

REFLECT
Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)



May 2024 – May 2025

*Image: Commissioned artwork 'River Dreaming' by
Richie Allen, Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Ngunnawal Country.*



Our Business

The [Australian River Restoration Centre \(ARRC\)](#) is an independent, not for profit organisation, established in 2007 to raise awareness about the need to protect and care for our rivers, streams and wetlands. The ARRC believes that rivers and people need each other to thrive. To facilitate this, the ARRC provides a range of services and products that combine science with experience to transform rivers by giving people the confidence to act. In essence, the ARRC inspires, supports and facilitates people to make a difference to the rivers we care about.

The ARRC was founded by Siwan Lovett and her husband Tom Clarke. Siwan and Tom used their own funds to set up the ARRC, and the organisation still receives considerable volunteer time and effort from the couple. Siwan Lovett is the Managing Director of the organisation and oversees all operations. The ARRC does not employ anyone directly, but instead uses sub-contracts to hire approximately 10 contractors from around Australia against specific projects. Currently none of our sub-contractors are First Nations People. It is a very 'lean' organisation and applies for grants to support all on-ground activities through the [Rivers of Carbon program](#). Public good work like the monthly e-newsletter, social media and free resources draw on donations and ongoing volunteer time. The ARRC is on the Register of Environmental Organisations, as well as being overseen by the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission, both of which require annual financial and governance reporting. The organisation has financial members, and each year holds a virtual online Annual General Meeting, as members are scattered across Australia.

At the Annual General Meeting updates are provided about how the organisation has operated over the past year, and questions asked about how members feel donated monies held by the [Australian River Restoration Centre Public Fund](#) should be distributed activities.

The Australian River Restoration Centre's Constitution is available by request.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

RAP Champion – Andy Lowes (Program Manager)

RAP Working Group (RWG) – Andy Lowes, Lori Gould (Program Managers), Lucy Stuart (Project Coordinator), Pat Gudhka (Digital Marketing Manager) and Chris Walsh (Project Officer).

The ARRC works towards an inclusive workplace that welcomes diversity. At the ARRC, we rely on strong relationships with our stakeholders to operate our business successfully, and these networks will be drawn upon as we work to deliver our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The ARRC is developing a RAP to demonstrate our support for a more just, equitable and reconciled Australia and has the explicit intention of ensuring that we have a culturally safe workplace. The RAP framework and strategic actions will enable us to achieve this through developing a structured plan that demonstrates our genuine commitment to making our organisation a culturally aware and inclusive workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our 2024-2025 Reflect RAP will draw on the learnings of our last Reflect RAP which was conditionally endorsed. The biggest learning we had was to be realistic in our ongoing support of reconciliation. As a non-government organisation and a registered charity recognised under the ACNC, we are often under resourced. In our last RAP we achieved many of the outcomes we set out to achieve but failed to meet the deadline for review, meaning we cannot progress to an Innovate RAP. In this RAP we endeavour to uphold the ongoing documentation and reporting processes.

We hope to support our strategic focus across our organisation, which aims to collaborate with clients, staff and community partners to provide fair and equitable options for all parties involved. We are planning to strengthen the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and acknowledge everyone's place in our shared colonial history, that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the true owners of this land, and that sovereignty was never ceded.

Relationships and connections with the communities within which we operate can be initiated through the countless daily touch points in our business operations and at our client locations, providing opportunities to foster the spirit of reconciliation. Our practical RAP actions will also deliver on our commitment to impact on employment, education, health and life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within our areas of operations. This will primarily be done through employment and procurement strategies across our business that support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, community events and programs.

The ARRC leadership team will encourage staff, contractors, and partners to be aware of our RAP commitments and to be engaged in all aspects of our RAP. We believe this RAP will guide and support us to build our knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and help us advocate within our sphere of influence. Our RWG will have bi-monthly meetings to check in on our targets and ensure we are delivering activities. These meetings will also be open to anyone from the [ARRC team](#) to attend.

We look forward to strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both within our organisation and externally and building on the foundations we have already within our organisation for a culturally safe workplace.

Our Partnerships & Current Activities

- Acknowledgement of Country and partners in communications for all projects – website, face to face workshops, newsletters, project materials.
- Commission of River Dreaming First Nations artwork for future use on the ARRC and Rivers of Carbon websites and other materials.
- Engagement of First Nations partners as presenters in field days (not just cultural workshops).
- Engagement of First Nations partners for goods and services such as catering and contracting.
- Investigate First Nations businesses as a first consideration when engaging goods and services.
- Engagement of First Nations partners to provide a Welcome to Country in the country where we are working across a range of activities.
- Seek input and advice on progressing First Nations partnerships including the development of our RAP.
- National Reconciliation Week activities – both hosting and attending.
- Respect for the Country we work on – having a knowledge of which Country we are on.
- Promote the importance of Connection to Country to others.
- ARRC and Rivers of Carbon website have explicit acknowledgement of Aboriginal ownership and knowledge.
- [ARRC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander webpage.](#)
- [Rivers of Carbon video series sharing Ngunnawal knowledge.](#)
- Advertising of [Aboriginal businesses we work with.](#)
- [Rivers the veins of our Country case studies.](#)
- [Rivers of Carbon projects](#) have explicit recognition of Aboriginal ownership and connection to Country.

Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations in and around the locations where we are delivering our projects, including Ngunnawal, Ngarigo, Yuin, Wiradjuri, Gundungurra, Dharug, Kuringgai and Dharawal.	August 2024	Program Coordinator (LS), RWG and all ARRC Staff
	Continue to work with Traditional Owner organisations during on-ground projects, including for ARRC activities, Rivers of Carbon, and any work in the Upper Murrumbidgee, such as the Demonstration and Recovery Reach projects.	September 2024	Project Coordinator (LS), RWG and all ARRC Staff
	Review all ARRC programs and processes to identify opportunities to involve First Nations People and organisations from the very start.	September 2024	Project Manager (AL), RWG and all ARRC Staff
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations with the support of Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. This includes engagement of the First Nations community more broadly respectful of cultural lore.	October 2024	Project Coordinator (LS) and RWG
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our corporate, staff and connections through our employee newsletters, emails, meetings.	May 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Coordinator (LS) and RWG
	Host an internal staff event with Ronnie Jordan from Culture on the Move for NRW.	April 2025	Project Manager (AL), RWG and all ARRC Staff

	<p>RWG Members to participate in an external NRW event to build relationships and further understanding.</p> <p>Research and disseminate information about NRW events local to the areas where we deliver most of our projects. See here</p>	27 May - 3 June 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Coordinator (LS) and RWG
	<p>Encourage and support staff to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</p>	27 May - 3 June 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Coordinator (LS) and RWG
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<p>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff through our internal communication strategies that lead up to the launch of the RAP and continue regular communications throughout 2024-25.</p> <p>Actively share and promote stories, articles, media and podcasts about collaborative projects between agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to care for Country and people.</p>	December 2024 December 2024	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG Program Manager (AL), Digital Marketing Manager (PG) and RWG
	<p>Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey using advice and the connections of our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships.</p>	August 2024	Program Officer (LG) and RWG
	<p>Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</p>	December 2024	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination	<p>Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination, through connecting with other organisations to see what they have done.</p>	December 2024	Project Officers (LS) and RWG
		October 2024	Program Manager

strategies.	<p>Conduct a review of our current HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, identifying any gaps in existing policies to align with best practice and consider future needs.</p> <p>Through informal sessions, hear about the employment journey of our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees or a Cultural expert (TOAC) in order to foster understanding, promote positive race relationships and anti-discrimination</p>	December 2024	(AL), Business Manager (Matt Morrison) and RWG Digital Marketing Manager (PG) and RWG
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Respect			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	Continue to develop a business case for funding to increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. This includes investigation of the opportunities to employ First Nations trainees to deliver Rivers of Carbon projects and develop cultural programs within the organisation.	December 2024	Program Manager (LG) and RWG
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation through a survey conducted to capture the level of cultural awareness and experiences of our staff.	August 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG) and RWG
	Commence AIATSIS CORE Cultural Learning modules for all team and continue to have regular meetings/sessions to share learnings.	May 2024	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG
6 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's business directorate.	August 2024	Project Officer (LS) and RWG
	Increase the understanding of our staff of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to	August 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG),

	Country protocols. Continue to encourage all staff to deliver an Acknowledgment of Country on behalf of ARRC.	October 2024	Project Officer (LS) and RWG Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Officer (LS) and RWG
7 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week through disseminating information through our communication strategies, including internal newsletters, meetings and emails in the weeks leading up to NAIDOC week.	7 July 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Officer (LS) and RWG
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local areas of our business regions.	7 July 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Officer (LS) and RWG
	RWG to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	7 July 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG), Project Officer (LS) and RWG

Opportunities			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Continue to use feedback from informal conversations with current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform the elements of an employment strategy including potential roles, internal supports, mentoring, career progression and retention.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Establish a process for enabling employees to self-identify as Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander people when they feel comfortable and ready.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Continue to create opportunities for First Nations participation in ARRC		Program Manager

	program delivery.		(AL) and RWG
9 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case or strategy for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Identify the current level of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses across our organisation and set a growth target –for the supply of all goods and services First Nations business will be considered first.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Maintain our list of First Nations businesses we work with to both demonstrate our commitment to procuring First Nations suppliers and to have a short list of suppliers ready to go for any procurement needed.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
	Continue to investigate commissioning local First Nations artwork for use as design on websites and other promotional material i.e. River Dreaming.	December 2024	Digital Marketing Manager (PG) and RWG

Governance			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation. A review will be conducted to track enthusiasm and ongoing engagement mid-way through RAP delivery.	July 2024	Program Manager (AL) and Project Officer (LS)
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	July 2024	Program Manager (AL) and Project Officer (LS)
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	July 2025	Program Manager (AL) and Project Officer (LS)

		Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. <i>Note, this role is currently filled by Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation provides advice to the RWG but remains independent.</i>	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
11	Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Maintain resource needs for RAP implementation.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Continue to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to guide the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	May 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally	May 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2024	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
12	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Report to the Director of Australian River Restoration Centre.	May 2025	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Collate and disseminate the RAP outcomes to the staff and leadership across the organisation.	July 2025	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	June 2025	Program Manager (AL) and RWG
		Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey	August 2025	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG

	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2025	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG	
13	Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	April 2025	Program Manager (AL), Project Officer (LS) and RWG

Contact Details

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