

Melba Support Services

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

MAY 2022-OCTOBER 2023



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



melba
support services

Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Melba Support Services to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Melba Support Services 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 Melba Support Services 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 Melba Support Services, 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



Our business

At Melba Support Services, we support people with disability to live a fabulous life. Our range of services include accommodation, individual supports, support coordination, enterprises, lifestyle and community programs. We are a not-for-profit and deliver our services through NDIS participant funding, state government contracts and donations.

We currently have approximately 1,500 employees, the vast majority of whom are our skilled and dedicated support workers. We also have office-based and administration employees across the state, helping to make Melba Support Services one of Victoria's leading disability service providers.

Currently, we believe that we do not have any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. We are committed to building the trust and respect that will open up these opportunities in the future.

Our reach is throughout Victoria including areas from Melbourne to the Central Highlands and Wimmera, and across to Gippsland. Our office locations include Dandenong, Lilydale, Ballarat and Morwell, however our accommodation and other services extend well into the rural areas surrounding those regional centres.

Our RAP

At Melba Support Services we are committed to creating and maintaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce.

As a key part of this, we recognise that we need a plan to ensure that we can connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to create respectful relationships, trust and employment opportunities. As an organisation we also want to ensure that we provide culturally appropriate disability support services which are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with disabilities in the regions we operate in. Our RAP is a step towards Melba's vision for reconciliation at a national level - that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with a disability will have access to and be able to fully participate in every aspect of life as they choose. In essence, we are creating a RAP because we are ready to take the next step in our shared reconciliation journey.

Our RAP Champion is our General Manager of Innovation and Development, David Glazebrook. David is a senior leader at Melba and in this role, David will drive and champion internal awareness and engagement of our RAP as well as provide regular updates on its progress directly to our Leadership Team.

Our approach to implementing our RAP will focus on engaging directly with First Nations stakeholders to seek guidance and advice. We have also ensured to attribute the most critical actions of our RAP to our senior managers and members of our Leadership Team, using a top-down approach to embedding our RAP right across our entire organisation. We will be developing actions that will not be tokenistic; we are committed to rolling out the actions across our entire organisation, and in a timeframe that ensures continuous employee awareness of our commitment to reconciliation.

To date, our reconciliation journey has been one of great intent. However, it has proven difficult to translate into action. As with many organisations, the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has also greatly delayed our reconciliation journey. As the pandemic graduates towards easing, we again look to progressing our reconciliation journey.

Our partnerships/ current activities

To date, our community partnerships have been established very much in a localised way in separate areas across the state; in some areas we have created limited partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and in others, we are yet to establish these connections. For example, Melba staff have attended Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (HICSA) meetings over past years, seeking to establish connections, though this has been halted recently because of the need for face-to-face meetings, the opportunity for which has been limited if not impossible at different stages of the pandemic.

Our internal initiatives are well-intentioned. Melba currently includes acknowledgements to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we live, work and learn at our meetings and events. We will use our RAP to guide further initiatives in terms of internal activities and initiatives, as part of our reconciliation journey.



RELATIONSHIPS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	August 2022	General Manager – Innovation and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	December 2022	Research Lead – Practice, Quality and Safeguards (PQS)
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	May 2022 and May 2023	Communications Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. 	27 May- 3 June 2022 27 May- 3 June 2023	General Manager, Innovation and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May- 3 June 2022 27 May- 3 June 2023	Disability and Inclusion Project Officer
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. 	Ongoing Review October 2022	Communications Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	August 2022	General Manager – Innovation and Development; Research Lead - PQS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	August 2022	General Manager – Innovation and Development
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. 	January 2023	PQS - Senior Quality Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	March 2023	General Manager – People and Culture



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. 	March 2023	PQS – Quality Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	April 2023	General Manager – People and Culture
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation’s operational area. 	August 2022	Research Lead - PQS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff’s understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	Ongoing Review October 2022	Communications Manager
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. 	June 2022 June 2023	Disability and Inclusion Project Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area. 	June 2022 June 2023	Communications Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	First week in July 2022 First week in July 2023	General Manager, Innovation and Development; RAP Working Group Chair



OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	· Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	May 2023	General Manager - People and Culture
	· Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	October 2022	General Manager – People and Culture
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	· Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	June 2023	General Manager – Innovation and Development
	· Investigate Supply Nation membership.	February 2023	Disability and Inclusion Project Officer



GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	May 2022	General Manager, Innovation and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	May 2022	General Manager, Innovation and Development; RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	August 2022	General Manager, Innovation and Development; RAP Working Group Chair
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	May 2022	General Manager, Innovation and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	Ongoing Review October 2022	RAP Working Group Chair; General Manager, Innovation and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments 	December 2022	PQS – Quality Manager
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence. 	July 2022, 2023	General Manager – People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. 	1 August 2022, 2023	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 September 2022, 2023	RAP Working Group Chair
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	End of June 2023	Disability and Inclusion Project Officer

Contact details

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