



OFFICE OF SPORT AND VENUES NSW

# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

September 2021 – September 2023

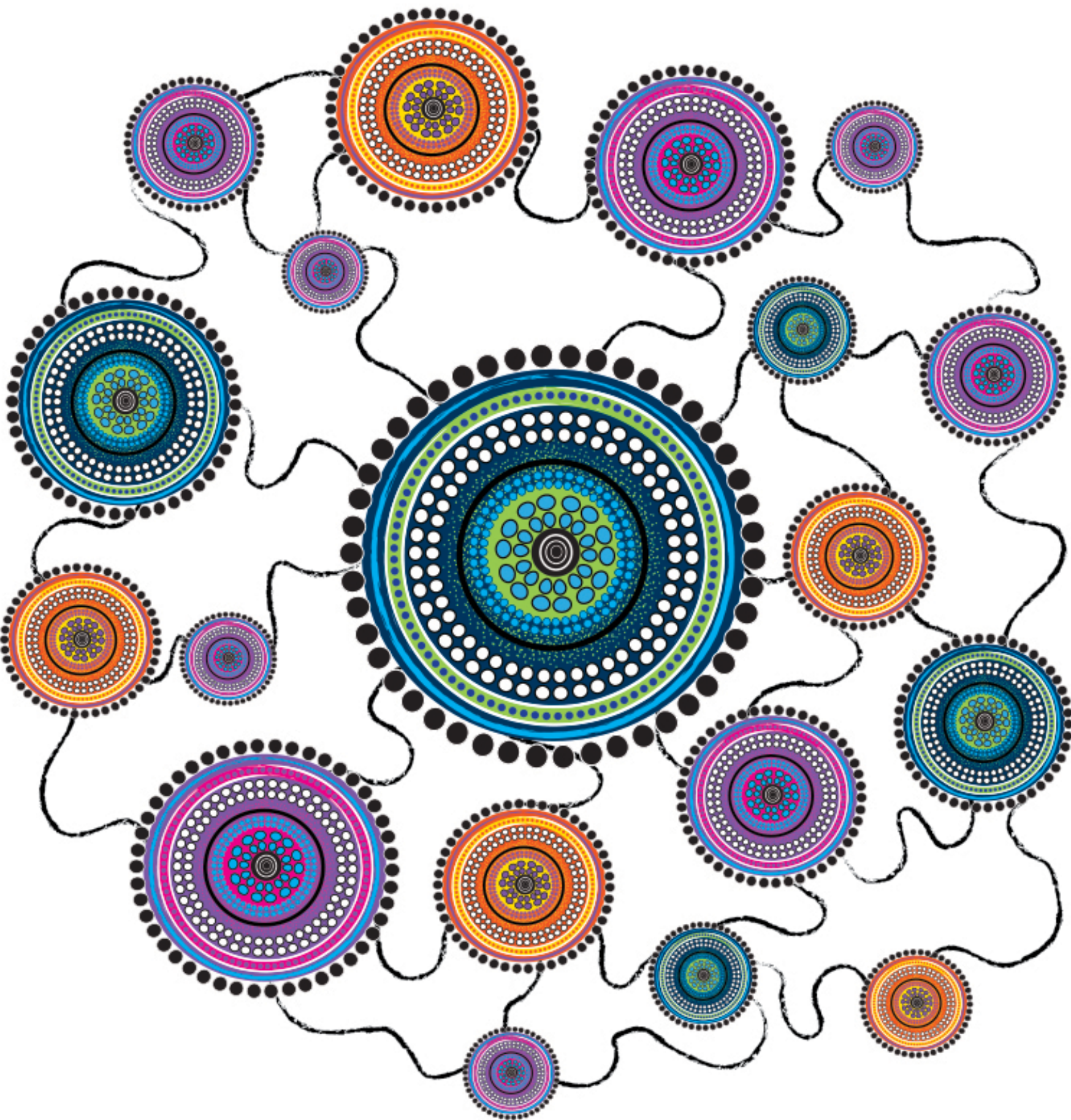


# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

**The Office of Sport and Venues  
NSW would like to acknowledge  
and pay respects to the Traditional  
Custodians of our land, Aboriginal  
people of NSW.**

Acknowledgement and thanks also to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff; and the RAP Advisory Committee members on the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan.





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# ABOUT THE ARTIST



Photo by Daniel Kukec

## Jasmine Sarin

I am a proud Kamilaroi and Jerrinja woman from NSW. I grew up predominantly on the South Coast in Nowra (Jerrinja and Yuin country) and Wollongong (Dharawal country) but have country influences from Coonabarabran in Central West NSW (Kamilaroi country). I have worked most of my life around the great Eora (particularly Gadigal and Dharug land) and currently reside in Spring Farm on Dharawal country. I am a self-taught visual artist and graphic designer. My artwork tells the story of my experiences growing up and my ongoing journey in this world. This allows me to bring contemporary methods and concepts to the oldest culture on earth. I pay my respects to my Elders both past and present and acknowledge that the land on which we all live, work and play was, is and always will be Aboriginal land.



## ARTWORK

### “Jennebe”

*Gadigal word for laughter*

This artwork reflects the importance of sport and physical activity in community. The love of sport brings tens of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples together to reconnect, spectate, play, coach and just enjoy the love of the game. Not only has the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in sport been a game changer across many codes, it has also led to the spotlighting of cultural and political issues that has seen many changes in this State and country. Sport has always been a major social event in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and continues to play a greater role in the ongoing recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

### Artwork description

This artwork highlights the coming together of many different communities for sport. Each circle is a representation of both team and community. Each concentric circle is slightly different to reflect different people, skills, and experiences. All the circles are connected in some way. Connection is important to ensure we stay strong and healthy, both individually and as a community. The colours are based predominantly on the Office of Sport’s primary and secondary colour palettes, which gave inspiration for the sunset fade in the background. The black u-shapes represent people, particularly, Elders. The Elders watch over the event and are bounded by lines of dots to signify the long histories and importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in sport.





## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVES

***Our community lives, works, plays and enjoys their sport and active recreation on the lands of the oldest continuing civilisation and culture known to humanity – that of our Nation's First Peoples.***

Our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan represents the Office of Sport and Venue NSW's vision for the future of reconciliation by paying respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acknowledging past and ongoing disadvantage and injustices.

Our vision to respect our past, create opportunities and build an inclusive future is reflected throughout this plan. We acknowledge the strength, resilience and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also understand the importance of creating opportunities for our employees to better understand our country's shared history, as we plan and work – both collectively and individually – towards a future that values and incorporates the unique perspectives and experiences of our First Nations Peoples.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey that begins with the acknowledgment of the enduring histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures by non-Aboriginal Australia. Reconciliation is fostered by a universal understanding and respect of the deep significance of this culture and its people, its seamless connection to this land, and to each other. Reconciliation is achieved by real action, in placing at the very foundation of Australian identity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and everlasting cultures, which underpins us as Australians.

Respecting and listening to a diverse range of thoughts and opinions is critical in ensuring we make better decisions, drive innovation and creativity, and have the capability to deliver our vision for the sport and active recreation sector, our venues and events. We leverage our venues, our partnerships, our shared sporting history and our rich event calendar to celebrate and continue the contribution of our First Nations Peoples.

The input of our Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Committee and Aboriginal Staff Network has helped shape our first Reconciliation Action Plan. With our collective staff's ongoing support, we will continue to embed an inclusive, collaborative and respectful culture at the Office of Sport and Venues NSW in everything we do.

We will champion, support and oversee the implementation of the plan and share in its wonderful initiatives.

**Karen Jones**

Chief Executive, Office of Sport

**Kerrie Mather**

Chief Executive Officer, Venues NSW



## A MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia commends Office of Sport and Venues NSW 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 Office of Sport and Venues NSW 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, Office of Sport and Venues NSW 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 over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Office of Sport and Venues NSW 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 Office of Sport and Venues NSW'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 Office of Sport and Venues NSW 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

The Office of Sport (the Office) and Venues NSW (VNSW) recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and acknowledge their continuing spiritual, cultural, social and economic connection to our lands and waters.

