



RECONCILIATION
AUSTRALIA



Caritas
AUSTRALIA

Caritas Australia

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2022 - March 2024



As human beings, we have more in common than differences. Let's celebrate these differences because that's how we learn from each other.

- John Lochowiak, Chair of NATSICC
(National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council,
one of Caritas Australia's First Australian Program partners)



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Djilpin Arts weaving work.
Photo: Cassandra Hill

Message from our partners

"It is important to be accountable, and by developing this RAP Caritas is committing to a brighter future. We are really pleased to be walking alongside Caritas on this shared journey of reconciliation."

NATSICC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council)

Acknowledgement of Country

At Caritas Australia, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which our offices are based. This land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the unceded lands of the Traditional Owners.

Caritas Australia offices are located on the lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation in Alexandria, the Boon Wurrung People and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) Peoples of the Kulin Nation in Melbourne, the Whadjuk of the Noongar Nation in Perth, the Turrbal and Jagera People in Brisbane, and the Ngunnawal People in Canberra.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of First Australians.



Cover: Julie Ashley, "Gapu" (2019) © Julie Ashley/Copyright Agency, 2021

Cover Artwork



Julie Ashley

Julie was born on Elcho Island off the coast of Arnhem Land. She was taught to weave pandanus and to collect natural bush dyes by her mother. Julie has created a range of contemporary fibre works including lampshades, hats, mobiles fish, turtles and fibre earrings. She has created designs for textiles and print and leads weaving workshops for visitors.

RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CEO STATEMENT



Reconciliation Australia commends Caritas Australia on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

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

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

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Caritas Australia to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Caritas Australia will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Caritas Australia is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Caritas Australia's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

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

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer

Reconciliation Australia

Our vision for Reconciliation

Guided by our values of Courage, Compassion, Stewardship and Partnership Caritas Australia's vision for reconciliation is an Australia in which First Australian cultures are embraced as part of a national identity, and First Australians are empowered to make decisions affecting their future. In the context of our work, our ambition in particular is for all First Australians to achieve their best possible social and emotional wellbeing and have access to culturally appropriate support. We seek to embed reconciliation into our core business practices and decision making at all levels. Our Advocacy focus to help bring our vision to life is to;

- Promote truth and voice for First Australians
- Support the inclusion of honest and truthful history of Australia and its relationship to First Australians throughout the education system
- Support local, grassroots, First Australians-led organisations to have a strong and effective voice in shaping policy that impacts the lives of their communities
- Reduce the over-representation of First Australians in the juvenile justice and child protection reform systems
- Promote ecological justice through recognising traditional knowledge and practices in caring for Country.



Barry participated in the Red Dust Healing program, which is supported by Caritas Australia. Photo: Richard Wainwright.

Our Organisation

For over 50 years, Caritas Australia has worked hand-in-hand with the most marginalised and remote communities in Australia and overseas, to confront the challenges of poverty. Through locally-led programs we work towards a world where all can thrive and reach their full potential.

As the international aid and development agency of the Catholic Church in Australia, Caritas Australia works with and for all people, to address immediate needs and long-term goals, regardless of religion, ethnicity or political beliefs. Through Caritas Internationalis, one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world, we are able to reach where the need is greatest, through local Church networks and organisations.

We accompany communities to build on existing local strengths and resources, supporting them to drive their own development for more transformative and sustainable change. When a crisis hits, Caritas Australia partners with local organisations and Church partners to bring aid and relief to people whose lives have been devastated by natural disaster or conflict. We advocate for social and ecological justice for those most impacted by inequality. Above all, with shared compassion and hope, we work towards a just world for all.

We have offices in Sydney, Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and one staff member based in Northern Territory, we employ 115 staff in Australia and 55 staff based overseas in PNG, Solomon Islands Cambodia, Timor Leste and Indonesia. We currently have two First Australian staff members and the Caritas Australia's First Australian Program is led by a First Australian based in the Northern Territory.

Our Current First Australian Partners

We believe in subsidiarity: that the people best placed to make decisions are those who will be most affected by them. Australia has a long history of making decisions for First Australian communities, rather than upholding these communities' rights to decide for themselves. This history has had deep and long-lasting effects on First Australians, as well as Australia as a whole. There are glaring inequalities between the general population and those identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. We support programs in Australia that are designed and led by First Australians.

