



# BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

**June 2025 – June 2027**



Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology



# Acknowledgment of Country



The Bureau acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, sky, and community.

We pay respects to Elders past and present, acknowledge and celebrate the unique living cultural knowledge and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as essential to connection with, protection of and caring for Country.



About the Artwork - “Weathering Change, Walking Together” .....	5
About the Artist.....	6
Artwork Elements .....	7
The Bureau’s Vision for Reconciliation.....	8
Artwork Elements .....	9
Message from Reconciliation Australia.....	10
Message from the Indigenous Champion .....	11
Message from the First Nations Portfolio Lead.....	11
Our business: The Bureau of Meteorology.....	12
Artwork Elements .....	14
Our Reconciliation Action Plan .....	16
RAP Governance .....	18
Highlights of the 2021-2023 RAP.....	20
Case study: NT Aboriginal Interpreter Service Project.....	22
Key challenges and lessons learned.....	24
RAP Pillars and RAP deliverable items.....	25
Relationships .....	26
Respect .....	30
Opportunities.....	34
Governance .....	36



# About the Artwork – “Weathering Change, Walking Together”



Long ago, the Ancestors walked this land, reading the skies, winds, and waters as if they were written in song. They understood that every cloud, wave, and gust carried a message—a story of change, renewal, and balance. This sacred knowledge was passed from Elder to child, woven into ceremonies, songs, and painted stories on rock and skin.

- ⇒ **The Central Circle** represents a place of gathering and knowledge—where communities come together to share wisdom. It signifies the Bureau of Meteorology’s commitment to listening and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodians of Country. Within it, the shape of Australia acknowledges that this wisdom belongs to all people, uniting traditional knowledge with modern science.
- ⇒ **The Blue River** winding through the landscape reflects the lifeblood of Country—water. Just as Indigenous custodians have followed the flow of rivers and the rise and fall of tides for generations, meteorologists study the movement of water to understand climate and ensure the safety of communities.
- ⇒ **The Weather Patterns** in the sky, swirling winds, gathering clouds, and the radiant sun, embody the ever-changing elements observed by both Indigenous weather watchers and modern meteorologists. The knowledge of seasonal shifts, fire cycles, and storm warnings has always existed, long before satellites and radars.
- ⇒ **The Footprints and Meeting Circles** scattered across the land remind us of the importance of collaboration and shared journeys. The Bureau walks alongside Indigenous communities, learning from their deep understanding of climate patterns, integrating this knowledge into forecasting and environmental stewardship.
- ⇒ **The Hand prints** symbolise knowledge passed down through generations — marking the presence of Elders and Ancestors who have shared their understanding of the land, sky, and waters. They also represent a commitment to reconciliation, ensuring that Indigenous voices remain visible and valued in the future of meteorology.

- ⇒ **The Ocean Element** at the bottom represents the vast waters surrounding the continent, which have shaped the lives and traditions of coastal and island communities. The movement of the ocean, like the shifting seasons, has always been understood through traditional knowledge, guiding navigation, fishing, and survival. The Bureau continues to study these waters, building upon this ancient wisdom to forecast tides, currents, and climate changes.
- ⇒ **The Green Flora** growing throughout the artwork represents renewal, resilience, and the deep respect for Country. Indigenous communities have long understood the role of plants in predicting weather patterns—whether through the flowering of certain species signalling the arrival of seasonal rains or the drying of specific leaves forewarning fire conditions. This living knowledge, encoded in nature itself, continues to guide environmental stewardship.
- ⇒ **The Kangaroo and Emu Tracks** are sacred symbols of movement, survival, and adaptation. Kangaroos and emus only move forward, never backward, representing progress and resilience. Their tracks across the land tell stories of migration, seasonal changes, and the search for water—aligning with the Bureau’s role in tracking weather patterns and guiding communities through climate shifts. These tracks also signify the ongoing journey of reconciliation, ensuring that Indigenous knowledge is recognized and respected in shaping the future.
- ⇒ **The Brown Earth Elements** represent the deep connection between land, climate, and culture. The rich soil and ochre tones symbolise the stability of Country, which holds the footprints and stories of generations past. The shifting tones of brown reflect the way land responds to weather—dry and cracked in drought, rich and nourished after rain. Just as Indigenous communities have read these changes in the land for thousands of years, meteorologists today study the impact of weather on soil, agriculture, and ecosystems. The brown elements serve as a reminder that weather does not exist separately from the land—it shapes it, sustains it, and is written into its very surface.



## Aboriginal Artist and Graphic Designer - Lani Balzan

Meet Lani Balzan, a proud Aboriginal woman from the Wiradjuri people of the three-river tribe. Though her family roots lie in Mudgee, she grew up traversing various regions of Australia, finally finding her home in Queensland, Australia.

Lani is an Aboriginal artist and graphic designer specialising in designing Aboriginal canvas art, graphic art, logo's, Reconciliation Action Plan's and document design.

In 2016 Lani was announced as the 2016 NAIDOC Poster Competition winner with her artwork 'Songlines'. This poster was used as the 2016 NAIDOC theme across the country.

With over a decade of experience under her belt, Lani has achieved consistent success throughout the country. One of her biggest aspirations is to strengthen her connection to her culture and contribute to the journey of reconciliation, bringing people and communities together to appreciate the richness of Australia's unique and vibrant Indigenous culture. Through her mesmerising art, Lani Balzan continues to make a profound impact, celebrating heritage, and fostering unity in the diverse tapestry of Australia's cultural landscape.