Our Vision for Reconciliation is **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.**

The development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) supports our mission for the Office and VNSW to work together to improve social, health and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in NSW.

## WE WILL:

- Use sport and active recreation as a vehicle to foster stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and connect with their communities
- Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create more active, healthier communities
- Provide leadership and support, alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, toward greater engagement, retention, achievement and respect within the sport and active recreation sector
- Provide opportunities to support improved economic and social outcomes through promoting equity in employment and supplier diversity
- Align our calendar of major live sport, entertainment and community events to the goals of the RAP
- Be a lead agency of reconciliation, through sound policy, advocacy and pathways of greater understanding, implementation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural, social and economic advancement
- Highlight the unique contribution of First Nations Peoples to sport, to our venues, our organisations and the history of Australian sport.

The Office and VNSW work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and we harness the power of sport and active recreation as a vehicle for change. This is the first RAP for our organisations and our Vision and Mission statements, while aspirational, will not be achieved by the completion of this Reconciliation Action Plan. However, by focusing on our internal policies and processes we will begin on the path to ensuring that we offer a culturally safe place for our staff and the people of NSW. The internal changes we make and the opportunities we have identified through our RAP will bring us towards reconciliation by building awareness, changing the way we do business and refining our policies and procedures to be more inclusive.





# OUR BUSINESS

## OFFICE OF SPORT

The Office of Sport (the Office) sits within the Stronger Communities Cluster. It is the lead NSW Government agency for sport and active recreation and our mission is Building Active Communities. Our role is to provide the people of NSW with the leadership, policies, programs, funding and infrastructure to maximise the social, health and economic benefits realised through sport and active recreation.

The work of the Office is spread across NSW, with ten Sport and Recreation Centres, five Olympic Sport Venues and regional offices throughout the state.

Globally, and here in NSW, the sports landscape has changed. Once perceived as strictly structured and competitive, there is an increasing emphasis on flexible, less formal and less competitive options that are not defined by seasons. While organised sport will always be a focus, we are working to broaden our scope to include all forms of sport and active recreation. Whether it is doing archery at one of our Sport and Recreation Centres or riding with friends, we want everyone in NSW to have the opportunity to be physically active.

The Office works to promote inclusiveness so everyone can participate in sport and active recreation regardless of age, ability, gender or background. We work with our partners in State Sporting Organisations (SSOs) and State Sporting Organisations for people with Disability (SSODs) to drive aligned programs and pathways. Fit-for-purpose facilities and infrastructure are vital to increase participation in sport and active recreation. The Office has an infrastructure network including our Sport and Recreation Centres, Regional Offices and four international standard sporting venues. We play an important role in planning, coordinating and optimising sport and active recreation infrastructure in the public’s best interest.

Our sector has over 10,000 sport and active recreation providers, and a workforce of close to 500,000 in paid and voluntary roles who deliver valued services to millions of people. The Office has a key role in managing government investments, coordinating partnerships and contributing to a broad range of government priorities to create greater benefits for everybody in NSW. Throughout the RAP references to “sport” include “active recreation”.

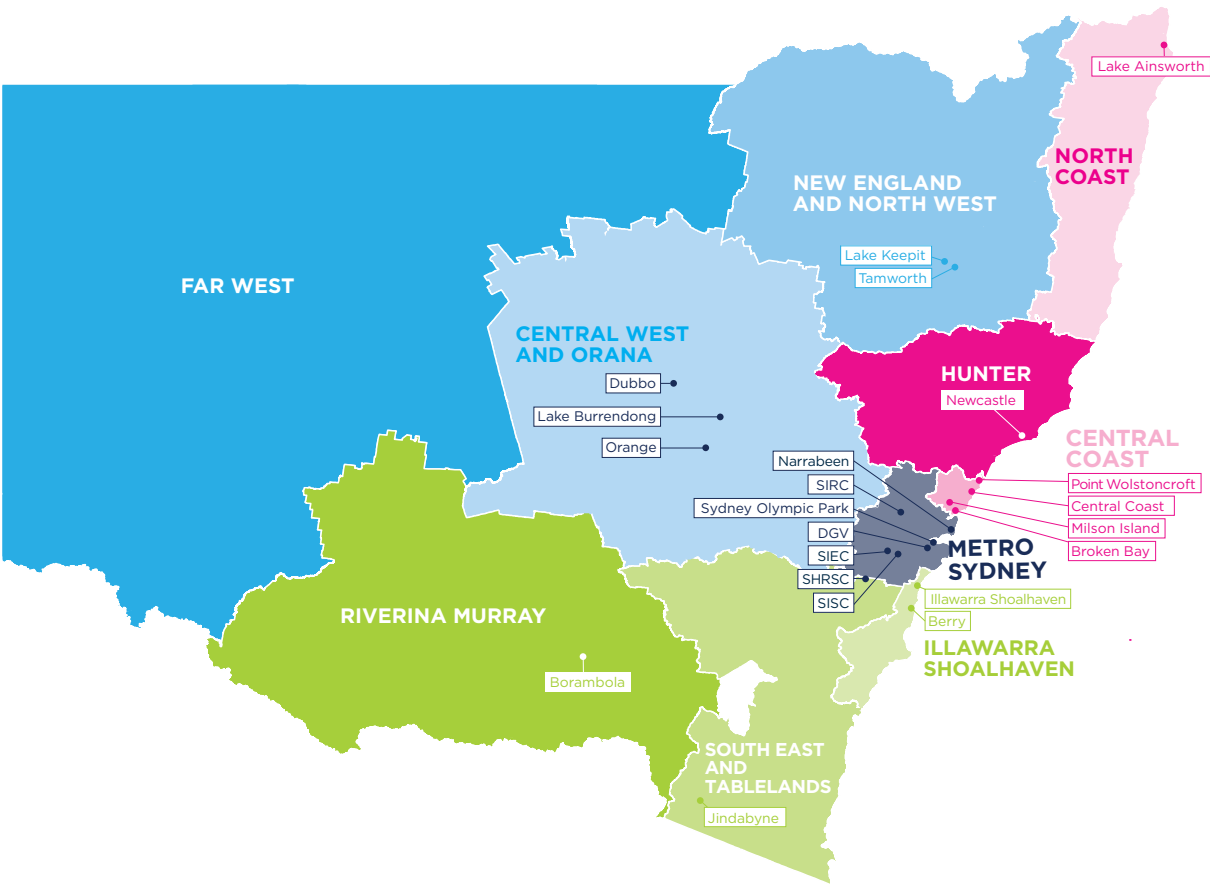
OFFICE OF SPORT STAFF

402

Staff identifying as Aboriginal

8

# OUR LOCATIONS



Western cluster	Southern cluster	Greater Sydney	Northern cluster
<b>NEW ENGLAND AND NORTH WEST</b> Lake Keepit Sport and Recreation Centre Tamworth Regional Office <b>CENTRAL WEST AND ORANA</b> Lake Burrendong Sport and Recreation Centre Orange Regional Office Dubbo Regional Office <b>FAR WEST</b> Far West Academy of Sport	<b>ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN</b> Berry Sport and Recreation Centre <b>Wollongong</b> Regional Office <b>SOUTH EAST AND TABLELANDS</b> Jindabyne Sport and Recreation Centre South East Sports Academy <b>RIVERINA MURRAY</b> Borambola Sport and Recreation Centre Wagga Wagga Regional Office	Narrabeen Sport and Recreation Centre  Sydney International Regatta Centre Sydney International Equestrian Centre Sydney International Shooting Centre Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex Dunc Gray Velodrome	<b>CENTRAL COAST</b> Milson Island Sport and Recreation Centre Broken Bay Sport and Recreation Centre Point Wolstoncroft Sport and Recreation Centre Central Coast Regional Office <b>HUNTER</b> Newcastle Regional Office <b>NORTH COAST</b> Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreation Centre North Coast Regional Office



# OUR BUSINESS VENUES NSW

Venues NSW (VNSW) brings together the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and the former VNSW into a single body to manage NSW’s leading sport and entertainment venues. The new organisation’s history begins in the 1850s with the establishment of the Sydney Cricket Ground at Moore Park. Over the more than 160 years since, it hosted many famous events including the Sydney 2000 Olympics, 1938 Empire Games, concerts by international superstars, grand finals, Test and fixtures large and small of every sport or pursuit that has captured the imagination of the people of NSW. Today, Venues NSW aims to create memorable live experiences for NSW fans and attract the biggest and best sporting events to its venues to drive the economic, cultural and community benefits that they bring.