Aboriginal Carbon Foundation

Aboriginal Carbon Foundation connects Aboriginal communities who supply carbon credits, with organisations seeking to offset their carbon emissions. The Foundation has also developed Australia's first peer-led (Indigenous to Indigenous) independent and rigorous Core Benefits Verification Framework (CBVF) for verifying carbon credits that demonstrate environmental, social and cultural core-benefits. Aboriginal Carbon Foundation are currently developing a strength-based planning process for remote communities to draw on their own talents in the meeting of community aspirations.

Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation

Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation founded by five Aboriginal elders from Western Sydney, it connects with individuals and families in a welcoming environment, providing support and links to services that help healing from the past as well as nurture a sense of confidence and pride in the future.

Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation

Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation involves Elders and young people from the community of Beswick (Wugularr) in the development of cultural enterprises. Over several years Djilpin Arts has built a cultural centre for the sale and exhibition of locally produced artworks (managed by young people from the community), trained young people in digital media, developed weaving, bush medicine and jewellery businesses, and established award-winning tourist accommodation facilities (also managed by young people from the community).

Grassroots Action Palmerston

Grassroots Action Palmerston was formed from the victims of crime meetings held in Palmerston. They are a group of volunteer community members, business members and youth experienced workers passionate about bettering our community from the grassroots. They are working towards many programs from community events to bring our community together to support for victims of crime and want to have family events to take back their parks. They are also focused on youth programs.

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation - has been formed by survivors of the Kinchela Boys Home to reconnect with one another and re-establish their brotherhood for healing and truth telling with the mission of: 'Unlocking our past to free our future'.

National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC)

National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) is the peak advisory body to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics. With over 130,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in Australia, it is the youngest and fastest growing demographic.

Red Dust Healing

Red Dust Healing is a cultural healing program, developed from an Aboriginal perspective that provides culturally meaningful tools to overcome past and present hurt and rejection. The program leads participants on a personal journey to understand the connections between Australia's history and the trauma that many experience, and empowers participants to take ownership of a brighter future.



Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, with Caritas Australia, supports survivors of the State-run Kinchela Boys Home in Kempsey, NSW. Photo: Caritas Australia



Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, with Caritas Australia, supports survivors the State-run Kinchela Boys Home in Kempsey, NSW. Photo: Caritas Australia

Our journey so far

+ There is no true peace without fairness, truth, justice and solidarity.

- St. Pope John Paul II

For over 50 years, Caritas Australia has worked in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our partnerships have their roots in the early 1960's when funds were raised to provide a deep-sea fishing boat for the people of Melville Island, west of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. In the 1970's, Caritas Australia began to fund First Australian projects, and since then has continued to support First Australian communities through long-term development programs. We believe that the story and journey of First Australians is integral and interwoven with that of our organisation

In 2008 we took this commitment one step further by formulating our own Reconciliation Action Plan, to provide a greater focus on the journey of reconciliation among our organisation. The Reconciliation Group undertook an extensive journey, consulting closely with staff, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, and Reconciliation Australia.

Next steps

With reconciliation firmly in the hearts and minds of our organisation, we now endeavour to further our commitment with a new Reconciliation Action Plan. This is built on our journey so far, and focuses on deepening our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and friends, and enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This Reconciliation Action Plan contains our planned actions for the period 2022 –2024 and each of the initiatives will have a defined timeframe and measurable outcomes.

This Reconciliation Action Plan aligns with the Caritas Australia's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy [The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy](#) also refers to the International Covenant of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by which Caritas Australia abides Caritas Australia works with Indigenous Peoples in many programs around the world and this Reconciliation Action Plan also aligns with [DFAT Social and Environmental Safeguards Policy](#)

It is indeed a privilege for us to connect with the Custodians of the oldest living cultures on earth.

Reporting

This Reconciliation Action Plan contains our planned actions for the period 2021 – 2023 and each of the initiatives will have a defined timeframe and measurable outcomes.

We will increase our cultural understanding and learning by celebrating and embracing First Australian histories, cultures and achievements.

