



aras
aged rights advocacy service inc.

Reconciliation
Action Plan
July 2022 - July 2023


RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT



Acknowledgement of Country

ARAS acknowledges the Adelaide Plains as the traditional land of the Kurna people and we pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with their country and the continuing importance to the Kurna people today. We extend our respect to Traditional Owner groups of South Australia and all First Nations People of Australia.

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About our artwork

Title: Walking with



The artwork reflects the ethos of ARAS and the belief that 'we work with you; we listen to you, and you make the decisions.'

The concentric circle in the middle with the U-shaped symbols shows people moving within, not being listened to or heard, and the confused and frustrated state when you feel like you are going round and round in circles.

The journey lines moving out from the concentric circles show the various avenues or journeys you can move through, which are shown as people moving in one clear direction toward a safe base, to the people symbols representing ARAS and the Advocates. The U-shaped symbols of the Advocates are all holding a spear and shield, showing the protection and support that ARAS provides. The red ochres and greens represent the colours of the ARAS logo and the commitment that ARAS has to support the Aboriginal communities through valuing individuals, culture and identity.

About the Artist



Sasha Hill is a Yamatji/Noongar woman living and working on Kurna Yerta. Sasha's experiences of collecting, sitting and learning on the country shape the visual stories that she transmits in her work. Painting from a young age, she was taught by staunch Aboriginal women, and this learning continues to resonate every time she paints.

Sasha's work is characterised by a mix of ochres and bright pops of colour, with heavy dot and symbol work. Sasha is also a mother of two and a social worker, and she draws on both roles when painting —incorporating Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing in her art therapy practice and parenting.

Our vision for reconciliation

ARAS is committed to reconciliation with First Nations peoples and relationships, respect and opportunities are at the core of our commitment. Our vision is a future where the cultural histories, heritage and traditions of First Nations peoples are recognised and honoured. We envisage all Australians respecting and embracing Elders for the wisdom and knowledge they hold and share, and supporting emerging leaders in local communities.

We look forward to seeing our staff grow through their experiences of the ARAS reconciliation journey. Through client engagement, training and development and community activities, we will broaden the capacity and quality of our service delivery.

All staff are excited to begin this journey together.

Message from our RAP Champion

Anne Burgess AM



As the Chairperson of the Board of ARAS, Chair of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Reference Group (RRG) and the RAP Champion, I am pleased to present Aged Rights Advocacy Service's inaugural RAP 2022-2023. It presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on our progress to date and where we need to focus to keep contributing to meaningful change for South Australia's elders and the community.

Our work in developing this RAP will enable us to build the right foundations to continue our vision to support our communities, demonstrate respect for First Nations peoples and assist in embedding positive and sustainable cultural change.

It is our responsibility to ensure we understand and embrace the cultural histories, embed a rights based approach and keep striving to increase appreciation, respect, and understanding amongst the broader community and in every relationship we establish.

In this RAP, we have set out the commitments, targets and service initiatives we will undertake over the next year, with the endorsement of Reconciliation Australia.

Message from our Chief Executive

Carolanne Barkla



I am delighted to support the launch of Aged Rights Advocacy Service's RAP 2022-2023. Our vision for reconciliation remains aligned to our Purpose, Vision and Values as an organisation.

We have outlined our plans to engage and connect with our customers and communities to fulfil our vision of educating our communities, demonstrating respect for First Nations peoples and embedding positive cultural change.

Over the past years, it has been encouraging to see ARAS continue to grow its support to elders and positively engage with the broader communities of South Australia.

Since 2015, we have had great success with the annual Intergenerational gathering of First Nations Elders and youth through sharing of knowledge and experiences to identify and address elder abuse. The gatherings are also an opportunity to share culture and guidance and build trusted relationships through respectful conversations, and to learn from Stolen Generations through their stories and guidance.

We anticipate supporting NAIDOC Week events, always acknowledging First Nations peoples in our meetings and events, developing cultural awareness for all staff, and designing our RAP guidelines to educate and inform our people.

We welcome the challenges of this plan and anticipate a positive journey.

Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO

Karen Mundine



Reconciliation Australia welcomes Aged Rights Advocacy Service to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Aged Rights Advocacy Service joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types— Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Aged Rights Advocacy Service to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Aged Rights Advocacy Service, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

About ARAS

ARAS is a not-for-profit, independent and state-wide organisation which has been providing free advocacy support, information and education to older South Australians since 1990.

The Chris Ronald's report 'Residents' rights in nursing homes and hostels', commissioned by the Commonwealth Government in 1989, brought about the implementation of advocacy services across the country under the government's User Rights strategy. Based on those rights, ARAS was established in 1990 with two Advocates, and now employs 32 staff, including one Aboriginal staff member in the role of Aboriginal Advocate. ARAS provides services through its main office in Dulwich and outlets in Victor Harbor and Nuriootpa.

ARAS provides support to older people (or their representatives) who are living in residential aged care or a retirement village, receiving Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) or Home Care Package (HCP) services, or at risk of, or experiencing abuse from family or friends. ARAS is participating in the Aged Care System Navigator Trial, which helps older people access aged care services through My Aged Care.

After identifying needs and ways First Nations peoples receiving aged care services could be supported to exercise their rights and increase their involvement in decision-making processes affecting their lives, ARAS introduced a First Nations Advocacy and information service in 2002. We now have a specialist Aboriginal Advocate who provides culturally safe support and the service has grown to include the annual Intergenerational gathering of First Nations Elders and youth. The gathering, which is delivered in partnership with First Nations organisations and the Safeguards for Ageing Well Program, delivers four key messages - how to stay healthy, stay connected, stay active, and plan for the future

Purpose statement: To encourage and support older people and community to uphold the rights of older people through information, education, advocacy and personal empowerment

Vision: A community in which all older people are valued and respected

Values: Integrity, inclusiveness, justice, respect

Funding: ARAS is funded by the Department of Health, National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) – an Australian Government initiative, Office for Ageing Well, SA Health and Council On The Ageing (COTA) Australia. ARAS is the South Australian member of the Commonwealth-funded Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), which delivers NACAP.

Our RAP Reference Group

In October 2021, our RAP Reference Group (RRG) was formed to examine and explore the ways in which ARAS engages and provide services to First Nations peoples. We registered with Reconciliation Australia soon after and commenced the journey of reconciliation with an enthusiastic group.

Our RRG reports to the Board and was formalised with the development and approval of Terms of Reference. The involvement of our ARAS leaders has been crucial in promoting collaboration and resourcing the development, roll out and execution of the plan.

RRG members are:

- Anne Burgess AM – RAP Champion, RRG Chair and ARAS Board Chair
- Alex Houthuysen – First Nations community representative, ARAS Board member
- Lyndon Prior – ARAS employee, Corporate Services Manager
- Julie Karidis – ARAS employee, Aboriginal Advocate
- Sarah Nicholas – ARAS employee, Advocate
- Sakina Vohra – ARAS employee, Communications and Education Coordinator

The group's focus has been on developing the plan and associated tools that will ultimately enable ARAS to deliver on the goals, objectives and targets in the plan.

Staff consultation

Staff consultation sessions on the RAP were included in weekly and monthly staff meetings and there were numerous other opportunities provided for staff to provide feedback on the RAP and to join the RRG.

Our RAP

The development of a RAP was identified by the ARAS Board and management as central to our culture as an organisation and is in our Strategic Plan.

As a community organisation advocating for the rights of older people, ARAS has a strong history of diversity and inclusion and holds dear its corporate values of Integrity, Inclusiveness, Justice and Respect. The RAP journey will demonstrate and underpin our commitment to these values.

We want our RAP journey to be about engaging with First Nations peoples and listening to what is important to them in the way we deliver our services. We want to increase the opportunities for First Nations peoples to work for ARAS and First Nations organisations to do business with us and we want to develop the networks that can make these things possible.

We are proud that we have already taken a few steps in our journey to reconciliation. We've printed the Acknowledgment of Country on a wall in our boardroom, displayed First Nations flags on the door of all our offices, included Acknowledgement of Country in our emails and website, and continued development and investment in First Nations resources. In addition, all staff and Board members have undertaken the ANZ Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training, which is part of the new staff orientation, and we have made the Wel2Country app available to all staff.