<b>VENUES NSW STAFF</b>	<b>143</b>
Staff identifying as Aboriginal	5

# OUR LOCATIONS







“ If you want to make a difference, get involved. ”

Gerald Bradshaw

## OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)

Sport is an important element within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It contributes to community identity and cohesion as well as being a focal point for engagement, and achievement. Sport provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Office and VNSW understand the power of sport in communities – sport can reach and motivate people as well as be a vehicle for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to empower themselves.

Our journey to developing our first RAP began in 2018 after consultations with Aboriginal staff, who between them had over 100 years of experience in the sport and recreation industry. While the discussions and suggestions were wide reaching, a priority recommendation was the development of an Office RAP.

Our Chief Executives, Karen Jones and Kerrie Mather are Champions for the development and implementation of this RAP.

While some national and state sporting bodies have already developed their own RAPs, the Office Executive agreed that a RAP would demonstrate leadership across the sport and active recreation sectors. A RAP also prioritises strategic engagement with key partners to help increase participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in sport and active recreation.

The broad reach of VNSW and its potential influence on thousands of people attending its facilities was recognised early and VNSW was invited to develop a RAP in partnership with the Office. The partnership was continued following the SCGT-VNSW merger to form the new entity.

With a strong motivation for action and a sense of corporate support, the RAP Advisory Committee agreed that the Innovate RAP was the correct RAP for the Office and VNSW. An Innovate RAP is focused on reviewing, testing and refining internal operations and helps us to make the Office and VNSW culturally safe places to work and to advance reconciliation.

Through this journey we will work together to rebuild and retain cultural identity by:

- being inclusive and respectful
- empowering staff to contribute their skills knowledge and experiences
- valuing the unique contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and staff working in Aboriginal communities
- celebrating, and building cultural understanding together
- committing to learning and action.

In doing this we will work more effectively to achieve our vision of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.**



# OUR TEAM

The development of the Office / VNSW RAP is supported by:



**Karen Jones**  
Chief Executive  
Office of Sport



**Kerrie Mather**  
Chief Executive  
Venues NSW



**Celia Murphy**  
Executive Director,  
Policy and Planning  
Office of Sport



**Gary Rake**  
Executive Director,  
Regional Delivery  
Office of Sport



**Joe Achmar**  
Chief Financial  
Officer  
Venues NSW

WORKING GROUP	
<b>Deborah Howard</b> (Chair)	Principal Policy Officer, Policy, Policy and Planning
<b>Anne Jackson</b>	Project Officer, Sector Performance, Policy and Planning
<b>Donna Coady</b>	Project Officer Indigenous, Policy, Policy and Planning
<b>Marcus Morgan</b>	Principal Advisor, Infrastructure, Planning and Delivery, Policy and Planning

ADVISORY COMMITTEE	
<b>Philippa Taylor</b> (Chair)	Director, Policy, Policy and Planning
<b>Andrew Adams</b>	Development Officer Aboriginal, Southern Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Cameron Whalan</b> (to Feb 2020)	Marketing Officer, Communications
<b>Damien Green</b>	Strategic Asset Manager, Venues NSW
<b>Denise Goddard</b>	Principal Project Officer, Human Resources
<b>Gerald Bradshaw</b>	Development Officer Aboriginal, Northern Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Jack Dearden</b>	Senior Project Officer, Strategic Projects, Executive and Ministerial Services
<b>Jason French</b>	Development Officer Aboriginal, Western Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Kristian Hodgson</b>	Manager Procurement, Finance, Procurement and IM&T
<b>Laura Hoy</b>	Program Officer, Western Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Mark Horton</b>	Regional Coordinator, Western Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Melissa Brummell</b>	Project Officer, Venues NSW
<b>Michael Collins</b> (from Feb – Mar 2020)	Manager, Strategic Marketing, Communications
<b>Peter Howland</b>	A/Manager, Delivery and Outreach, Broken Bay Centre
<b>Peter McCue</b>	Principal Policy Officer, Policy, Policy and Planning
<b>Shelley Barlin</b> (from Feb 2020)	Engagement Officer, Active Kids, Policy and Planning
<b>Suzzy Geusher</b>	Planning, Performance and Risk Officer, Venues NSW
<b>Tanya Carabez</b> (from Mar 2020)	Marketing Officer, Marketing and Communications
<b>Teena Reeves</b>	Development Officer Aboriginal, Northern Cluster, Regional Delivery
<b>Zac Auton</b>	Principal Advisor, Infrastructure, Planning and Delivery, Policy and Planning



# OUR CONSULTATION PROCESS

This Reconciliation Action Plan was developed over an 18-month period during which time the RAP Advisory Committee met 14 times. The RAP Working Group was responsible for coordinating the Advisory Committee meetings, minute taking, editing, updating and circulating RAP drafts as well as managing consultation sessions. Both groups had Aboriginal membership, and the Office's Aboriginal Staff Network was invited to give feedback on each new draft of the RAP to ensure that all Aboriginal staff were regularly consulted.

Thirteen on-line consultation sessions were held internally and over 200 Office and VNSW staff attended. This accounts for almost half of the Office and VNSW staff. Staff feedback was also received via the dedicated RAP Mailbox.

A number of external organisations were invited to comment on our draft RAP, and we would like to thank the following organisations for their engagement with this process:

- Local Land Services
- Aboriginal Affairs
- NSW Office of Children's Guardian
- NSW Education Standards Authority
- Southern NSW Local Health District, NSW Health
- NSW Public Service Commission
- Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

Following the establishment of the new VNSW in December 2020, the new entity provided feedback and input to the RAP Working Group and Advisory Committee.