⇒ [www.aboriginalartbylani.com.au](http://www.aboriginalartbylani.com.au)

⇒ [enquiries@aboriginalartbylani.com.au](mailto:enquiries@aboriginalartbylani.com.au)

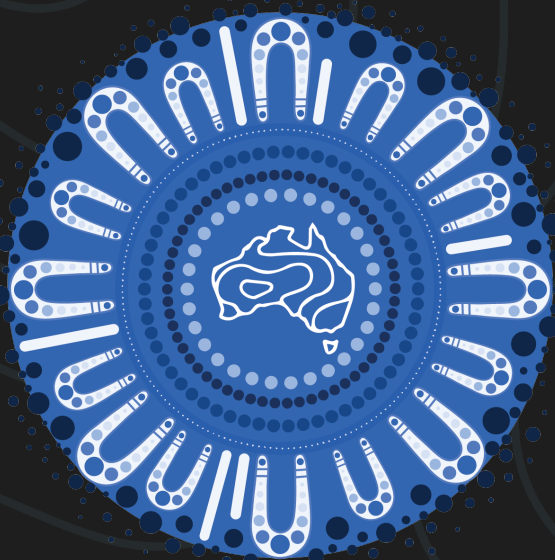
*All artwork is ©Copyright Aboriginal Art by Lani 2024*

*Artwork within this document is under license by Bureau of Meteorology.*

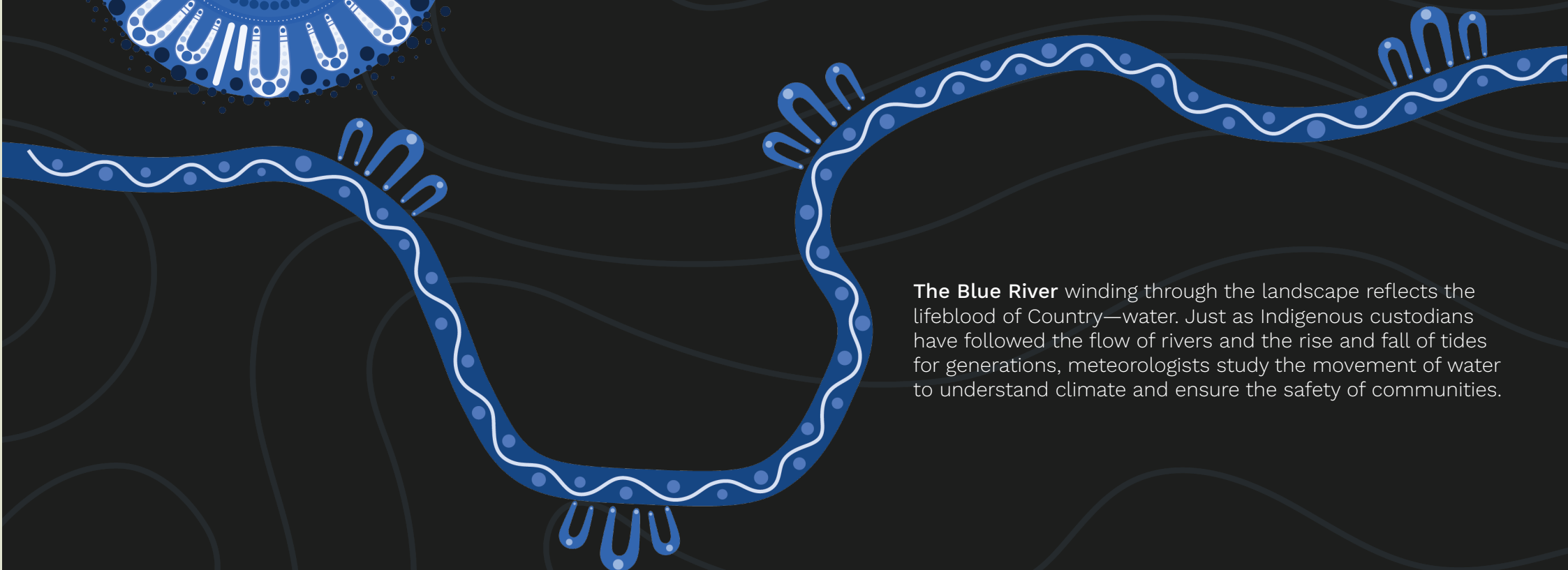
### Reconciliation and the Future

"Weathering Change, Walking Together" reminds us that the wisdom of the past must guide the future. The Bureau of Meteorology's RAP is a commitment to honouring Indigenous weather knowledge, fostering partnerships, and ensuring that all Australians benefit from the deep-rooted understanding of land, sky, and water.

By embracing reconciliation, we acknowledge that Country speaks—and through the collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices, we can all learn to listen.



**The Central Circle** represents a place of gathering and knowledge—where communities come together to share wisdom. It signifies the Bureau of Meteorology’s commitment to listening and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodians of Country. Within it, the shape of Australia acknowledges that this wisdom belongs to all people, uniting traditional knowledge with modern science.



**The Blue River** winding through the landscape reflects the lifeblood of Country—water. Just as Indigenous custodians have followed the flow of rivers and the rise and fall of tides for generations, meteorologists study the movement of water to understand climate and ensure the safety of communities.

# The Bureau's Vision for Reconciliation



As Australia's national weather, climate, water, oceans and space weather agency, the Bureau's role is to make meaningful impact on all sectors of the community and industry to ensure our continuing safety, security and prosperity. The Bureau recognises and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continuing connection to Country for over 60,000 years, with distinct knowledge systems that contribute to addressing national challenges and opportunities.

We recognise the unwavering connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the land and waters on which we operate and strive to create genuine opportunities for connection and partnerships where we are located.

We respectfully acknowledge traditional weather and climate knowledge passed down through countless generations by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

