

# *Reflect* Reconciliation Action Plan

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July 2017 – July 2018



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

**REFLECT**

Our  
**WATCH**

End violence against  
Women And Their Children



## Artwork Statement

The painting on the cover page and featured throughout this document is titled “The Town Camp women of Alice Springs say ‘No to family violence’” by artists Gwen Gillen Napanangka, Hellen Gillen Napanangka & Shirleen Campbell Nampitjinpa. It was purchased by Our Watch in 2016 and used by permission of the artists.



**Language groups:** Yankuntjatjara/Luritja

**Region/community:** Alice Springs Town Camp communities, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

**Description:** The left-hand side of the painting represents the community experiencing family and domestic violence and the community coming together to think about what to do about it. The community throw all the weapons used in family violence in the middle saying “this is enough, no more family and domestic violence”.

The left-hand side is also about not using the cultural weapons in family violence. These weapons need to be put back into culture, culture needs to be respected and not used to hurt families and communities.

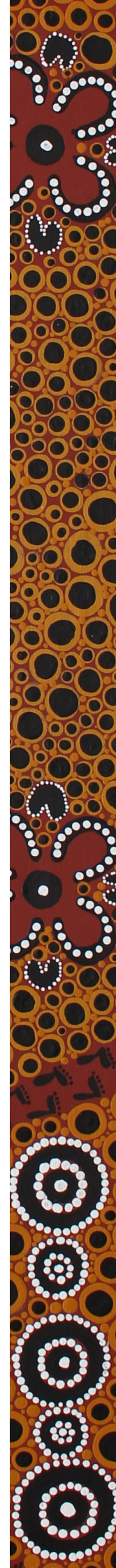
The right-hand side of the painting represents healthy and safe families and communities going into the future.

The eye in the middle represents Our Watch. The area around the eye represents the Tangentyere Women’s Family Safety Group standing beside Our Watch to support other Aboriginal women, children, men and communities to be free from violence.

# Contents

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Our vision for reconciliation	4
Our role	4
Message from the Chair, Natasha Stott Despoja AM	5
Message from the CEO, Mary Barry	6
Message from inaugural Board Director, Professor Muriel Bamblett AM	7
Our business	8
Our Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2018	9
1. Relationships	10
2. Respect	11
3. Opportunities	14
4. Tracking progress	15
Contact details	16



## Our vision for reconciliation

Our Watch shares Reconciliation Australia's vision of a reconciled, just and equitable Australia: an Australia where the voices, experiences and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are central, and where violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children is a thing of the past.

## Our role

The role of Our Watch in the achievement of this vision is to work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children. Such work cannot be separated from efforts to address the racism, dispossession and intergenerational trauma that are the legacy of colonisation.

Our Watch believes that we are all, as Australians, products of that legacy, and that the responsibility for the active effort of reconciliation lies with us all.

### Acknowledgement of Country

*Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and future, and we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and knowledge.*





# Message from the Chair, Natasha Stott Despoja AM

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The prevalence and severity of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children is chilling. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience violence at approximately twice the rate of non-Indigenous women, and are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence related assaults than other Australian women.

The complex broader context in which this violence manifests is at the forefront of our work at Our Watch. The intergenerational impacts of dispossession, the forced removal of children, the interruption of cultural practices and the ongoing and cumulative economic exclusion and disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities all play a role in driving violence, and affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's experiences of it.

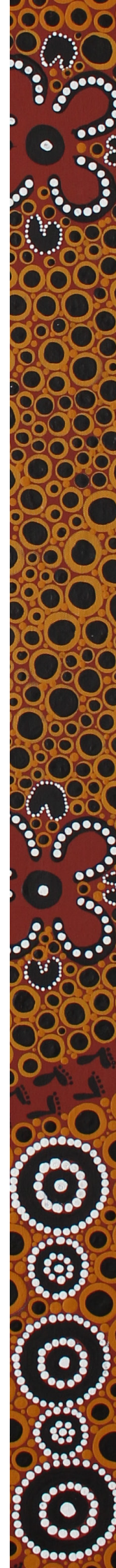
This is why our work to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children cannot be separated from efforts to address the racism, dispossession and intergenerational trauma that is the legacy of colonisation. In recognition of the differential impact of violence against women in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we also understand the necessity for a greater intensity of effort and investment in order to address the complex drivers contributing to violence for Indigenous communities, and a tailored approach to its prevention.

