to address identified gaps.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Workforce Planning
12.2 Use workforce data, employee feedback and workforce planning processes to identify barriers and opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce representation.	Nov 2027	Assistant Director, Workforce Planning
12.3 Monitor retention and career progression outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and identify actions to address emerging workforce issues.	Nov 2027	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
12.4 Identify and implement strategies to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in senior leadership roles, including SES pathways, talent development and succession planning.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, Recruitment



Governance

Effective governance makes us accountable and turns RAP commitments into meaningful action. Our RAP governance model balances equitable and shared decision-making with existing organisational governance and business structures, ensuring reconciliation is embedded across all levels of the organisation rather than operating as a standalone initiative. Strong First Nations representation is central to this approach, supported by open and respectful communication, clear lines of accountability, and genuine partnership between First Nations and non-Indigenous staff.

We commit to regularly reviewing and refreshing our governance arrangements, membership and ways of working to ensure diverse perspectives are represented, emerging priorities are recognised, and our systems remain relevant and effective. Our whole-of-organisation approach enables us to track progress, learn from experience, and transparently report on how our actions are contributing to better outcomes for First Nations peoples within the Commission and across the aged care sector.

Action 13. Recognise and promote the knowledge and experience of the Indigenous Staff Network.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13.1 Recognise and promote the knowledge, expertise and lived experience of ISN members through participation in external communications opportunities.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
13.2 Increase the visibility of ISN members' knowledge, expertise and experiences through internal communications, events and staff engagement activities.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
13.3 Strengthen communications within the ISN, coordinated by the Indigenous Liaison Officer, to support a connected, informed and engaged network.	Nov 2028	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
13.4 Work with the ISN to identify the effects of cultural load impacts and use strategies that support wellbeing and sustainable participation.	Nov 2027	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation

Action 14. Maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14.1 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and participation on the RAP Working Group.	Nov 2028	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
14.2 Review and maintain the Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group, to support them to effectively apply the RAP in a culturally responsible way.	Nov (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
14.3 Hold monthly RAP Working Group meetings to oversee, guide and monitor how we apply the RAP.	Monthly (review Dec annually)	Chair, RAP Working Group

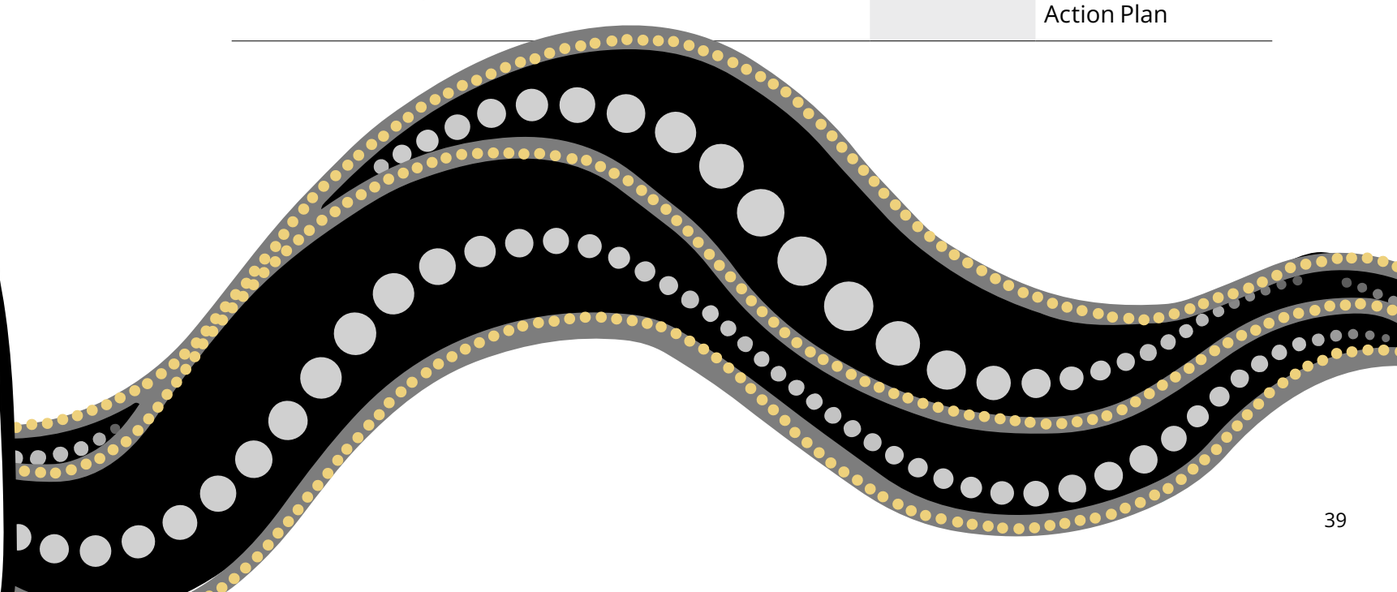
Action 15. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15.1 Reassess the resources and skills we need to support a sustainable RAP.	Nov 2027	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
15.2 Maintain opportunities for dialogue between the ISN, Assistant Commissioners and Commissioner on RAP implementation and reconciliation priorities.	June (annually)	Assistant Director, First Nations Engagement and Reconciliation
15.3 Support budget planning across the organisation to enable RAP implementation and advance the Commission's First Nations strategic priorities.	May (annually)	Director, Financial Governance
15.4 Define and maintain systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March, June, Sept, Dec (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
15.5 Maintain visible senior leadership sponsorship through an appointed RAP/Indigenous Champion at SES level.	June (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan



Action 16. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16.1 Contact Reconciliation Australia to confirm our primary and secondary contact details are up to date. This will ensure we receive all important RAP correspondence.	June (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
16.2 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	Sept (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
16.3 Report our RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders each quarter.	March, June, Sep, Dec (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
16.4 Evaluate our progress against the RAP. Communicate achievements, challenges, lessons and priorities through our annual public report.	Sept (annually	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
16.5 Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2028	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
16.6 Submit a report to Reconciliation Australia when this RAP expires.	Nov 2028	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan

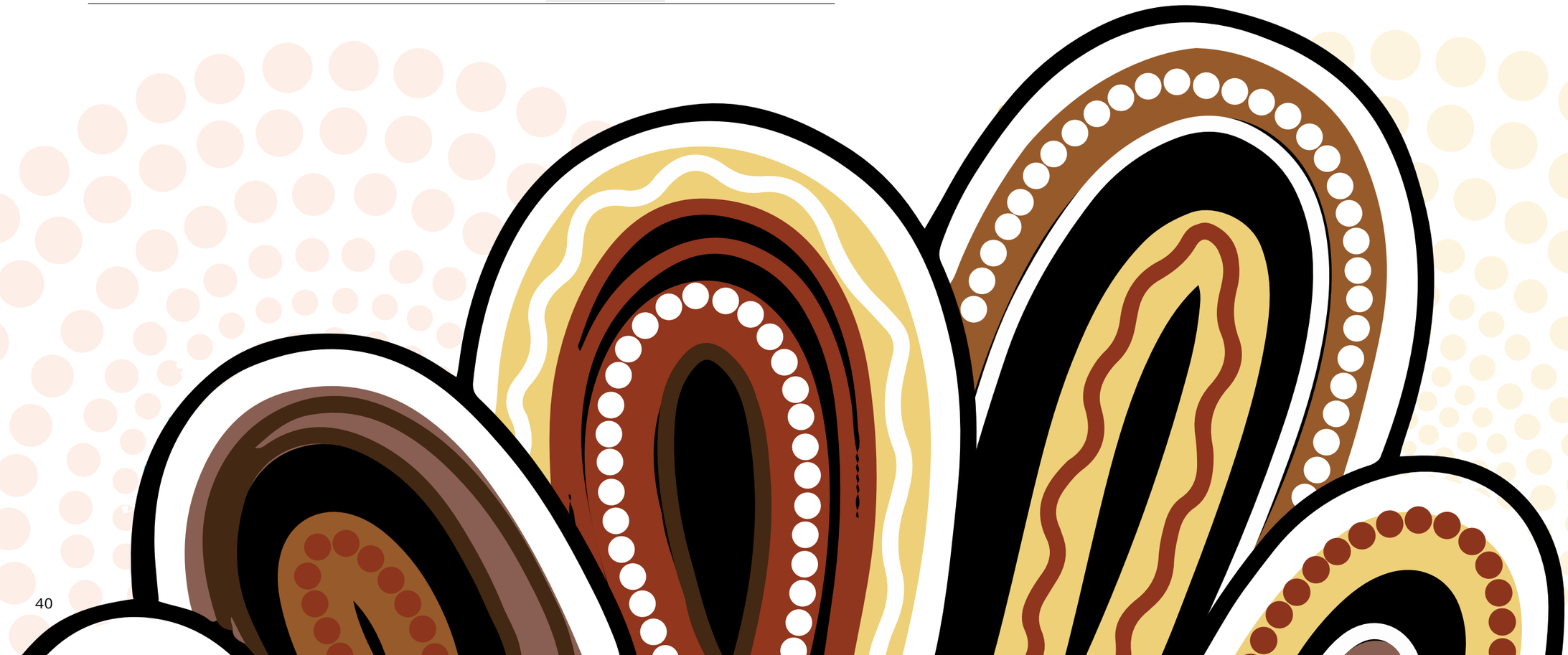


Action 17. Improve accountability and reporting of key priorities within Corporate and Operational plans relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
17.1 Include our First Nations strategic priorities in our Corporate Plan to make sure we are accountable and our priorities and plans align.	June 2027	Deputy Commissioner, Corporate
17.2 Use the RAP Working Group to support accountability for embedding RAP commitments, actions and measures within divisional, branch and section planning processes.	June 2027	Chair, RAP Working Group
17.3 Strengthen accountability measures and our RAP reporting framework across all levels of the Commission.	March, June, Sept, Dec (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan

Action 18. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
18.1 Register on Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2028	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
18.2 Facilitate opportunities for staff, leaders, ISN and key stakeholders to contribute to the review, reflection and co-design of our next RAP.	May 2028	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan
18.3 Develop a roadmap for our next RAP, including alignment with long-term business strategies.	March (annually)	Senior Program Advisor, Reconciliation Action Plan



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Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
GPO Box 9819, in your capital city

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