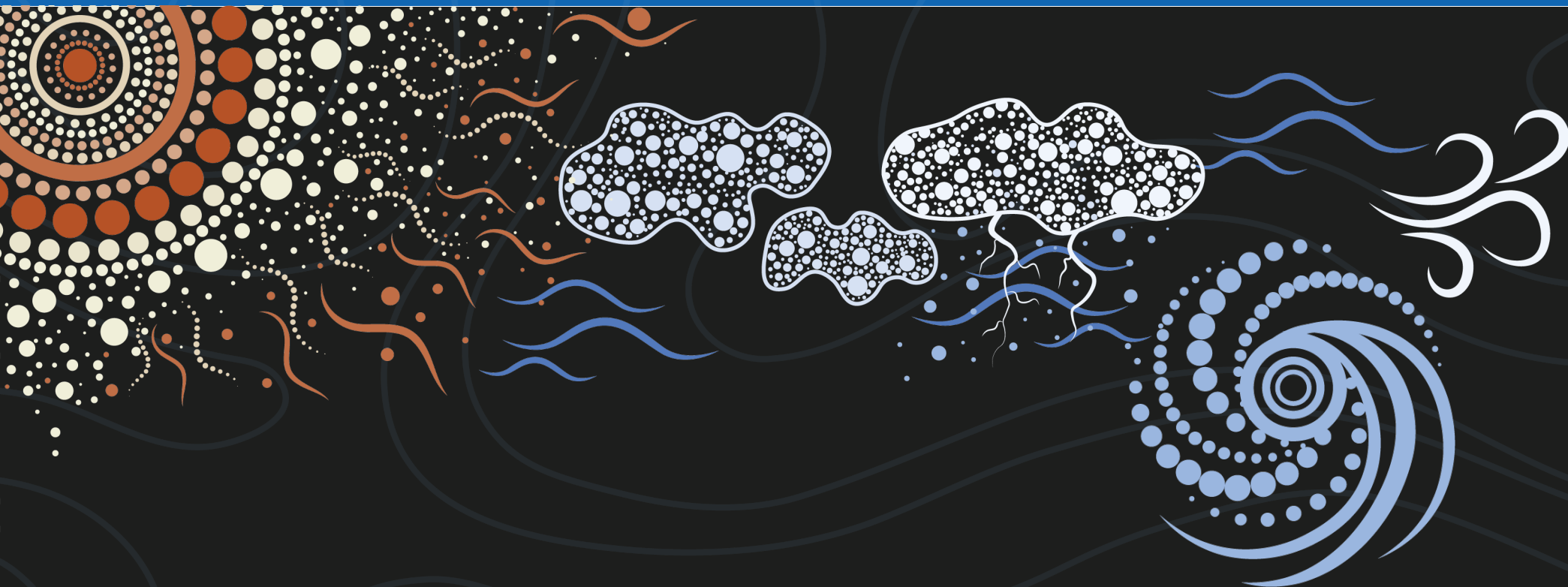
We commit to fostering an inclusive, diverse workplace that is culturally safe, is committed to career opportunities, development and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and recognise representation and diversity as a key workforce strategy that will positively impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the work of the Bureau and the nation.

We will foster a workplace culture of deep respect and enrich staff understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We renew our commitment to embedding reconciliation initiatives into what we do so that it becomes our 'business as usual'.

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their continuing connection to Country. A reconciled Australia embraces traditional weather knowledge as a precious national resource.

Our vision for reconciliation includes recognising and growing opportunities to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to build genuine partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and to seek opportunities for traditional knowledge to contribute to the work of the Bureau in generating science-based solutions to national weather and climate challenges.

This Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a sincere statement of the responsibilities and obligations we have set for ourselves and our organisation. Our RAP shows how serious we are about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians.



**The Weather Patterns** in the sky, swirling winds, gathering clouds, and the radiant sun, embody the ever-changing elements observed by both Indigenous weather watchers and modern meteorologists. The knowledge of seasonal shifts, fire cycles, and storm warnings has always existed, long before satellites and radars.

# Message from Reconciliation Australia



## Reconciliation Australia commends Bureau Of Meteorology on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Bureau Of Meteorology continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Bureau Of Meteorology will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Bureau Of Meteorology using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Bureau Of Meteorology to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Bureau Of Meteorology will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Bureau Of Meteorology's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Bureau Of Meteorology on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

## Message from the Indigenous Champion

As the Bureau's Indigenous Champion, it has been a privilege to play a part in the Bureau's reconciliation journey and incorporating many elements of the previous RAP into our everyday business.

It has been a period of growth for the Bureau as we mature our capability to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. From realigning products and services to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to successfully initiating and completing large scale projects of national significance in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, we see the impact of meaningful RAP initiatives.

This Innovate RAP marks the next step in the Bureau's ongoing commitment to reconciliation. We are committed to ensuring our people, especially our Senior Leadership team, are engaged and empowered to lead initiatives that drive positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities.

Peter Stone  
**Indigenous Champion**  
**Group Executive Business Solutions**

## Message from the First Nations Portfolio Lead



I am excited to help deliver the 2025-2027 Innovate RAP and eager to see the vision of this RAP realised. The First Nations Office is proud to work with our colleagues across the Bureau to implement our RAP commitments.

Given the Bureau's broad reach and our significant impact on all parts of the Australian community and economy, we are proud to deliver a RAP that will further develop the Bureau's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and help evolve how we work together.

The Bureau's vision for reconciliation means viewing our work through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and working in genuine partnership to incorporate it into the work of the Bureau.

The Bureau's vision for reconciliation is not just about providing opportunity for employment and career progression, but to strengthen the Bureau as a culturally safe workplace, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff can excel.