Our Watch was established with a focus on prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children. This is enshrined in our constitution which also includes a dedicated Board Director position in our governance group. Our organisation was founded with Professor Muriel Bamblett AM, who served from June 2013 to August 2016. Mr Charlie King, OAM, served for two years from August 2014 to August 2016, and Ms Dorinda Cox was recently appointed as a Board Director in November 2016.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a further step in our commitment and is designed to reflect not only our organisational vision for reconciliation, but our commitment at all levels of the organisation in all areas of work. It is our intention that our vision for reconciliation is reflected in our journey and process of reflection, our internal governance processes, and our approach to strategy, project work, consultation, partnerships and stakeholder management. It is our intent to embrace this Plan as an evolving document and process that guides and facilitates our learning, growth, and continuous improvement as we work towards an end to violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.



**Natasha Stott Despoja AM**  
Chair, Our Watch



# Message from the CEO, Mary Barry

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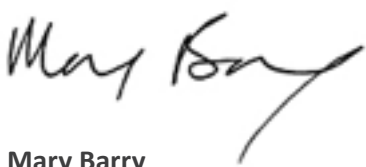
As a young organisation, we believe it is critical that we begin as we intend to continue, and ensure that we allow the time for reflection, both as individuals and an organisation, to enable us to approach our work in a culturally appropriate manner.

Our flagship document, *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, was informed by the expertise, experience and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men. We learned that while a national framework must acknowledge the specific reality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experience, a document designed for relevance across the diverse Australian population could not do this complex experience justice. Further consideration of how to most effectively prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children was imperative, and required a separate, dedicated effort.

Our Watch, with an expert Advisory Group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, are now developing a dedicated resource for the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children, to be released as a companion document to *Change the story*. The voices, experiences, ideas and solutions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples themselves will be central to the resource and the approach it articulates. We have recruited for a dedicated position for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander project lead for this work. This resource will help guide and frame all our work going forward, including, for example a new component of The Line campaign specifically designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Our work has also been informed by learnings from a stream dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women at the Our Watch/AWAVA conference Prevalent & Preventable, held in Adelaide in September 2016. This stream was designed and facilitated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, creating a space for dialogue between Indigenous women to further unpack the complexities of violence within their communities, and workshop their solutions.

Building effective partnerships is a key component of enabling Our Watch to serve in a 'backbone' function to support organisations nationally. We hope that our vision for reconciliation will guide our journey, and allow us to build effective and ongoing partnerships with Elders and leaders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to support their efforts to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.



**Mary Barry**  
Chief Executive Officer, Our Watch

# Message from inaugural Board Director, Professor Muriel Bamblett AM

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The Australian nation and its institutions have their origins in the violent expropriation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the denial of our existence and our experience. In much the same way as intergenerational abuse is perpetuated in families so is it in relation to Australian society and our treatment.

I was keen to be a part of Our Watch because I believe that we have to engage with all sectors of society if we, as Aboriginal People, are to achieve our rightful status as Indigenous People in our own land. Focussing our attention on governments alone is inadequate. This is especially so in the field of violence prevention which is heavily reliant on non-government organisations and agencies. Through Our Watch we can drive nationwide change and shift the behaviours that lead to violence against women and their children.

Reconciliation is critical if we are to move on as equals.

In my view, Reconciliation has to be based on an understanding of what happened and an acknowledgement of the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It also has to be based on an understanding of the role of individuals and collectives in the perpetuation of our status as the most disadvantaged group within the Australian population. We all have to understand how within a society that is passively and actively violent towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people everyday of our lives, violence can also become something we commit against each other. Once we understand this and incorporate this understanding into all aspects of our work, we can genuinely and meaningfully address violence in our communities.

By agreeing to be part of a Reconciliation process we agree to work together on this journey, one based on truth rather than an avoidance of it, and which we all hope will be the basis of a relationship of trust and honesty leading to a common understanding.



**Professor Muriel Bamblett AM**  
**Inaugural Board Director, Our Watch**





# Our business

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Our Watch is a national organisation established to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children. Since being set up by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments in 2013, the South Australian, Northern Territory, Tasmanian, Queensland and Australian Capital Territory governments have joined as members. Our vision is an Australia where all women and children can live free from all forms of violence. Our purpose is to provide national leadership to prevent all forms of violence against women and their children.