Priority Areas:

- Relationships
- Respect
- Opportunities
- Governance
- Tracking Progress & Reporting

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation is not a quick fix or an easy solution. We will be learning from each other and stumbling along together, with the intention of continually growing. Reconciliation involves change. Change within each of us, and change in the wider world. It may not always be comfortable but it's important work to do. We will hold ourselves accountable by seeking feedback from First Australian partners. Caritas Australia believes that a Reconciliation Action Plan provides an opportunity for all members of our community to consider ways in which we, together, can heal the wounds of the past and foster a shared future filled with hope. We have embedded reconciliation-focused outcomes in the Strategic Direction,

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Champion is our CEO Kirsty Robertson.

Members of our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group are;

- Alicia Benardos – People Director
- Michael McGirr – Mission Director
- Helen Deering – People and Culture Coordinator
- Koreen Cueto – Program Coordinator, Indonesia and Vietnam
- Ellie Wong – Graphic Designer
- Christine Rhazi – First Australians Associate Director
- Helen Whyatt – Executive Assistant Programs
- Christine Rhazi is our First Australian Representative on our Reconciliation Action Plan working group

Prior to sending this Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia we sent for feedback to our First Australian Partners, we incorporated all of their feedback in this Reconciliation Action Plan.

+ Self-determination, pride and self-respect are the banks of the river through which the waters of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life flows.

-NATSICC, Joint Statement on Subsidiarity 2016

RELATIONSHIPS



Our Aim

We seek positive and enduring relationships with First Australians and will use our reputation and influence to advocate for stronger recognition and respect for culture, community, and equal opportunity. We will work tirelessly to communicate this message and fight for social justice so that we may help to overcome disadvantage among First Australians. We will achieve this by working with communities to create true partnerships, by listening and learning from lived experiences and shared stories, ensure they are culturally appropriate. We will use this understanding to enhance communication and engagement with our employees, volunteers and the communities in which we work.

Focus area:

Advocacy and Partnership. We believe every person has a right to participate in the decisions that affect them. Too often, First Australians are denied this right. We will advocate for First Australians to be involved in the decisions that affect them.

| Actions | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence | Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation. | November 2022 | People Director |
| | Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly. | Nov 2022 | People Director |
| | Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. | Feb 2023 | Mission Director |
| | Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation. | March 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and perspectives help to drive the design and development of Strategic Directions, Policies and Advocacy Priorities | Ensured that Caritas Australia Strategic Direction 2021-31 has been informed by our First Australian Program partners. Their aspirations are reflected in the reconciliation-focused outcomes throughout. | March 2022 | Chief Executive Officer |
| | Ensure Caritas Australia's policies, programs and strategic direction be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and priorities. | March 2022 | People Director |

Red Dust Healing is a Caritas Australia-supported program.
Photo: Richard Wainwright

RELATIONSHIPS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | Continue to work with partners and staff to identify key advocacy issues. We will use our networks and reputation to advocate to policy makers and government. | March 2023 | First Australians Associate Director |
| | Through our advocacy strategy which was done in consultation with First Australian Partners Work with similar organisations in the sector to pool resources to advocate for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. | March 2023 | Advocacy Associate Director assisted by People and Culture Coordinator |
| Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. | March 2023 | People Director |
| | Continue to ensure we abide by Caritas Australia's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy which also refers to the International Covenant of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by which Caritas Australia abides | March 2023 | People Director |
| | Reflect on the ways that we may each contribute to racism (e.g. ignorance, unconscious bias, white privilege, white centering via culture awareness training | February 2023 | People Director |
| | Provide training to staff to support decolonization as individuals and educate on the effects of racism | November 2022 | People Director |
| | Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. | January 2023 February 2023 | People Director |
| | Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism. | | Mission Director |
| | Create a Video "What does Reconciliation mean to you?" | May 2023 Filming, June 2023 Editing, July 2023 Launch | People Director |