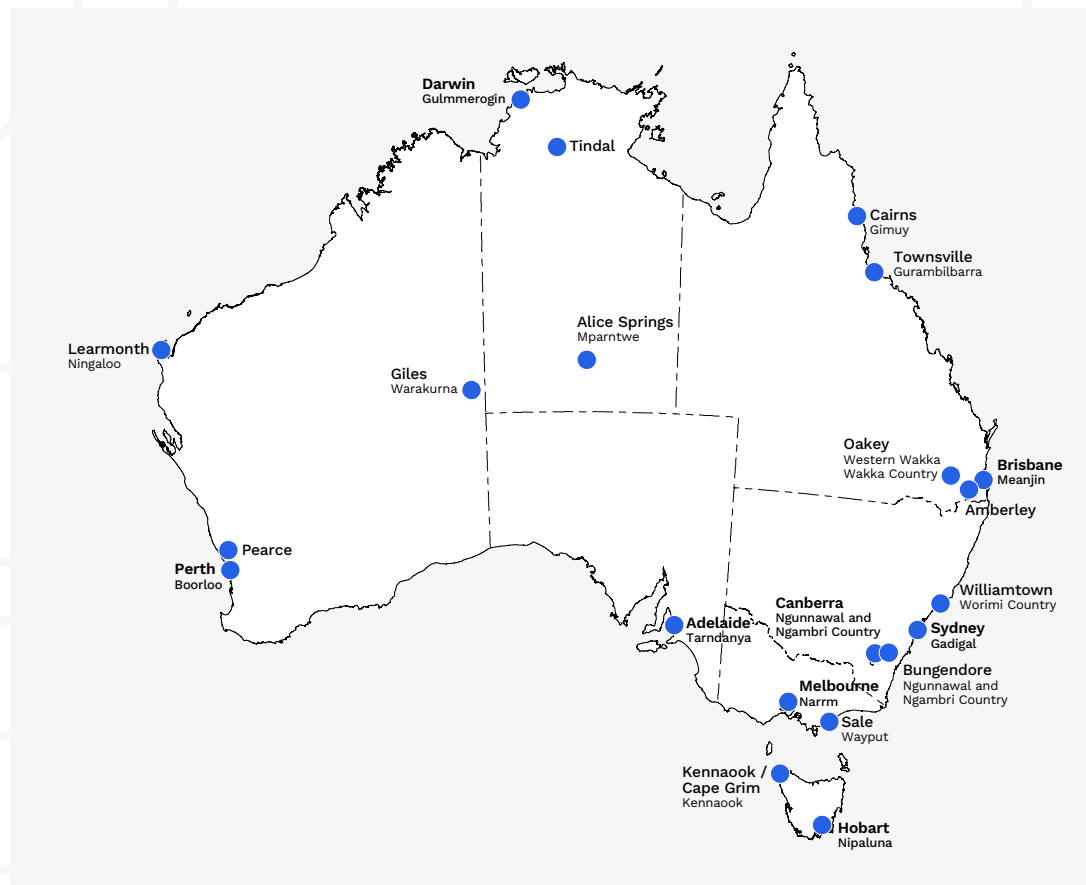
A reconciled Australia is a worthy goal that we all want to see achieved. I am proud to lead the First Nations Office to help deliver the Bureau's RAP and to lead the Bureau in the implementation and delivery of these important initiatives.

Roland Wilson  
**First Nations Portfolio Lead**  
**People Solutions**

# Our business: The Bureau of Meteorology

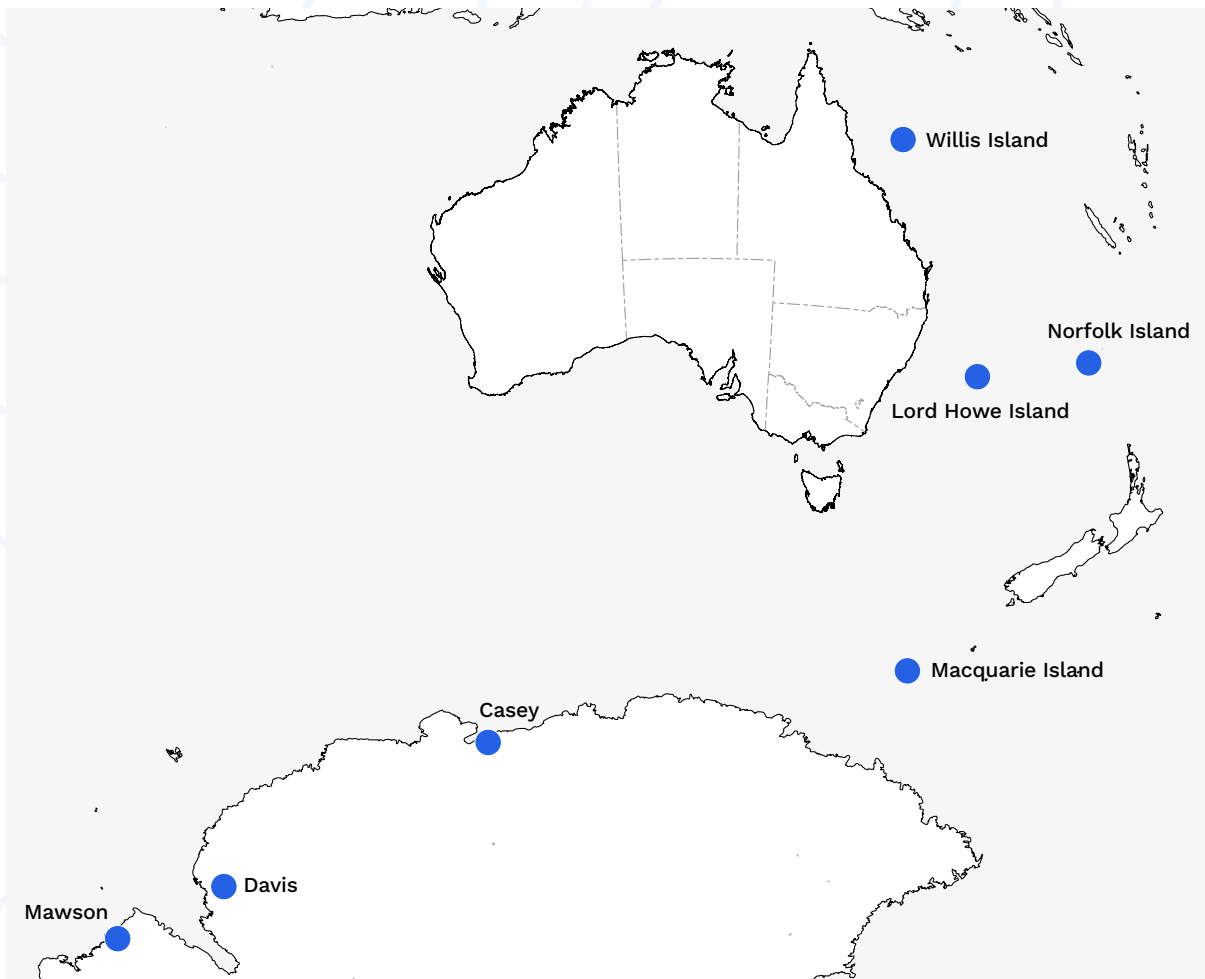


Our core business is to be an organisation of global standing, that is highly valued by the community for our pivotal role in enabling a safe, prosperous, secure and healthy Australia. To provide trusted, reliable and responsive weather, water, climate, ocean and space weather services for Australia – all day, every day. The Bureau has offices in every capital city, as well as regional centres located across Australia to ensure we maintain our reach across all sectors of Australian society. The Bureau of Meteorology employs nearly 1800 people who work from different locations across Australia, and who come from a diverse range of personal and professional backgrounds. Of the total employees, 23 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, representing approximately 1.4% of the Bureau's workforce.