“It is positive to see ARAS making this commitment to build their cultural understanding and expand their reach across the diverse communities of South Australia. Sharing the responsibility of servicing First Nations Elders with my colleagues allows me the opportunity to support their passion and dedication to reconciliation,” says Julie Karidis, First Nations Advocate at ARAS.

This is our inaugural Reflect RAP, and we acknowledge we have much to learn. We are fortunate to have Mr Alex Houthuysen-Hill, a proud First Nations man from the Yamatji Nation of the Pilbara region of Western Australia, on our RRG. He brings his knowledge and insight into First Nations cultures and the local issues faced by our First Nations community, and we are grateful for his ongoing commitment to our RAP.

The development of this RAP is driven by the Board Chair and supported by the Chief Executive, the Corporate Services Manager and ARAS staff and will positively impact and influence the way ARAS does business.

Wish us well on our journey!

Partnerships/current activities

ARAS continues to build on its established respectful relationships with First Nations organisations in diverse communities and groups across South Australia. Through these relationships, we are able to consult with and listen to the voices of those communities and tailor our approach to ensure inclusive and responsive delivery of our services.

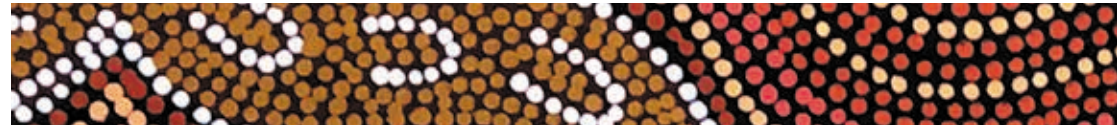
Currently, ARAS delivers education sessions to metro, regional and remote First Nations communities with an intergenerational gathering organised annually. Our Aboriginal Advocacy team will regularly consult with First Nations communities to further develop our engagement and education programs.

ARAS will continue its commitment to recruit for identified roles to ensure expertise and experience within the organisation and ensure those identified roles are provided with ongoing professional development to ensure career progression in all areas of ARAS, not only in identified roles.

Our list of Partnerships includes those organisations where collaboration exists and/or where the potential for collaboration exists.



Relationships



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations	1.1 Identify current and potential First Nations stakeholders and organisations within South Australia	July 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
	1.2 Research, develop, circulate and finalise a First Nations Engagement policy	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff	May 2023	Communication and Education Coordinator
	2.2 Meet with staff to share ideas and information, including staff presentation on significant First Nations dates, which includes Sorry Day and NRW and provide links to staff on NRW resources to encourage self-learning.	May, June 2023	Communication and Education Coordinator
	2.3 Facilitate a reflection of experience in staff monthly meetings by staff who have attended NRW events.	June 2023	Aboriginal Advocate
	2.4 Encourage and support Board and staff to recognise, celebrate and participate in at least one external NRW event, including reconciliation breakfast, walk of awareness, western reconciliation event and/or an information stall at the family fun day.	May, June 2023	Chief Executive
	2.5 RRG members to recognise, celebrate and participate in at least one external NRW event, including reconciliation breakfast, walk of awareness, western reconciliation event and/or an information stall at the family fun day	May, June 2023	Chief Executive
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff	Aug 2022	Chief Executive
	3.2 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Aug 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	3.3 Identify organisations who have a RAP and/or other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Sept 2022	Communication and Education Coordinator
	3.4 Engage with aged rights advocacy organisations across Australia to learn from their reconciliation journey	Aug 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	3.5 Deliver ongoing informal education sessions by Aboriginal staff on current and significant events and issues affecting First Nations people.	July 2022	Communication and Education Coordinator
	3.6 Develop a knowledge hub with First Nations resources and relevant contacts.	July 2022	Communication and Education Coordinator
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	4.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	Sept 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions as they pertain to perspectives and future needs of First Nations peoples	July 2023	Corporate Services Manager