Our Watch endeavours to lead a shift in the social norms, institutional practices and individual and community attitudes contributing to violence against women and their children. We deliver activities that engage and activate the community, including undertaking innovative prevention projects in media, schools, workplaces and communities. Examples include the implementation of *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children*, delivery of The Line campaign, a National Media Engagement project, respectful relationships education programming, a Sports Engagement program, and the Victorian Workplace Equality and Respect Project. Work specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children anticipated for 2017-2018 include:

- The development of dedicated resource for the prevention of violence against women and children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- A new component of The Line campaign specifically designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

This Reconciliation Action Plan aims to help us continue to strengthen our capacity to develop culturally appropriate policies, programs and projects that embed respectful, long-term engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities. Through our vision for reconciliation, we aim to build internal awareness, understanding, and cultural competency that can be incorporated into our approach to our work, and ensure that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are respectfully heard.

Development of the Plan has been led by a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group of internal staff, in consultation with the Our Watch staff, Board of Directors and external stakeholders. It is supported by the Our Watch Board of Directors and Senior Executive Team, and championed internally by the Director of Policy and Evaluation. It has been designed to reflect our commitment to facilitate cultural change to guide our thinking and approach to our work, and embed a whole-of-organisation commitment to reconciliation.

Our Watch employs 30-35 staff, a mix of full-and part-time employees. We have sought to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a range of recruitment strategies, and have recently recruited for our first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dedicated position. We anticipate that our Reconciliation Action Plan will also be a step towards supporting future recruitment activity in 2017/18 to bring about further opportunities.



# Our Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2018

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Our Watch has developed a 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan in recognition that our organisation is in the formative stages of a reconciliation journey. This is the first Reconciliation Action Plan developed by the organisation. The 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan provides a platform for us to establish meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and lay strong foundations for the development of future Reconciliation Action Plans.

In our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan we will begin to explore how we can strengthen internal processes and build the cultural competency of our staff. Our Watch intends to review this process in a year's time and advance to an 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan. Our Watch believes it is critical to commit the time needed to adequately assess the internal needs of the organisation and to progress our journey.

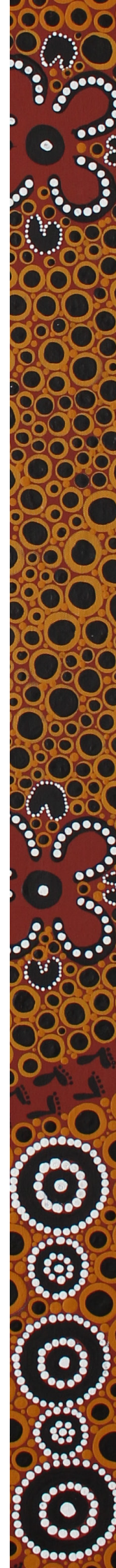
This Reconciliation Action Plan was developed by the Our Watch Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (working group) that was established in mid-2016, two workshop consultations with all staff, and consultation with the Senior Executive Team (SET). The working group will oversee the progress of the plan and provide quarterly updates to the SET and Board of Directors.

The working group is comprised of representatives across the organisation, including one Aboriginal staff member. At the time of writing they include:

- Loren Days: Senior Policy Advisor, Intersectionality
- Yvonne Lay: Senior Policy Advisor, Intersectionality
- Selina Getley: Manager, Strategy and Quality
- Sarah Kearney: Coordinator, Evaluation and Learning
- Bill Lawford: Senior Content Developer
- Emma Partridge: Manager, Policy
- Karla McGrady: Senior Project Advisor, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children
- Kylie Smith: Advisor, Workplace Prevention of Violence against Women
- Monique Keel: Project Manager, Practice Capability Development

The Our Watch Reconciliation Action Plan is championed internally by the Director, Policy and Evaluation, Lara Fergus.

Our current partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people include a memorandum of understanding with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance (NATSIWA) since December 2015, and an Advisory Group comprised of eleven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women across the country to advise on the development of a resource to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children. The development of the resource has included significant consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people nationally.