| Actions | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW). | Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff via workplace. | 27 May to 3 June 2022, 2023 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |
| | RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. | 27 May to 3 June 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | 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, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Organise at least one NRW event each year. | 27 May to 3 June 2022, 2023 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam and Executive Assistant Programs |
| | Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. | May 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Share information with staff via 'Workplace' about the meaning of National Reconciliation Week, including the significant dates that book-end Reconciliation Week: the 1967 Referendum and the Mabo decision. | May 2022, 2023 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |
| | Continue to develop external comms about Reconciliation and National Reconciliation Week, including links to resources on our website. | May 2022, 2023 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |
| | Display Reconciliation Australia posters and resources around our national office during National Reconciliation Week. | May 2022, May 2023 | Executive Assistant Programs |
| Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | Meet with local First Australian stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. | October 2022 | Mission Director |
| | Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with First Australian stakeholders and organisations. | March 2023 | People Director |

RESPECT



Acknowledging dates of significance

Our Aim

To stand in solidarity, we remember significant dates for First Australians.

- National Sorry Day is respectfully observed. The joy of one is the joy of all as the sorrow of one is the sorrow of all
- National Reconciliation Week is commemorated by raising awareness and igniting hearts
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday. Every year, at the start of NAIDOC week Catholics come together across Australia to acknowledge and celebrate the gifts of Australia's First Australians in the Catholic Church.
- Survival Day is acknowledged. We recognise that 'Australia Day' is not an inclusive day
- International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is recognised and commemorated each year
- National Reconciliation Week (and other dates of significance) provide the opportunity to strengthen our relationships with First Australians and deepen our resolve to achieve true Reconciliation in Australia.

Further,

- We don't shy away from the painful history of our collective past. We will shine a light on injustices including the histories of the Stolen Generations. Unlocking our past to free our future – Kinchela Boys Home
- We remember that Indigenous people worldwide have both similarities and differences to the First Australians. We also remember that some of our programs support Indigenous people outside Australia. This Reconciliation Action Plan aligns with Caritas Australia's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Our Aim

To acknowledge unceded lands wherever in Australia we are located. This land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land. Caritas Australia recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and respects their cultures, lands, waters, histories; and their right to live in a society free of economic, social, and cultural oppression. All Caritas employees and volunteers, will acknowledge and be expected to support this vision in all aspects of their work. We acknowledge and celebrate the deep, abiding pride that First Australians have in their diverse cultures and we place great value in the contributions they make to the wider Australian society. We welcome the chance to learn more, and we are actively building education opportunities for employees and volunteers through our Cultural Awareness Training and our Diversity Equity and Inclusion Policy

- Our meetings and events commence with an Acknowledgement of Country
- All Australian based staff have an Acknowledgement of Country in their email signatures specific to where they are located
- Our website features an Acknowledgement of Country
- Our Annual Report and all other externally facing publications include an Acknowledgement of Country.

Focus

We welcome the chance to learn more, and we are actively building education opportunities for employees and volunteers through our Cultural Awareness Training and our Diversity Equity and Inclusion Policy.

| Actions | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|-------------------|---|
| Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. | May 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Consult local Traditional Owners and/or First Australian Partners to inform our cultural learning strategy. | July 2022 | First Australians Associate Director |
| | Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff. | October 2022 | Mission Director |
| | Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning. | April 2023 | Organisational Development and Learning Manager |
| | Conduct cultural competency training for all staff utilising the course on Caritas Australia's Learning Management System | May 2023 | Organisational Development and Learning Manager |
| Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance. | Create an events calendar for dates of significance to be shared on workplace. | May 2022 | Executive Assistant Programs |
| | Include an article on workplace to inform employees of the significant dates. | May 2022 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |
| | Invite a local Elder to speak to our employees on National Sorry Day. | 26 May 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |

RESPECT

OPPORTUNITIES

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|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| | Continue to invite our staff to cultural events which include visits from Partners, Smoking Ceremonies held at Caritas Australia and/or in the wider community. Where people cannot attend, streaming and/or recording will be provided where possible. | May 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Invite Traditional Owners and Custodians to share their stories, we compensate them for their time and invite them to share morning tea with our staff | Week in July, 2022, 2023 | First Australians Associate Director |
| Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | Continue to develop Caritas Australia's employee's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. | April 2022 | Mission Director |
| | Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. | June 2022 | Mission Director |
| | Continue to invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year. | May 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. | May 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. | RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. | First Week in July 2022,2023 | People Director |
| | Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. | July 2022 | People Director |
| | Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. | July 2022,2023, | Mission Director |
| | Raise awareness and share information about the meaning of NAIDOC Week internally via Workplace and externally via our website | July 2022,2023, | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |