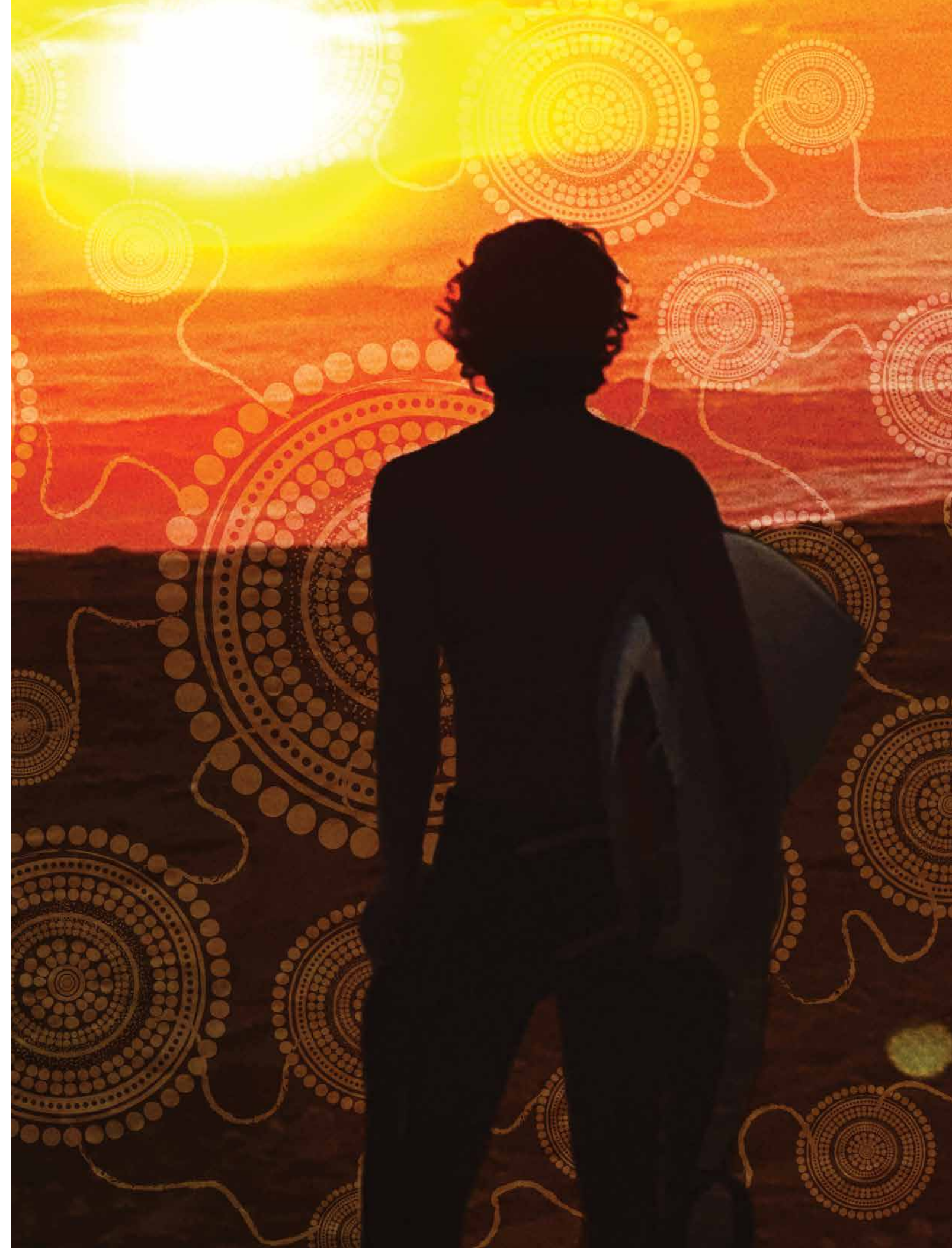
The Advisory Committee and Working Group remained in place until the RAP was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia whereupon it was disbanded. A new team, the Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Team (RAPIT) has been formed. The RAPIT has an Aboriginal Co-Chair and Aboriginal staff in its membership and includes content expert representation from across the organisation.

It is incumbent on each project lead to ensure that there is engagement with our Aboriginal staff through an Aboriginal Working Group representative, or directly through the Aboriginal Staff Network.

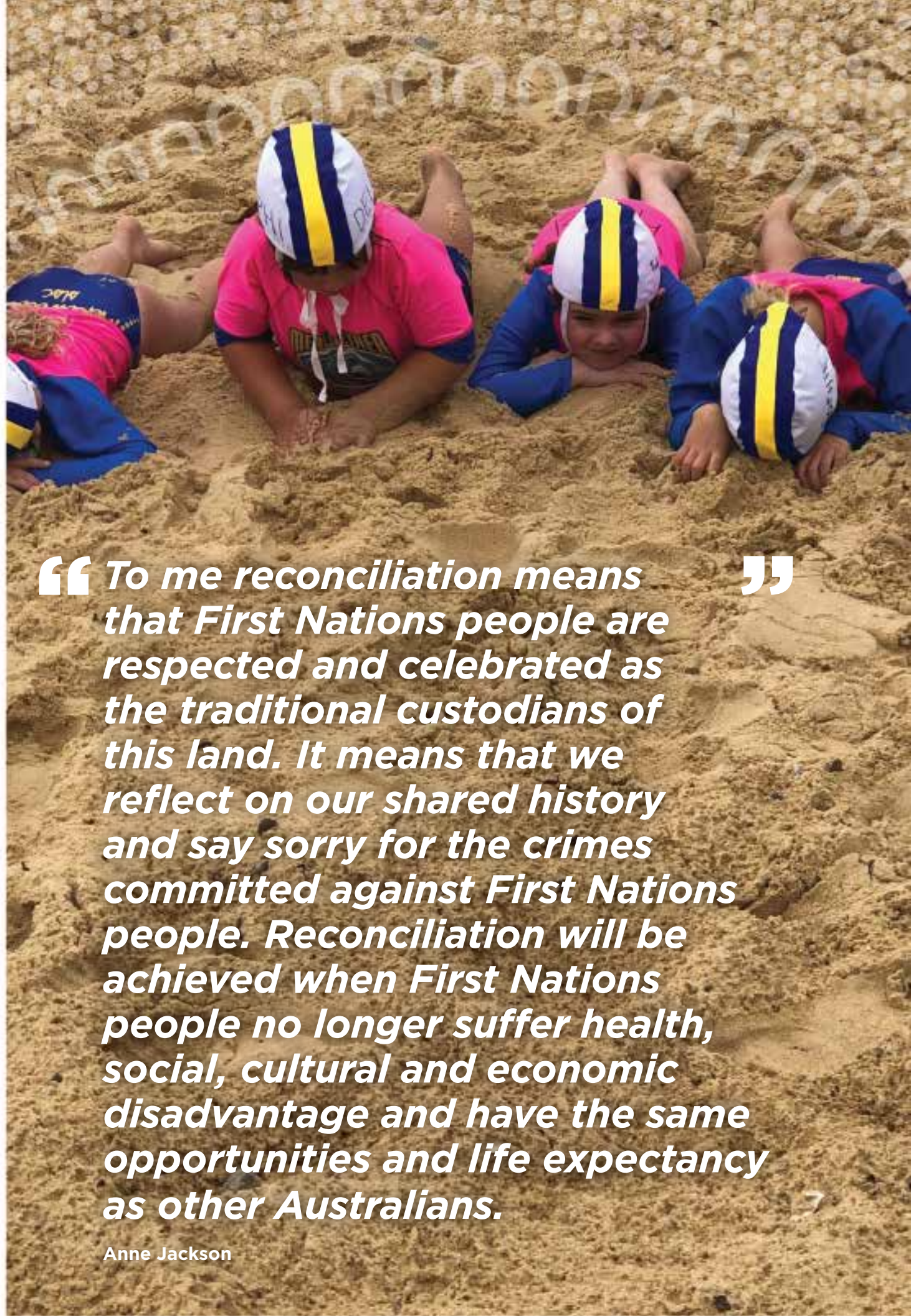
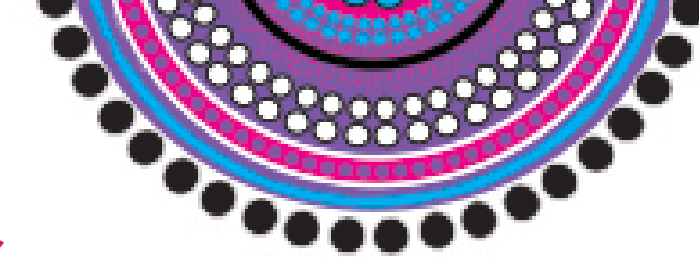
“ To me, reconciliation means acknowledging people of different races, their background, history and culture and more importantly the values and contribution they make to society and the world as a whole.

**Philippa Taylor**

”







***“To me reconciliation means that First Nations people are respected and celebrated as the traditional custodians of this land. It means that we reflect on our shared history and say sorry for the crimes committed against First Nations people. Reconciliation will be achieved when First Nations people no longer suffer health, social, cultural and economic disadvantage and have the same opportunities and life expectancy as other Australians.”***

Anne Jackson

## RELATIONSHIPS

Sport is an important vehicle for building relationships and partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the broader Australian community. Building and deepening these relationships will be how the Office and VNSW will work towards reconciliation.