# 1. Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Lead
1. Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group to monitor progress of RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor, track and report the progress of the RAP implementation across all areas of the organisation to the Senior Executive Team</li> </ul>	July & November 2017 / March & June 2018	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the working group oversees the endorsement and launch of the RAP</li> </ul>	July 2017	
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey</li> </ul>	September 2017	Manager, Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a list of RAP and like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey</li> </ul>	December 2017	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
3. Participate and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce our staff to NRW by encouraging staff to attend a NRW event</li> </ul>	May 2018	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff</li> </ul>	May 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure our working group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW</li> </ul>	May 2018	
4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Content Developer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP</li> </ul>	August 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend the staff induction checklist to include reference to the RAP</li> </ul>	July 2017	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish the RAP on the organisational intranet for easy access by staff</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Content Developer

## 2. Respect



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Lead
5. Investigate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation</li> </ul>	March 2018	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an internal audit to determine cultural awareness training needs within the organisation, including to assess cultural competency and areas for development, such as understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements</li> </ul>	July 2017	Coordinator, Evaluation and Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold two organisational workshops/guest speaker series to bolster organisational cultural awareness</li> </ul>	December 2017/ June 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities for cultural awareness training for all staff</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed a structural approach within the organisation to foster cultural awareness in the organisational annual operating plan, which is then reflected and picked up through team and individual work plans and individual performance plans</li> </ul>	April 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality



6. Explore opportunities to increase cultural competency within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a first step to developing our cultural awareness practice to acknowledge the experiences and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, place items in our physical work space and include messages on our publications that signify these acknowledgements (e.g. placing plaques, photos, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags or artwork in the office, adopting an Acknowledgement of Country as standard wording in our publications, newsletters, communications etc.)</li> </ul>	July 2017	Coordinator, Evaluation and Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate opportunities for acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures with staff to increase general understanding of cultural competency</li> </ul>	August 2017	Manager, Policy
7. Update internal communications to build cultural competency internally and promote awareness externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update internal style guide on appropriate terminology to use when communicating about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/ issues and promote proper usage to staff</li> </ul>	November 2017	Senior Content Developer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct audit of existing materials on website to ensure they are culturally appropriate</li> </ul>	December 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce/update content on the Our Watch website that relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the prevention of violence against women</li> </ul>	January 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish set of external referral pathways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to consult with for our communications work</li> </ul>	December 2017	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
8. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols)</li> </ul>	July 2017	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area</li> </ul>	February 2018	Senior Advisory – Intersectionality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence</li> </ul>	February 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an organisational policy that will include the activity described above and outline expectations of the protocols</li> </ul>	April 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality



9. Participate in and celebrate National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Content Developer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area</li> </ul>	July 2017	Coordinator, Evaluation and Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Our Watch RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Advisor – Intersectionality
10. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance are recognized internally/externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance internally</li> </ul>	July 2017	Senior Content Developer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that dates of significance are built into the Our Watch media and social media calendar/strategy</li> </ul>	July 2017	
11. Incorporate cultural considerations into policy and evaluation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure culturally appropriate and ethical methodologies are used in research and project design and implementation (e.g. ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders are valued and acknowledged for their contributions)</li> </ul>	March 2018	Manager, Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure comprehensive evaluation practices that embed representative data collection practices that capture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander demographics</li> </ul>	March 2018	Coordinator, Evaluation and Learning



### 3. Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Lead
12. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	• Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation	May 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	• Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities	March 2018	Manager, Policy
13. Investigate opportunities for procurement of goods/ services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers	• Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	March 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	• Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	May 2018	
14. Reflect on existing work practice and identify gaps and opportunities to support the future inclusion of cultural considerations into our work	• Develop a framework to audit our current practice tools, processes, deliverables and projects to identify where cultural considerations need to be included, and amend these to address any issues identified	February 2018	Manager, Policy, Advisor and Project Manager, Practice Capability Development
	• Review existing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities and consider ways to ensure these relationships are valued and strengthened	February 2018	
	• Consider organisations and communities with whom we need to build relationships to support the Our Watch reconciliation efforts	February 2018	
	• Prepare a scoping document to inform priorities for improving the extent to which cultural considerations are embedded into our work	February 2018	Manager, Strategy and Quality
	• Incorporate a cultural competency assessment in project proposals, Requests for Quote and Memoranda of Understanding	February 2018	
15. Identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) sector	• Review the PVAW workforce development strategy to ensure consideration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait workers are a core component	September 2017	Advisor, Workplace Prevention of Violence against Women



## 4. Tracking progress



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Lead
16. Build support for the RAP	• Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation	July 2017	Senior Policy Advisor - Intersectionality
	• Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities	August 2017	
	• Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia	September 2018	
17. Review and refresh RAP	• Review RAP based on lessons learned, and identify and record both achievements and ongoing challenges	May 2018	Senior Policy Advisor – Intersectionality
	• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a draft 'Innovate' RAP based on the results of the Impact Measurement Questionnaire and our organisational learning	July 2018	
	• Submit to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement	December 2018	

## Contact

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