Employment

Our Aim

To make our recruitment process more accessible and welcoming for First Australians Employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are an integral part of a diverse workforce, along with growing a deeper cultural competency of staff, Board members and volunteers. Caritas Strategic Directions 2021- 31

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|--|--|
| Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | Build understanding of current First Australian staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | July 2022 | People Director |
| | Engage with First Australian Partners and staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy | August 2022 | First Australians Associate Director |
| | Consult with First Australian Partners and staff on a review of HR and recruitment policies and procedures to remove barriers to First Australian participation and retention in our workplace. | August 2022 | First Australians Associate Director and People Director |
| | Continue to develop roles and advertise job vacancies to effectively reach First Australians. | May 2022 | HR Business Partner |
| | Implement, review and update First Australian recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | October 2022 | People Director |
| | Increase the percentage of First Australian staff employed in our workplace. | February 2024 | People Director |
| | Increase First Australian supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | Develop and communicate to staff a list of First Australian-owned businesses that can be used to procure goods and services. | July 2022 |
| Continue to develop commercial relationships with First Australian-owned businesses. | | April 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |

OPPORTUNITIES

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|--|--|---------------|---|
| | Investigate Supply Nation membership | June 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Engage First Australian facilitators and trainers where possible. | June 2022 | Organisational Development and Learning Manager |
| | Develop and implement a First Australian procurement strategy. | June 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from First Australian businesses. | May 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from First Australian businesses. | Feb 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| Continue to identify key advocacy issues. We use our networks and reputation to approach policy makers and government to advocate. | Identify and participate in local and national working groups where appropriate. | February 2024 | Policy Influence Lead |
| | Continue to work with similar organisations in the sector to pool resources to advocate for the rights of First Australian individuals and communities | February 2023 | Policy Influence Lead |



Aboriginal Carbon Foundation ranger, Sarah Barkley, with elder, John Clark.
Photo: Aboriginal Carbon Foundation

GOVERNANCE



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | Hold at least four Reconciliation Group meetings annually to monitor and report on Reconciliation Action Plan progress and implementation. | March June September December 2022, 2023, 2024 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | March 2022, 2023 2024 | First Australians Associate Director |
| | Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG. | March 2022 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | Define resource needs for Reconciliation Action Plan implementation as part of annual budgeting process. | April 2022 | People Director |
| | Continue to have Leadership Representation on the Reconciliation Group | June 2022, 2023 | People Director |
| | Continue to engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments. | March 2022, 2023 2024 | People Director |
| | Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | March 2022, 2023 2024 | People Director |
| | Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. | March 2022 | Chief Executive Officer |
| | Develop and implement a way in which First Australians can provide input and advice at a governance level. | March 2024 | Chief Executive Officer |
| Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence. | June 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |

GOVERNANCE

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| | Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. | 1st August 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | 30 September 2022, 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |
| | Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. | March June September December 2022, 2023 2024 | People Director |
| | Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | May 2022 | Program Coordinator Indonesia and Vietnam |
| | Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP. | March 2024 | People Director |
| Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | October 2023 | People and Culture Coordinator |

Contact details

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Position: People and Culture Coordinator

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Afterword from Kirsty Robertson

Caritas Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan for 2022 - 2024 is a milestone, not a destination.

It has been prepared with much appreciation of our First Australian partners from whom we have learnt so much and to whom we are grateful. At the same time, it enshrines a commitment to keep learning as we deepen our awareness and respond more fully to the First Australians who are the heart of the history of this continent and the islands that surround it. We acknowledge that the very people who most understand this country have been marginalised over and over again. We also acknowledge that reconciliation is a long and necessary journey. We have no future that does not fully embrace it, both as individuals and as an organisation. Actions speak louder than words and Caritas Australia is committed to the concrete steps expressed in this plan.