Our sphere of influence is across all sectors; individual, organisations, government, the community, whole of society. The weather impacts each of these customer segments differently and the Bureau strives to make meaningful impact in all sectors of the community and society, of businesses and nationally significant assets to ensure the continuing safety, security and prosperity of Australia.

# Our business: The Bureau of Meteorology



The Bureau's reach is regional, national and international in scope. Our business impacts everyday lives of all Australians but is also crucial to the delivery of weather services to the Australian government and industries, and to regional areas in the Pacific and Antarctic regions. Internationally we partner with a range of global government and non-government agencies and organisations to deliver and improve upon the range of services crucial to the safety and security of all Australians.



**The Footprints and Meeting Circles** scattered across the land remind us of the importance of collaboration and shared journeys. The Bureau of Meteorology walks alongside Indigenous communities, learning from their deep understanding of climate patterns, integrating this knowledge into forecasting and environmental stewardship.

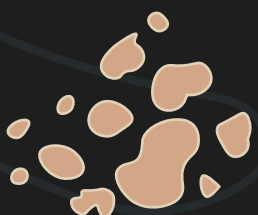



**The Hand prints** symbolise knowledge passed down through generations — marking the presence of Elders and Ancestors who have shared their understanding of the land, sky, and waters. They also represent a commitment to reconciliation, ensuring that Indigenous voices remain visible and valued in the future of meteorology.




**The Kangaroo and Emu Tracks** are sacred symbols of movement, survival, and adaptation. Kangaroos and emus only move forward, never backward, representing progress and resilience. Their tracks across the land tell stories of migration, seasonal changes, and the search for water—aligning with the Bureau's role in tracking weather patterns and guiding communities through climate shifts. These tracks also signify the ongoing journey of reconciliation, ensuring that Indigenous knowledge is recognized and respected in shaping the future.

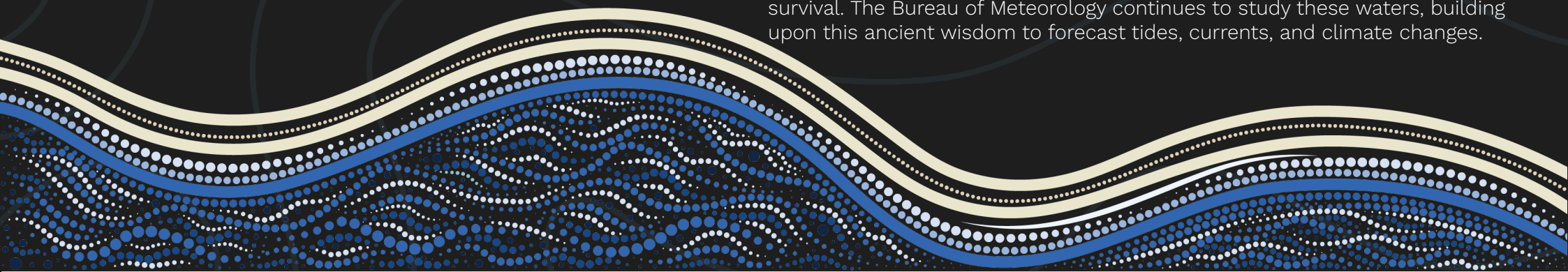
# Artwork Elements



**The Brown Earth Elements** represent the deep connection between land, climate, and culture. The rich soil and ochre tones symbolise the stability of Country, which holds the footprints and stories of generations past. The shifting tones of brown reflect the way land responds to weather—dry and cracked in drought, rich and nourished after rain. Just as Indigenous communities have read these changes in the land for thousands of years, meteorologists today study the impact of weather on soil, agriculture, and ecosystems. The brown elements serve as a reminder that weather does not exist separately from the land—it shapes it, sustains it, and is written into its very surface.



**The Green Flora** growing throughout the artwork represents renewal, resilience, and the deep respect for Country. Indigenous communities have long understood the role of plants in predicting weather patterns—whether through the flowering of certain species signalling the arrival of seasonal rains or the drying of specific leaves forewarning fire conditions. This living knowledge, encoded in nature itself, continues to guide environmental stewardship.



**The Ocean Element** at the Bottom represents the vast waters surrounding the continent, which have shaped the lives and traditions of coastal and island communities. The movement of the ocean, like the shifting seasons, has always been understood through traditional knowledge, guiding navigation, fishing, and survival. The Bureau of Meteorology continues to study these waters, building upon this ancient wisdom to forecast tides, currents, and climate changes.

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan



In developing the Bureau's 2025-2027 RAP, the Bureau is committed to being aspirational and innovative to help our organisation gain a deeper understanding of its sphere of influence and to achieving the commitments we have set out in our RAP. Our RAP reflects the strong commitment across all areas of the organisation to support the delivery, continuation, and success of our RAP commitments. We will do this by engaging all areas of the Bureau and embed the RAP into Program plans, enhancing cultural capability training, and strengthening RAP governance to improve accountability across the organisation.

Building on our reconciliation journey, the benefits of engaging in reconciliation for the Bureau are that we have a deeper understanding of our organisational context and influence, while acknowledging there is more to learn and opportunities to do things differently. We ensure lessons are captured and shared to build the Bureau's collective cultural maturity to drive better reconciliation outcomes. These insights have informed the approach for developing the 2025-2027 RAP, with a lens of striving for value in everything we do to mature the enterprise through learning and doing.

Importantly, it expands ownership of the RAP's delivery, and accountability for success across all areas of the Bureau, with all Bureau Senior Leaders committed to the RAP 2025-2027's success.

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan



It does this by:

- ➔ Establishing a strategic approach to advance reconciliation within the Bureau by embedding the RAP into Group Plans across every business area of the Bureau.
- ➔ Implementing sustainable reconciliation strategies and initiatives that build on the success of the previous RAP.
- ➔ Strengthening existing initiatives, while expanding opportunities to develop new and meaningful ways of engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and partners.