Experience and research show that it is critical that relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are based on trust, respect and transparency. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may have differing views, knowledge, customs and ways of doing business. Getting to know each other's cultural norms and practices shows respect and builds trust. It is important that the Office and VNSW employees consult with and learn from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and stakeholders.

The Office and VNSW HR policies must align with the RAP's vision for reconciliation, demonstrate inclusion and improve the cultural capability of all staff. Every time training, and community programs are developed or a story shared, staff must always be mindful of building a culture of inclusion, respect, trust and transparency.

**Note:** Input from our Aboriginal staff is critical for each of the Deliverables in the RAP.

It is incumbent on the project lead to ensure that there has been engagement with our Aboriginal staff through an Aboriginal Working Group representative, or directly through the Aboriginal Staff Network.





ACTION (RELATIONSHIPS)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
1 <i>Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations</i>	a. Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stakeholder Engagement Framework The Framework will include agreed guiding principles and processes for ongoing engagement by all Office staff when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, stakeholders and Organisations	Dec 2021 and ongoing	Head of Marketing and Communications	Group General Manager – Communications and Community
	b. Develop a Community Access Policy to provide opportunities for Not for Profit (NFP) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to utilise the Office and VNSW facilities and venues	June 2023	Executive Director Regional Delivery	
	c. Incorporate existing events and fixtures such as the AFL's Marngrook Cup, NRL Indigenous Round, Jack Marsh History Lecture and Bradman Foundation Annual Gala Dinner	June 2023	–	
2 <i>Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</i>	a. Deliver a minimum of one state-based NRW activity annually	May 2022 May 2023	Head of Marketing and Communications	Chief Executive Officer / Group Executive
	b. RAP Implementation Team members to participate in an external NRW event	May 2022 May 2023		
	c. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources, materials and event information to the Office and VNSW staff	May 2022 May 2023		
	d. Promote NRW activities, being held both internally and externally	May 2022 May 2023		
	e. Encourage all staff to attend and participate in NRW activities, both internal and external	May 2022 May 2023		
	f. Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	May 2022 May 2023		



“ NRW and NAIDOC are times to remember, learn and celebrate. They are important for everyone's calendar. ”

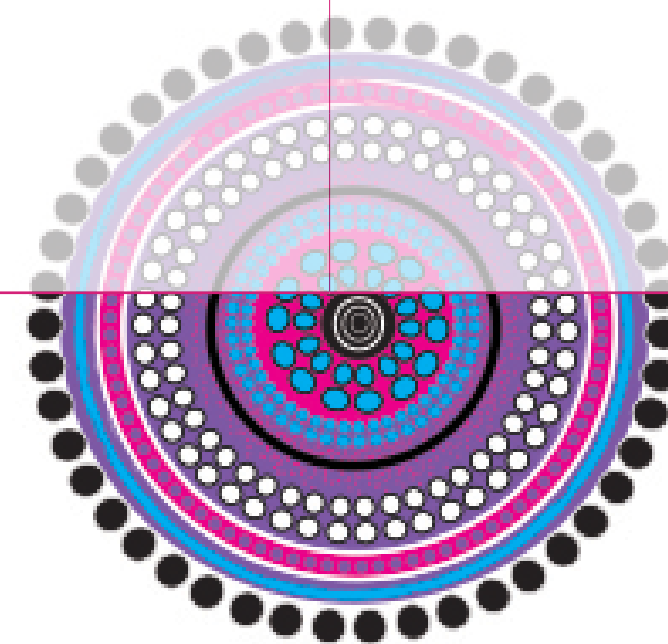
**Phil Heads**



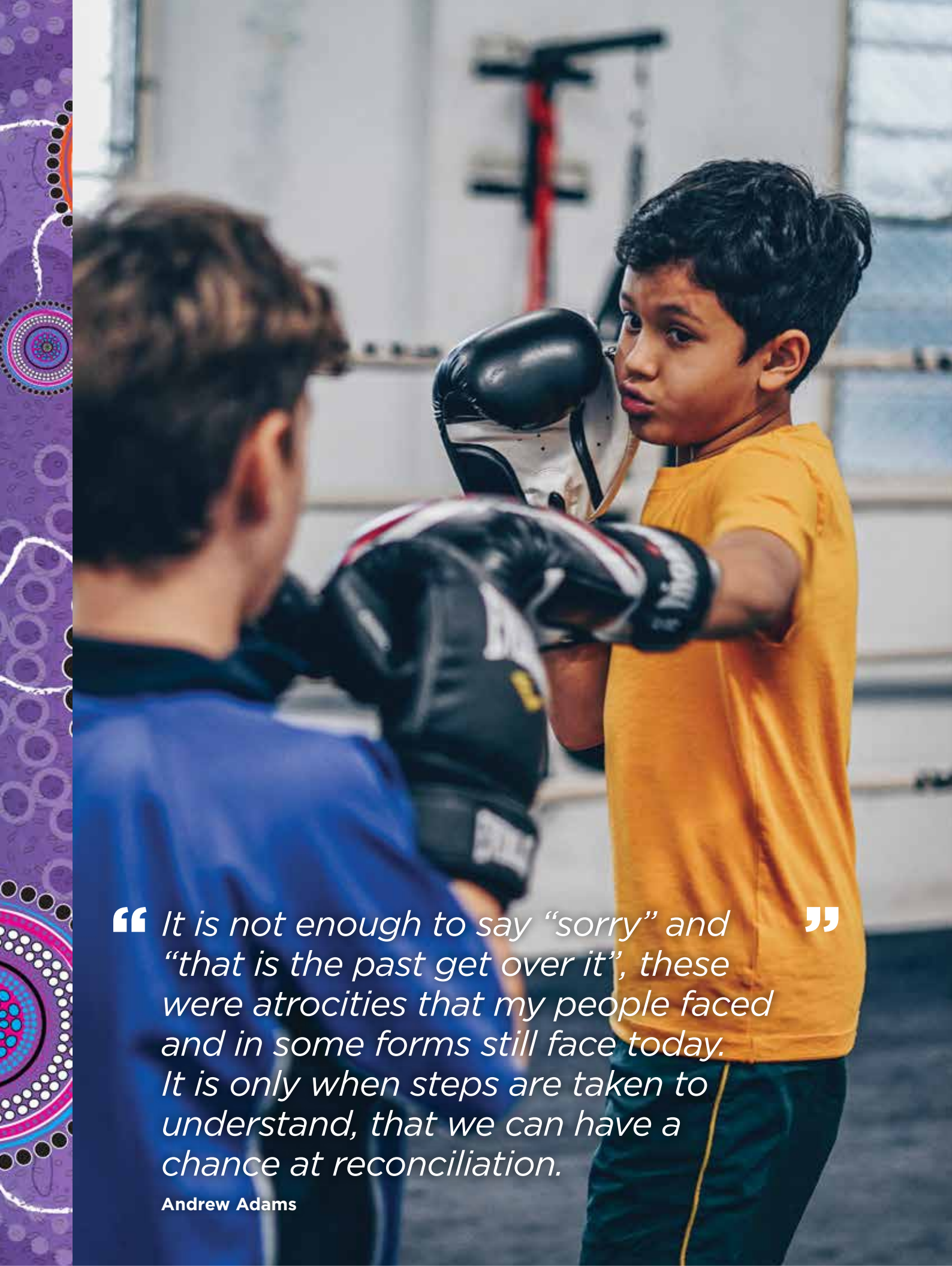
ACTION (RELATIONSHIPS)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
<b>3</b> <i>Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence</i>	a. Communicate our commitment to reconciliation by publishing and promoting the RAP	September 2021	Head of Marketing and Communications	Group General Manager – Communications and Community
	b. Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation	September 2021	Co-Chair(s) RAPIT	
	c. Explore opportunities to positively influence our stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	June 2023		
	d. Collaborate with other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation: • Identify other stakeholders that have a RAP and work with them on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs • Promote Reconciliation programs/activities with stakeholders in the sport and active recreation industry • Promote examples of other sporting organisations who are positively contributing to reconciliation	June 2022  December 2022  June 2023		
	e. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and communities to align and access cultural activity within the sport and active recreation sector	June 2023	Executive Director, Regional Delivery	–
	f. Support state-wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sporting and cultural events	June 2023		Group General Manager – Communications and Community
	g. Maximise reconciliation activities and opportunities by leveraging relationships with home teams, event promoters and sporting codes to deliver collaborative recognition on existing and future event/fixtures	May 2022 May 2023	–	
<b>4</b> <i>Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination</i>	a. Conduct a review of Human Resource policies and procedures to identify discriminatory provisions	May 2022 May 2023	Director, Human Resources	General Manager, Human Resources
	b. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for input on our anti-discrimination policy	May 2022 May 2023		
	c. Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism	May 2022 May 2023		
	d. Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for all staff	May 2022 May 2023		