Caritas Australia has walked with First Australian partners from our earliest days. We give thanks for this opportunity. Our Strategic Direction, launched in 2021, describes reconciliation as 'an ongoing commitment to justice and dignity'. This Reconciliation Action Plan is part of that commitment. It embodies deep hope.

Tom Powell, Red Dust Healing Founder
Photo: Richard Wainwright

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Originally developed at Caritas Australia Partners Meeting, 2nd to 6th May 2011, Eastern Arrente Country; revised at Caritas Australia Partners meeting, 16th-20th September, 2019, Katherine.

This Statement of Intent was developed by Caritas Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and friends to inform Caritas Australia in its planning and implementation processes, such as strategic planning, advocacy strategy, reconciliation action planning and other plans for the future. At the partners meeting in 2019 the statements were reviewed and details added about what these statements will look like in practice, to ensure we can regularly review our progress in achieving these, in consultation with our First Australian partners. We uphold and promote the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and endeavour to ensure that in all programs affecting First Australian Peoples the principle of subsidiarity or self-determination is embedded, making sure that decisions are made by the people that are affected by them.

- 1. We uphold and promote the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and endeavour to ensure that in all programs affecting First Australian Peoples the principle of subsidiarity or self-determination is embedded, making sure that decisions are made by the people that are affected by them.**
- 2. We request that Caritas Australia recognises publicly that Caritas Australia works and operates on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands.**
 - Acknowledgements at every meeting
 - Getting permits to go on lands
 - Every publication has an acknowledgement at the beginning
 - Training up Diocesan Directors
 - Genuine respect for the land, working within cultural protocols (different for different areas)
- 3. We expect that Caritas Australia will work in respectful partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and friends, learning and incorporating their values and ways of working.**

- Not having fixed timeframes
 - Flexible methodologies and reporting, not just a written report
 - Continuity across time
 - Evidence of true accompaniment
 - Being with, time, face-to-face with partners
 - Time with partners, not always about an agenda
 - Respectful exit strategies (at least 2 years)
 - Respect of cultural practice and protocols
 - Cultural competencies
- 4. We encourage Caritas Australia to incorporate and respect Indigenous ways of working in all of its programs, nationally and internationally.**
 - Board and governance sharing commitment to partners
 - Protecting financial support to the First Australians program
 - Everyone in the organisation sees its value
 - Cross-cultural competency activities, exchange, help volunteer at partners events
 - Cross-agency representation at First Australian Program partners meeting – staff, National Council, Bishops
 - 5. We expect that Caritas Australia will work with each of its First Australian partners to develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous ways of working that is relevant to those partners' circumstances.**
 - Annual/ more regular partners meetings
 - Caritas Australia visit to partners

- 6. We encourage Caritas Australia to recognise and value the reciprocal exchange that occurs with its relationships with First Australian partners and communities.**
 - Annual/regular partners meetings: recognising value of being in community and need for cost efficiency
 - Sharing ideas – such as the Baabayn child protection video
- 7. We request that Caritas Australia and the First Australian program team establish regular opportunities to be informed and educated by partners on issues relevant to First Australians.**
 - Multiple linkages and layers of connections between organisations
 - Sharing/Updating on achievements
 - Social media as a tool for updates (later discussed a regular First Australian partners newsletter)
 - Regional opportunities
- 8. We support Caritas Australia in working with, listening to and supporting connections between First Australian partners into the future.**
 - Elders sharing wisdom, young ones learning
 - Reporting templates – more clarity, better story telling

+ You lived your lives in spiritual closeness to the land, with its animals, birds, fishes, waterholes, rivers, hills and mountains. You did not spoil the land, use it up, exhaust it, and then walk away from it. You realised that your land was related to the source of life.

You have lived in this land and fashioned a culture that endures to this day. And during all this time, the spirit of God has been with you.

- St. John Paul II's address to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in 1986

Aboriginal Carbon Foundation uses savanna burning practices to maintain traditional land management and cultural practices. Photo: Richard Wainwright.

**AS YOU TAKE YOUR NEXT STEPS
REMEMBER THE FIRST PEOPLE
WHO WALKED THIS LAND**

The best people to
make decisions are
those who are most
affected by them.