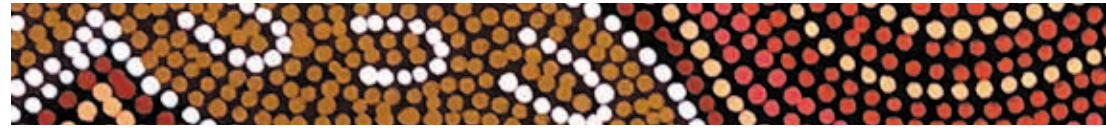
Respect



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within ARAS via survey tool or face-to-face discussion or interviews	Oct 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	5.2 Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within ARAS	Oct 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	5.3 Continue to include First Nations cultural education as part of the staff and Board orientation via e.g. ANZ Indigenous Cultural Awareness www.indigenousculturalawareness.anz.com	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	5.4 Build First Nations cultural education program for Board and staff through monthly/bi-monthly information sessions	July 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
	5.5 Embed cultural awareness learning opportunities for employees by accessing cultural awareness training from recognised providers on an annual basis, as part of the staff development day	Aug 2022	Corporate Services Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols	6.1 Through the First Nations engagement policy, we will develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within the ARAS operational area	Sept 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	6.2 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country	July 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
	6.3 Staff to download Wel2Country app to ensure they know what lands they are visiting when giving presentations	Aug 2022	Corporate Services Manager
7. Provide opportunities for staff to build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	7.1 Raise awareness and share information with our staff about the meaning and history of NAIDOC Week (4 – 11 July 2022)	June 2023	Communication and Education Coordinator
	7.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/events/	June 2023	Communication and Education Coordinator
	7.3 RRG members and staff to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2023	Communication and Education Coordinator

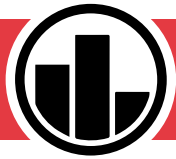


Opportunities



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing recruitment, retention and professional development of First Nations peoples	8.1 Develop a business case for First Nations employment within ARAS.	Oct 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	8.2 Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities which are aligned with business requirements	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
9. Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	9.1 Review and amend Procurement Policy to ensure that First Nations suppliers are also considered, if available, when procuring goods and services	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	9.2 Use Supply Nation registered providers to identify and engage with local First Nations businesses and service providers when procuring goods and service, subject to commercial viability	Aug 2022	Business Support Coordinator
10. Improve engagement and service delivery to First Nations peoples	10.1 Continue to promote the First Nations Advocacy and information service with targeted First Nations community groups	Review progress Dec 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
	10.2 Increase the number of First Nations clients through increased engagement with First Nations organisations	Review progress Dec 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
	10.3 Use a targeted approach through a visitation program to rural and remote First Nations communities by Aboriginal and non-Indigenous staff.	Aug 2022	Aboriginal Advocate
11. Decrease instances of First Nations elder abuse	11.1 Educate ARAS staff on cultural complexities faced by First Nations peoples; including (but not limited to) discussions during monthly staff meetings, where Aboriginal staff deliver information on current First Nations issues, and address Q&A.	Review Jan 2023	Aboriginal Advocate
	11.2 Explore how ARAS can address and support prevention of elder abuse by delivering education sessions for First Nations communities.	July 2022	Aboriginal Advocate