This RAP strengthens how the Bureau can drive reconciliation through its business activities, services, programs and stakeholders across its sphere of influence. The Bureau respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and will observe and follow cultural protocols and further commit to building cultural awareness and capacity across the Bureau.

We will do this by:

- ➔ Initiating a Cultural Learning Needs Analysis to understand and improve our professional development and learning offerings to all staff, and by doing so improve cultural awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and perspectives.
- ➔ Further embedding cultural protocols in the workplace.
- ➔ Respecting culture by, where feasible, adopting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language names for Bureau infrastructure.
- ➔ Acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance, including NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week.

This effort is being led by Group Executive Business Solutions and Indigenous Champion, including championing the inclusion measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and advocating for reconciliation initiatives across the Bureau. The work is directed from the First Nations Office. Alongside them are a range of people who form the RAP Working Group who help to advise and lead the work of reconciliation within the Bureau, including four First Nations employees of the Bureau.



The 2025-2027 RAP Reference Group governance arrangements provide a higher level of accountability across the Bureau, with all business areas involved in implementing the RAP actions.

Our RAP governance includes:

- ➔ **Bureau Executive Team:** The Bureau's Executive Team provides the overall strategic governance and direction for the Bureau, including approving the annual RAP activities and budget.
- ➔ **Indigenous Champion:** This role is fulfilled by the Bureau's Chief Customer Officer. The Indigenous Champion supports and advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, as well as RAP activities across the Bureau. The Indigenous Champion provides strategic support and direction to the RAP Working Group.
- ➔ **The First Nations Office:** This capability oversees the development, implementation and monitoring of RAP initiatives and works closely with the First Nations Senior Advisor, Indigenous Champion, Bureau leadership and Indigenous Employee Network to ensure the RAP aligns with the Bureau's capabilities and objectives.
- ➔ **RAP Working Group:** The RAP Working Group has representation from across the Bureau, including the Indigenous Employee Network. The RAP Working Group advocates and champions the RAP, drives implementation of RAP actions and commitments, and reports on RAP progress to the Bureau's Executive Team and relevant external stakeholders, including Reconciliation Australia. The Working Group also looks to the future to develop the next RAP. It will do this in consultation with staff and the Bureau's Executive Team. All members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Network members are offered the opportunity to participate in the RAP Working Group.

RAP Working Group members include:

- ➔ Indigenous Champion and General Executive Business Solutions,
- ➔ First Nations Portfolio Lead,
- ➔ Manager, People Solutions,
- ➔ Diversity and Inclusion Portfolio Lead,
- ➔ Operations Delivery Support Officer,
- ➔ People Partner,
- ➔ Executive Officer, Business Solutions.



# Highlights of the 2021-2023 RAP



## Relationships

- ⇒ The First Nations Community Engagement Guidelines were developed by Decision Support Services to inform, support, and guide Bureau staff on how to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in a way that is culturally safe, respectful, and reflects best-practice.
- ⇒ In 2023, the Media team travelled to Northwest Australia and met with Indigenous radio, local communities, and various media. The team continues to build connections with remote communities recognising that they are an important customer. This initiative helped grow awareness of what we are proactively doing to complement Bureau services by understanding ways of knowing and sharing information, and thinking differently about how to educate, prepare and advise Indigenous communities who live in areas that are prone to extreme weather.
- ⇒ Decision Support established partnerships with remote communities to help provide severe weather warnings “in Language” to lift key messages into easy to understand and actionable messages.
- ⇒ After a successful pilot in December 2022, CORE Yarning Circles continued in 2023. Seven topics were covered over 16 sessions with around 200 staff participating, reinforcing lessons from the CORE eLearning modules, and building the Bureau’s cultural capability.



## Respect

- ⇒ The Bureau partnered with the local Peerapper people of the Kennaook community in North-western Tasmania to rename the Cape Grim Baseline Air Pollution station to Kennaook / Cape Grim Air Pollution Station.
- ⇒ We integrated Indigenous place names for K’gari (Fraser Island, Qld) and Beswick is now Wugularr (NT), and Pigeon Hole is now Nitjpurru (NT) into Bureau products, with the process for doing so now business as usual.
- ⇒ Property management processes were reviewed to understand legal instruments such as native title and other cultural heritage overlays.
- ⇒ The Bureau assisted with publishing 2 Indigenous Weather Knowledge calendars for the Gibson Desert and Murray Mallee. This work reached a national platform through programs such as the National Environmental Science Program.

# Highlights of the 2021-2023 RAP



## Opportunities

- ⇒ We engaged with Aboriginal communities through the Gwydir Project as part of the Murray Darling Basin Water Information Portal. The Gwydir project was led by the Bureau and consulted and worked collaboratively with local Gomeroi/Kamilaroi Elders who contributed their water and river knowledge and expertise, which is displayed on the Water Information Portal to inform better water management across the Basin and celebrate their traditional cultural and scientific knowledge.
- ⇒ Becoming a Supply Nation member, with a total Indigenous contract value of \$43 million across 2021-2023.
- ⇒ Employing an Indigenous Procurement Officer and having an Indigenous Procurement Strategy has provided a way to better understand how the Bureau can improve economic opportunities for Indigenous companies, and stakeholders.
- ⇒ The Bureau sponsored an Aboriginal staff member through the Master of Indigenous Business Leadership at Monash University.



## Governance

- ⇒ The Bureau completed the RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire in 2022 and 2023, submitting results to Reconciliation Australia.
- ⇒ The Bureau's next RAP was registered with Reconciliation Australia in December 2023.
- ⇒ The First Nations Office was established to oversee and lead the implementation of the 2025-2027 RAP.

# Case study: NT Aboriginal Interpreter Service Project



Language plays an important role in communicating and understanding severe weather.

Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Northern Australia face the potential for severe weather events, including cyclones, thunderstorms and floods, every wet season. The Bureau has been working closely with local communities to strengthen mutual understanding of the impacts of these events on the community and enable seasonal community preparedness.

In 2021, Decision Support Services began collaborating on a project with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS), the NT Emergency Service and NT Government's Public Information Group to deliver 'in-language' and live interpreting for Aboriginal communities affected by major floods in March 2022.