“ Statewide events that bring communities together are good for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, good for community, and help showcase why Reconciliation is for everyone.

**Gary Rake**







“It is not enough to say “sorry” and “that is the past get over it”, these were atrocities that my people faced and in some forms still face today. It is only when steps are taken to understand, that we can have a chance at reconciliation.”

Andrew Adams

## RESPECT

As the oldest living culture in the world, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history is a major source of identity for our First Nations Peoples.

Understanding this history and learning from First Nation's cultures are the foundations for building respect and there is much for us at the Office and VNSW to learn.

Through appropriate training, resources, and experiences for staff, the Office and VNSW will foster greater awareness and understanding of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

With footprints all over NSW, we have a powerful opportunity to connect with the lands on which our sport and recreation centres, venues and offices are located. By making these connections visible, we show our respect and inclusiveness, as well as educate our staff, clients and visitors of our rich history. The Office and VNSW will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and appropriate agencies to protect and manage artefacts and sites of cultural significance on the land we occupy.

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country are simple ways of showing respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who consider themselves custodians or caretakers of the land. These actions alone in a small way for past injustices and demonstrate our willingness to be inclusive.

We want our staff to understand the history of exclusion and the complexity of barriers that exist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We want to recognise and celebrate the work of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and staff working in Aboriginal communities.

As we continue to learn more, and embed equity and diversity into our organisational culture, we are better able to show respect and model it for others.

**Note: Input from our Aboriginal staff is critical for each of the Deliverables in the RAP.**

**It is incumbent on the project lead to ensure that there has been engagement with our Aboriginal staff through an Aboriginal Working Group representative, or directly through the Aboriginal Staff Network.**



Photo by April Boughton



ACTION (RESPECT)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
<b>5</b> <i>Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning</i>	a. Consult with Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy	June 2022	Director, Human Resources	General Manager - Human Resources
	b. Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs for all Office and VNSW staff	September 2021		
	c. Review and communicate a cultural awareness training strategy	June 2022		
	d. Develop a framework for measuring cultural learning of staff	December 2022		
	e. Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing Directors and above to be trained within 6 months</li> <li>All staff trained within 12 months of the Strategy being developed</li> </ul>	August 2021		
	f. Include cultural capability training within six months of employment for all new staff members	September 2021		
	g. Explore options for staff training that can be delivered by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business	September 2023		
	h. Develop cultural capability of all staff, starting with Executives, Managers and staff whose role entails working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities including training on how to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and unconscious bias	June 2022 – Executive June 2023 – All staff		

“ Reconciliation means working collaboratively to build and genuinely foster respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to understand their history, culture and contribution.

Joe Achmar



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.



ACTION (RESPECT)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
6 <i>Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols</i>	a. Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document including protocols for <i>Welcome to Country</i> and <i>Acknowledgment of Country</i> for the use of the Office staff, venue operators, event deliverers and the sports industry	December 2021	Aboriginal Project Officer, supported by Head of Marketing and Communications and Executive Director, Regional Delivery	Chief Financial Officer Group General Manager - Olympic Park and Regional Venues
	b. Align communication guidelines to reflect cultural protocols	February 2022		
	c. Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including <i>Acknowledgment of Country</i> and <i>Welcome to Country</i>	March 2022		
	d. Include an <i>Acknowledgment of Country</i> or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings	March 2022		
	e. Identify key local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contacts	April 2022		
	f. Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a <i>Welcome to Country</i> or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	August 2023		
	g. Develop a cultural induction for Centre, Venue and Regional staff in consultation with local Community and by a local Elder	June 2022	Director, Human Resources	-
	h. Invite an Office/VNSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff member to every Corporate Induction Day to: • Meet new staff members • Explain the difference and deliver the appropriate Welcome/Acknowledgment to Country to new staff • Outline the work of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff • Talk about the RAP • Explain where to get more information • Outline the role of the Aboriginal Staff Network and explain how and when to access this forum	August 2023		
	i. Commission signage with an <i>Acknowledgement of Country</i> plaque at all sites venues with reference to the specific Nation on which the display is located in consultation with local community	August 2022 (SCG/SFS) June 2023 (VNSW regions) June 2023 (the Office)	Head of Marketing and Communications	Group General Manager – Communications and Community Group General Manager - Olympic Park and Regional Venues

“ *Acknowledgement of Country is such a simple yet powerful way for an organisation to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where the meeting/ event is taking place.* ”

*It shows respect for Aboriginal people and connection to community, land and water, it lets everyone know the organisation takes Reconciliation seriously.*

**Peter McCue**



ACTION (RESPECT)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
7 <i>Protect significant Aboriginal sites and artefacts in line with the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act) and the Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act)</i>	a. Establish contact with the relevant stakeholders toward meeting our obligations with respect to newly discovered and existing Aboriginal sites and artefacts under the NPW Act and the Heritage Act in consideration of Local Lands Councils and Community needs	September 2021 - Broken Bay  December 2021 - Narrabeen	Executive Director, Regional Delivery	Chief Financial Officer  Group General Manager - Olympic Park and Regional Venues
	b. Conduct a review on Centres / Venues to determine what significant sites / artefacts are currently known	December 2021 - Broken Bay  June 2022 - Narrabeen		
	c. Develop a Management Plan to protect and manage newly discovered and existing Aboriginal Places, objects, artefacts and sites under the NPW Act and the Heritage Act at locations in conjunction with the appropriate subject authorities	June 2022 - Broken Bay  December 2022 - Narrabeen		
	d. Communicate our obligations to site managers and train them in the policies and procedures for management of all significant sites and artefacts	December 2022 - Broken Bay  June 2023 - Narrabeen		
	e. Develop policies for meeting our obligations under the NPW and Heritage Acts	June 2023		
8 <i>Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week</i>	a. • Communicate HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week • Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC Week events to all staff	Oct 2021  June 2022 June 2023	Head of Marketing and Communications	Group General Manager – Communications and Community  Group General Manager - Olympic Park and Regional Venues
	b. • RAP Implementation Team members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event • Deliver a minimum of one NAIDOC week activity each year • Showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories in internal communications during NAIDOC week to inspire, celebrate and educate OoS staff • Circulate NAIDOC week resources, material and event information to the Office and VNSW staff	October 2021 July 2022 July 2023		
	c. Encourage our partners in the sport and active recreation industry to celebrate NAIDOC week	June 2022 June 2023	Executive Director, Regional Delivery	

“ Our connection to Country is profound. It is part of us and our history. Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever. ”

Donna Coady







# OPPORTUNITIES

As organisations with a state-wide reach and influence, the Office and VNSW have a unique opportunity to support diversity and inclusion. By implementing policies that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, stakeholder organisations and businesses, we can create opportunities internally as well as in the broader community.

By developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy (AES), we will have a roadmap to improve our recruitment and retention practices to be more inclusive and give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff equal opportunities to develop and thrive.

Establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport and Active Recreation Network, led by our Aboriginal staff and leveraging existing partnerships, will bring together stakeholders and provide a platform to share stories, support each other and learn together as we work to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation on and off the field of play.

We will also leverage our procurement capacity to provide variety, choice, and opportunity through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inclusive protocols guided by the State policy. All our existing grants, strategies and programs will be reviewed to be more inclusive.

With schools, families and corporate groups as core clients at our sport and recreation centres, we have an opportunity to embed culturally appropriate learning into our suite of programs.

**Note:** Input from our Aboriginal staff is critical for each of the Deliverables in the RAP. It is incumbent on the project lead to ensure that there has been engagement with our Aboriginal staff through an Aboriginal working group.

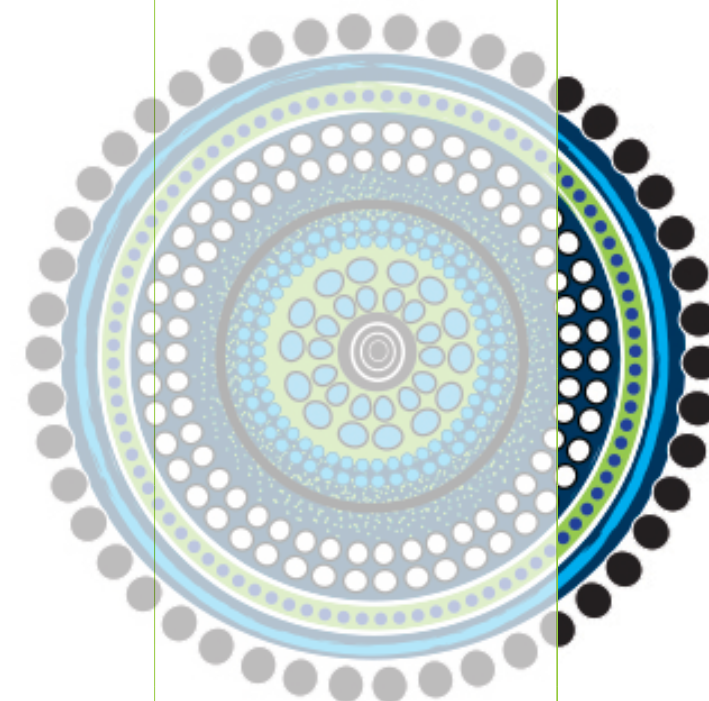


“ The Office of Sport is part of a unique space in Government, being an agency with customers. Other agencies have clients; this compels us to remain nimble, flexible and relevant. ”

Mark Horton



ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
<b>9</b> <i>Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development</i>	<b>a.</b> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult and develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy for staff (in line with the Public Service Commission recommendations) that should as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address current barriers to the recruitment, retention and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (e.g. accessibility of positions at all levels and at a range of locations)</li> <li>• Include reportable KPIs</li> <li>• Identify and expand employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and ensure that all identified positions are filled</li> <li>• Provide professional development opportunities at all levels (e.g. mentoring, traineeships, graduate and leadership programs)</li> </ul>	June 2022	Director, Human Resources	General Manager - Human Resources
	<b>b.</b> Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy	June 2022		
	<b>c.</b> Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce	June 2023		
	<b>d.</b> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace	December 2021		
	<b>e.</b> Review and amend job advertisements (language and placement) to make positions more accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants	September 2023		
	<b>f.</b> Use appropriate language and advertise all roles in Aboriginal media	September 2023		
	<b>g.</b> Review and amend interview panel participation, especially where the position will be working directly or indirectly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities or staff	September 2023		
	<b>h.</b> Ensure Employee Assistance Program provider has specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers	September 2023		



“Promotion to leadership roles is challenging for anyone, but as Aboriginal people we have to overcome so many extra barriers.”

**Teena Reeves**



ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
<b>9</b> <i>Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development</i>	<b>i.</b> Build understanding across the Office of the needs and aspirations of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting/higher duties</li> <li>• Provide career and development pathways</li> <li>• Provide exchange secondment opportunities to other government organisations</li> <li>• Funded opportunities to attend Aboriginal Leaders Conference and scholarship opportunities (including Duke of Edinburgh)</li> <li>• Inclusion on interview panels</li> <li>• Provide training assistance to build confidence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and support their managers to enable them to manage gaps in knowledge and experience</li> </ul>	December 2021	Director, Human Resources	General Manager - Human Resources



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.



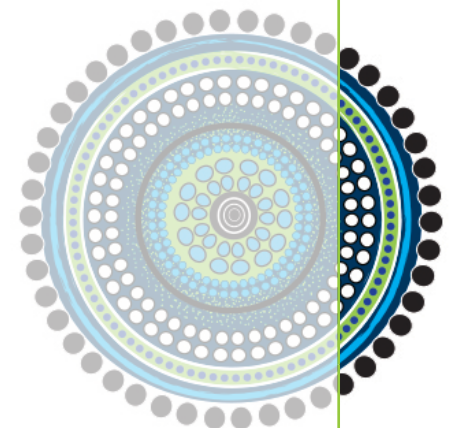
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and non-Aboriginal communities engaged through sport and active recreation to break down barriers and level the playing field.



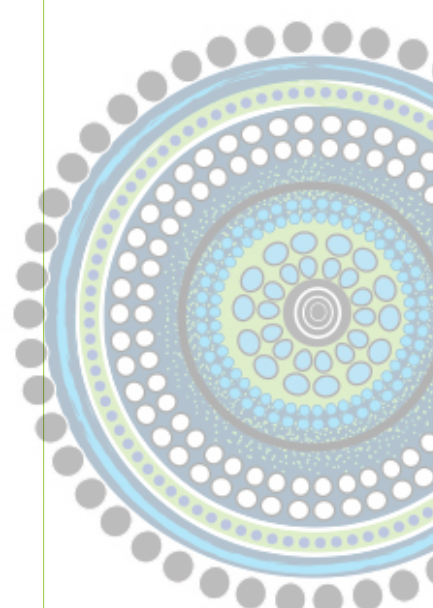
ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
10 <i>Support State Sporting Organisations (SSO) and State Sporting Organisations for people with Disability (SSOD), active recreation sector and Academies</i>	a. Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport Network to share stories, resources, programs, and opportunities within the sports sector	December 2021	Regional Managers	-
	b. Provide support to connect SSOs and SSODs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	December 2021		
	c. Support in the development of and facilitation of culturally appropriate program implementation	December 2021		
	d. Provide support to the sport and active recreation sector to be more inclusive by removing barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation	December 2021		
	e. Assist SSOs, SSODs and their sector to partners, to support emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-elite athletes to pursue their high-performance aspirations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness and provide advice on the importance of supporting athletes who relocate from Country</li> <li>• Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-elite athletes to improve talent identification, development, planning and implementation including relocation and support strategies</li> </ul>	June 2023	Aboriginal Development Officers  Supported by: Principal Advisor Talent Pathways Officers and Director Sector Performance	-
	f. Educate SSOs and SSODs through participation and evaluation (using the Future Champions Pathway Healthcheck tool) and engage with the Office's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for ongoing guidance and advice	June 2023		
	g. Collaborate with Regional Academies and sporting organisations to support pre-elite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander athletes on the talent pathway	June 2023		

“When sports make their programs more inclusive, it's a win for everyone. A win for the sport that attracts more players, a win for Aboriginal people as it's one less challenge to overcome, and a win for non-Aboriginal people as we all have greater opportunities to learn from one another.”