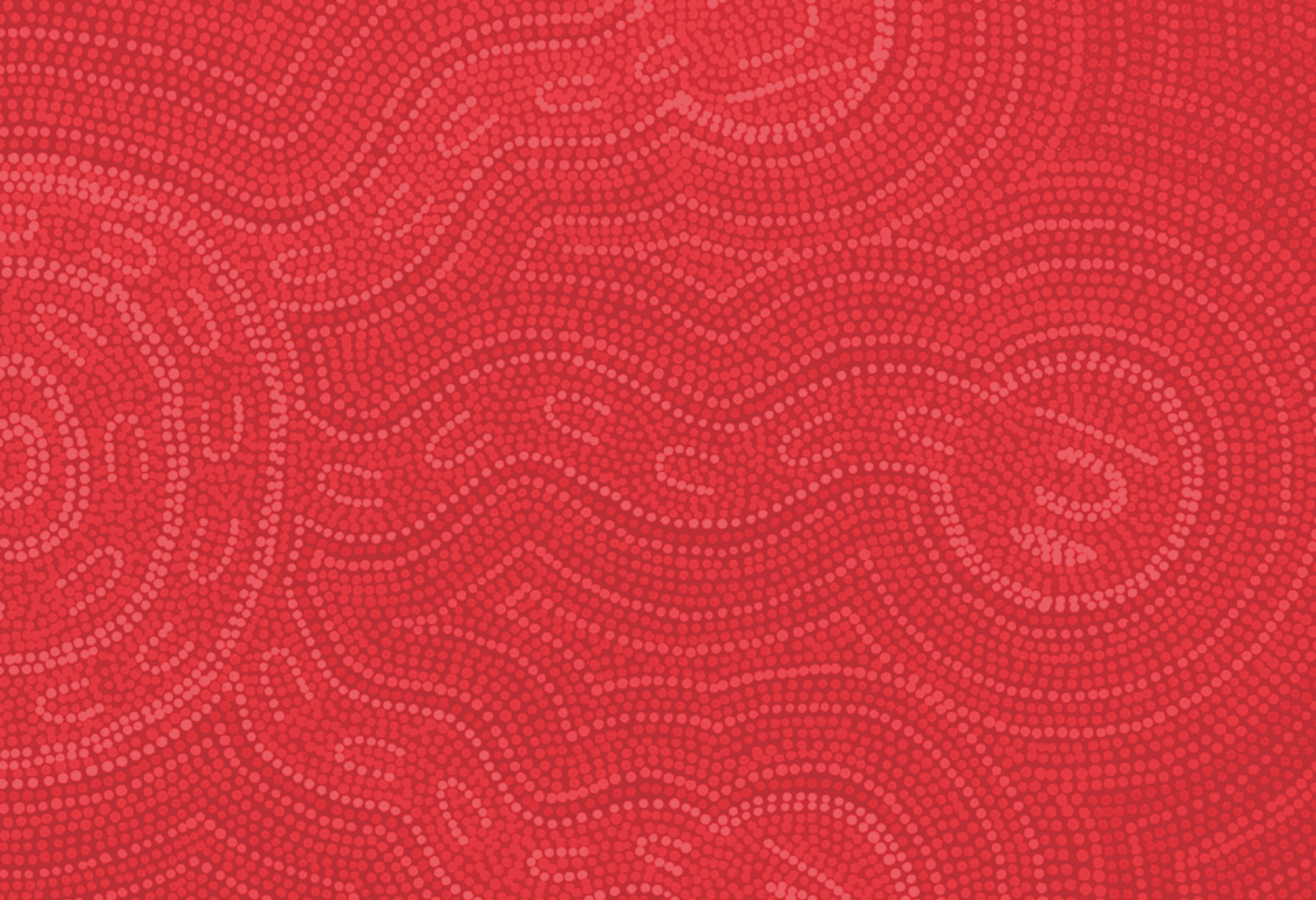


Governance



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12. Establish and maintain an effective RRG to drive governance of the RAP	12.1 Maintain membership of the RRG to govern RAP implementation	Review Jan 2023	Corporate Services Manager
	12.2 Conduct a review of Terms of Reference for the RRG	Oct 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	12.3 Maintain First Nations representation on the RRG, including a Board member and a staff representative	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
13. Provide appropriate support for the effective implementation of RAP commitments	13.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation via the annual budget	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	13.2 Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments via regular meetings and reports to Board and RRG	Oct 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	13.3 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	July 2022	Corporate Services Manager
	13.4 Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally	Oct 2022	RAP Champion, ARAS Board
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	14.1 Develop Quarterly reports to review, reflect and plan for the ongoing delivery of RAP	Sept 2022	Corporate Services Manager
		Dec 2022	
		March 2022	
		June 2022	
14.2 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	Deadline 30 Sept annually	Corporate Services Manager	
14.3 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 annually	Communication and Education Coordinator	
14.4 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire	1 Aug annually	Communication and Education Coordinator	
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	15.1 Reflect within the RRG to identify challenges and inform our future RAP	Feb 2023	Corporate Services Manager
	15.2 Register on Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	May 2023	Corporate Services Manager







For Public RAP Enquiries:

Corporate Services Manager

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