It was the first time something like this was done successfully in the Northern Territory (NT), with the interpreters having received pre-season specialist training by the Bureau along with key emergency services partners.

Community members and Bureau team members did two-way knowledge-building around weather and held a mock media event to allow interpreters to practise. This work came to fruition months later, when severe flooding forced evacuations in the communities of Kalkarindji, Daguragu and Nitjpurru.



*October 2022 training workshop with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service, NT Emergency Service, Bureau of Meteorology and a Charles Darwin University student*



*NT Police Commander Danny Bacon, the Bureau's Shenagh Gamble and Gurindji interpreter Sharon MacMillan at a press conference in March 2023*

**“We were able to contact one of the interpreters, Sharon MacMillan from our training workshop, she came to the media event and interpreted into Gurindji. Three media events over three days got out in Gurindji language as well as in English. That really made our messaging so much more accessible and relevant for those communities.” Josie Matheson**

**“We had the opportunity to work with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) to really get that important in-language messaging to communities that were being impacted on the ground,” says Shenagh Gamble, Manager for Hazard Preparedness & Response (HPR) – Northern Territory.**



## A Weather and Climate Communication Workshop was held with the Ngukurr Community in November 2023.

Attended by Josie Matthiesson, Community Engagement Officer, Alice Nagy, Decision Support Officer and Ian Shepherd, Senior Meteorologist from Decision Support Services Program (Northern Territory) and Charles Darwin University (CDU), the workshop focused on how we can better work together to keep people safe.

For many it was the first opportunity to discuss the challenges with communication and emergency management that arose during previous cyclones. The workshop was an opportunity for the Bureau to consult with Traditional Owners and community leaders in Ngukurr to learn about local knowledge and governance practices around weather and climate. The focus was on physical and cultural safety and the role of weather knowledge and language in building disaster resilience.

The Bureau is now working with emergency management partners to simplify community messaging, prioritising preparedness activities for remote northern communities.



*First Nations Climate Communications Community Workshop Ngukurr, November 2023.*

# Key challenges and lessons learned



The following key challenges and lessons learned highlight the complexities and opportunities faced in advancing our RAP initiative:

- ➔ Many RAP initiative actions can take more than 2 years as we gain a greater understanding of our organisation's context and influence and build relationships with our people, stakeholders, and communities.
- ➔ Engagement should be approached as a learning opportunity and valued for the positive impact it has in strengthening understanding and trust. This paves the way for exploring ways of working together that are mutually beneficial. Processes to capture and share these lessons across the Bureau should be strengthened.
- ➔ The Bureau's cultural training and guidelines are an important foundation to ensure teams are equipped to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- ➔ Resourcing should be explored to support teams on the ground to engage more meaningfully with communities for better mutual outcomes.
- ➔ Seasonal employment of technicians was explored and trialled with limited success. Committing to continued onsite, face-to-face contact with Traditional Owners has built relationships that have paved the way for communities to have a communication channel to approach the Bureau for employment opportunities.
- ➔ Average Staffing Level (ASL) and resourcing constraints, combined with low participation in the APS (Australian Public Service) entry level pathway programs has affected the intake of graduates and trainees in 2024, resulting in limited success of these programs.
- ➔ Due to resourcing constraints to support the RAP Reference Group, representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff was difficult to maintain, and a Terms of Reference was not established.
- ➔ Progress reporting was initially challenging as RAP Leads developed an understanding of their responsibilities. Additionally, there was turnover of RAP Leads which affected continuity.
- ➔ The Bureau did not meet its employment targets for the period of the 2021-23 RAP. A priority for the next Innovate RAP will be to develop and implement the Bureau's Indigenous Employment Plan to guide the attraction, recruitment, retention and career progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

# RAP Pillars and RAP deliverable items



A Reconciliation Action Plan is based around the core pillars of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities which are designed to provide tangible and substantive benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Each pillar is designed with a range of deliverable items that are set out by Reconciliation Australia, as well as a range of items that are unique commitments by the Bureau to achieve our vision for reconciliation.

This Innovate RAP focuses on strengthening the commitments we have made previously, builds on our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and develops new commitments to enhance the Bureau's cultural capabilities and advance our vision for reconciliation.



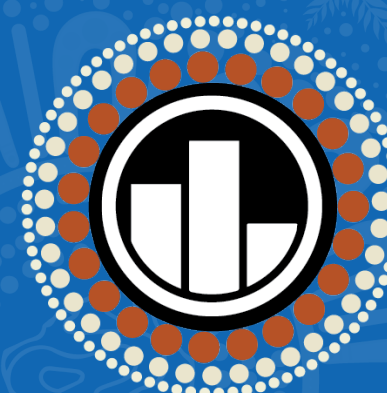
**Relationships**



**Respect**



**Opportunities**



**Governance**



# Relationships



The Bureau recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connection to and knowledge of Country and the importance of building and maintaining relationships and partnerships. These relationships support the collection and sharing of weather, water, climate and ocean knowledge to strengthen and build confidence in our services, ensuring they reflect the needs and values of our communities.

**Focus area:** This focus area aligns with the Bureau's Strategic Success Pillar of 'The Bureau Way' – one enterprise, that is safe and diverse, where our people grow and are empowered to excel, and where our customers come first, trust us, and consider that we are a pleasure to work with.

## Profile: Shaunah Downton



### Operations Delivery Support Officer, Service Delivery Optimisation, Aviation, Land and Maritime Transport

I joined the Bureau almost 3 years ago in Aviation, Land and Maritime (ALMT), Aviation Operations. I came through the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program in late 2021, graduating university in 2022. Reconciliation for me means creating a sense of belonging, standing together in unity regardless of our differences and promoting our culture and our people.

Aviation, Land and Maritime (ALMT) formed a Reconciliation Action Plan reference group to tackle this opportunity, where 11 of my colleges and I have collaborated to embed Reconciliation into our everyday working lives. The objective is to promote Reconciliation by commemorating key days through activities, creating initiatives, knowledge sharing and supporting our First Nations staff.