**Celia Murphy**





ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
11 <i>Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes</i>	<b>a.</b> Develop a standalone Sustainable Procurement Policy which includes a framework for procuring from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses and aligns with NSW Government Aboriginal Procurement Policies and the Stronger Communities Cluster Aboriginal Participation Plan. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make requirements for procuring from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses more visible, understandable and accessible for staff</li> <li>• Include at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff representative on the NSW Government Aboriginal Procurement Community of Practice Working Group</li> </ul>	June 2022	Manager Procurement	Chief Financial Officer  Procurement and Contracts Manager
	<b>b.</b> Improve understanding of what is being procured by the Office (i.e. capture all contracts) and measure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Centres and Venues to review spending and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses</li> <li>• Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff connections to network with local businesses</li> <li>• Develop and monitor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation against agreed KPI's</li> <li>• Develop a list of pre-approved suppliers</li> </ul>	June 2023		
	<b>c.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update procurement practises to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</li> <li>• Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation subject matter experts both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal during the procurement evaluation process as a professional development opportunity for staff</li> </ul>	June 2022		
	<b>d.</b> Develop and support commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	June 2022		
	<b>e.</b> Maintain Supply Nation Membership	September 2021		Procurement and Contracts Manager

“ *With so many Aboriginal organisations delivering quality services in the market, the unique opportunity of reconciliation through business success only needs realisation.*

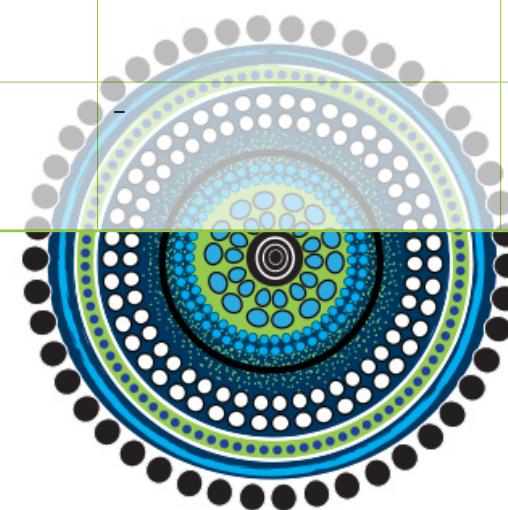
*We need to increase awareness and help potential customers ask themselves ‘do we want to contribute to economic and social empowerment for Aboriginal people?’* **Lynda Mackie**



ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
12 <i>Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in sport</i>	a. Work with Grants Unit to align RAP with new grants framework in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Target opportunities for organisations proposing programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</li><li>• Ensure underrepresented groups are a priority for all the Office grant programs</li></ul>	June 2022	Manager Grants Unit	-
	b. Develop annual reporting of grants that have gone to underrepresented groups	December 2021		
	c. Target opportunities through Her Sport Her Way Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls	September 2023	Executive Director Policy and Planning	
	d. Target inactive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations through existing Office policies and strategies designed to increase physical activity including: Active Kids, Duke of Edinburgh, Her Sport Her Way (including Dads and Daughters program and Regional Plans)	September 2023		
	e. Develop partnerships with organisations (both government and non-government) that work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	June 2022		
	f. Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff during the development stage of strategies to increase participation in sport	September 2021		
	g. Collaborate with home teams and codes with established RAPs to support participation goals	June 2023	-	Group General Manager - Communications and Community
13 <i>Preserve, protect and celebrate cultural significant sites and artefacts at the Office and VNSW locations</i>	a. Develop a business case for respectively maximising opportunities for the management of Aboriginal sites, places, artefacts, local history, and cultures	September 2023	Executive Director Regional Delivery	Group General Manager - Events and Partnerships
	b. Support the inclusion of culturally appropriate program implementation and facilitation within our centres including: Traditional Indigenous Games, cultural walks and bush tucker	September 2023		Group General Manager - Olympic Park & Regional Venues
	c. Leverage existing heritage partnerships including Bradman Foundation, to widely communicate the importance of sites and artefacts at VNSW locations	June 2023	-	Group General Manager - Communications and Community


“Ask any young kids what they want to do when they grow up and they’ll tell you ‘I want to be a sports star’ or ‘I want to work in the sports field’.”

Jason French





ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
14 <i>Promote Connecting with Country and Designing with Country in planning for sport infrastructure, including putting forward a possible site for piloting the Connecting with Country Framework</i>	a. Put forward a site e.g. the replaced Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre to the Office of the Government Architect for consideration of testing the Connecting with Country Framework	September 2023	Director Infrastructure and Planning	-
	b. Promote Connecting with Country and Designing with Country in planning for sport infrastructure with other local and state government agencies	September 2023		



“ When you build something you have the opportunity to do something really great with respect for our history, our environment and our future.

Deborah Howard





# GOVERNANCE

## RAP Implementation Joint RAP Governance Structure

The Office of Sport, Venues NSW and their respective CEOs work closely with each other and stakeholders throughout the sport and recreation sector. Being a joint RAP, a clear reporting and accountability structure will be critical to its successful implementation.

Each organisation is responsible for implementing and reporting against their nominated Actions.

**The RAP Steering Committee**, co-chaired by an Executive Director from each organisation and with membership from both organisations, will oversee the RAP Implementation Team (RAPIT).

The Steering Committee will:

- Meet quarterly to receive and consider progress reports prepared by the RAPIT
- Assist where the RAPIT is having difficulty in progressing specific Actions
- Facilitate joint CEO approvals for new policies, strategies and ongoing reports etc
- Provide clarity and recommend solutions if RAPIT are unable to reach agreement
- Endorse progress updates to Reconciliation Australia.

**The RAPIT** will be co-chaired by an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal staff member and include representatives from both the Office and VNSW. All Aboriginal staff members expressing an interest in membership will be automatically included, and the RAPIT will always have a minimum of three Aboriginal staff representatives.

The RAPIT will:

- Establish and oversee RAP Action Teams through an EOI process
- Meet quarterly to review and report on the RAP implementation progress
- Ensure Aboriginal staff involvement/consultation in implementation of each RAP Action or RAP Action Team
- Be accountable for implementation and assist teams which have been unable to progress,
- Provide secretariat and coordination functions, roadblock resolution, and prepare reports for the RAP Steering Committee and Reconciliation Australia.

**RAP Action Teams will:**

- Be led by a member of the RAPIT who is responsible for reporting progress on specific Actions
- Work on implementation of specific agreed Actions
- Report to the RAPIT on progress.



ACTION (OPPORTUNITIES)	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	
			THE OFFICE	VNSW
<b>15</b> <i>Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments</i>	<b>a.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP Implementation</li> <li>Engage our Senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP Commitments</li> <li>Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management (CE the Office, and CEO VNSW)</li> <li>Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments</li> </ul>	August 2021	Co-Chair(s) RAPIT (the Office)	Chair RAPIT (VNSW)
<b>16</b> <i>Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally</i>	<b>b.</b> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	30 September 2022 30 September 2023	Co-Chair(s) RAPIT (the Office)	Chair RAPIT (VNSW)
	<b>c.</b> Report our RAP progress to all staff and Steering Committee quarterly	December 2021 March 2022 June 2022 September 2022 December 2022 March 2023 June 2023		
	<b>d.</b> Publicly report on our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings annually	September 2022, 2023		
	<b>e.</b> Investigate participation in the Workplace RAP Barometer (WRB)	May 2022		
<b>17</b> <i>Review and refresh the RAP, and continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP</i>	<b>f.</b> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia and register via Reconciliation Australia's website and Reconciliation NSW to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges, and achievements from current Innovate RAP	January 2023	Co-Chair(s) RAPIT (the Office)	Chair RAPIT (VNSW)



“ To me reconciliation means instinctive equality and the RAP maps a deliberate pathway to deliver healing change. With genuine commitment, implementation of the RAP has the power to drive ongoing reconciliation. The journey has begun, but it doesn't end here.

**Damien Green**



# CONTACT DETAILS

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