We provide opportunity for all staff in the ALMT to wear and represent our Bureau RAP polos, and we celebrate National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week across our locations to provide activities for staff to engage and reflect on the significance of these events. We intend to lead by example in the Bureau with this reference group and continue to do our part for Reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Continue to promote the Bureau's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Guidelines, including embedding the guidelines into staff learning and development programs, to grow our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	January 2025	General Manager Decision Support Services
	Engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to continuously improve our guiding principles for engagement, and that Bureau business areas have appropriate training to engage effectively.	January 2025 Review yearly	General Manager Decision Support Services
	Strengthen and expand media relationships between the Bureau, First Nations media organisations and relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies to be written into relevant Bureau Program Plans	January 2025 Review annually	General Manager Decision Support Services, General Manager Communications
	Develop research ethics guidelines to provide relevant, contemporary advice about ethical conduct in research engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Research, General Manager Organisational Resilience
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	RAP Working Group members to participate in external National Reconciliation Week events and are actively supported by the Executive Team to do so.	May 2025, 2026, and Annually	Indigenous Champion, First Nations Office
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW by providing resources, and information to all staff about Reconciliation Week events nationally on the Breeze News webpage.	May 2025, 2026, and Annually	Indigenous Champion, General Manager Communications, First Nations Office
	Organise and fund at least one internal National Reconciliation Week event annually at each capital city office, including a Bureau-wide national event each year where all Bureau staff are encouraged to participate collectively in the event.	May 2025, 2026, and Annually	Enterprise Contribution, Indigenous Champion, General Manager Communications, First Nations Office
	Register all our National Reconciliation Week events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	March 2025, 2026, and Annually	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop a RAP implementation plan to engage all business areas and staff to drive reconciliation initiatives and outcomes.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development, General Manager Communications
	Each business area to actively identify and consider opportunities relevant to their area to positively engage and influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	March 2025	Enterprise contribution, First Nations Office
	Collaborate with other public sector agencies and departments to advance reconciliation at the Bureau by networking and sharing learnings to drive innovation and advance reconciliation measures within the Bureau and across the APS.	March 2025 Review annually	Indigenous Champion, First Nations Office
	The Bureau will continue to fund and support up to 2 JAWUN secondee positions annually. JAWUN secondees will contribute to Bureau reconciliation initiatives across the Bureau and assist in facilitating Bureau reconciliation objectives with their external customers.	January 2025 Review annually	Indigenous Champion, First Nations Office
	Develop enterprise project management documentation, including investment proposal templates and project management plan templates, to include consideration of engagement and consultation with First Nations communities.	June 2025 June 2026	General Manager Portfolio Management
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Review workforce procedures concerned with anti-discrimination, including affirmative action measures in advertising hiring of new employees; manager training on employment affirmative action measures; conducting a gap analysis.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development
	Develop, implement, and communicate procedures concerned with anti-discrimination. Senior leaders to model, encourage and support anti-discrimination policies, campaigns, initiatives, or stances against racism as they arise.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to continuously improve our anti-discrimination procedures. This will be in line with the regular review cycle.	February 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development,

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Continuously strive to improve the Bureau's services and products to ensure the physical and cultural safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers	Continue to work with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media organisations, government emergency management agencies and consult with local communities and interpreting services that will lead to the provision of weather and warning broadcast services to communities in plain English and/or local language where possible.	January 2025 Reviewed annually	General Manager Decision Support Services, General Manager Business Management
	Improve Bureau procedures to embed dual place names in Bureau products where they are gazetted.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Business Management
	Explore training and development options for the forecasting team to enable radio crosses into local communities utilising local place names.	January 2025 June 2026	General Manager Decision Support Services
	Ensure ongoing support and engagement with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop and maintain Indigenous Weather Knowledge calendars.	July 2025, Review annually	General Manager Research, General Manager Decision Support Services



# Respect



The Bureau respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. We recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional knowledge languages, histories, and practices, seek to build our knowledge and understanding of Indigenous weather knowledge systems and work in partnership across our operational footprint.

**Focus area:** Respect aligns the Bureau's Strategic Success Pillar of 'The Bureau Way' – building an enterprise that is safe, inclusive, and diverse for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and where our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers come first, trust us, and consider that we are a pleasure to work with.

## Profile: Cheryl Lewis-Fitzgerald



### Senior Advisor, Learning & Development, People Solutions

*"I hear the magpie's song as I stand on the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation"*

I have been organising and participating in Yarning Circles at the Bureau since 2022. They provide a safe environment where we can talk, share, discuss, educate and have a yarn together. They are a place to build respectful relationships and a space to enrich my learning experiences. And what a personal journey it has been for me in organising and taking part in these circles.

Working with the facilitator, he asked each of us what home meant. Then told us, that was basically an acknowledgement – what the land we stood on meant to us. That was the start of my own, personal, Acknowledgement of Country. With each acknowledgement I look at the local Aboriginal calendar and let people know what is happening on the lands on which I stand. And I have been learning local knowledge to start work on my own Indigenous garden in my home.

After many Yarning Circles, my journey and my quest for knowledge continues. No matter how many I attend I know that I will always have questions, and the yarning circles provide me with a place to do this.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Senior Leadership Team will exemplify behaviours that demonstrate ongoing cultural learning	All SLT and EL2 staff commit to complete cultural competency training by 28th March 2025. All new SLT members and EL2s are to complete their cultural competency training within 12 months of commencement.	1 April 2025	CEO, General Manager Organisational Development
	All senior leaders and team managers to promote, encourage and support staff to complete cultural competency training modules and report on completion rates for their business areas.	June 2025 Review annually	Enterprise contribution
7. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	All senior leaders will contribute to the development and finalisation of a Cultural Learning Needs analysis, and to the development of a Cultural Learning Framework.	February 2025 March 2026	Enterprise contribution, General Manager Organisational Development
	Reflect Cultural competency and responsiveness into the People Skills Framework	March 2025 November 2025	General Manager Organisational Development
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning, open to all staff, not just in the cities.	March 2025 Review annually	Enterprise contribution, First Nations Office
	Encouraging all business areas to engage with the online learning packages with a target of 70% of all staff completion rate.	March 2025 review annually	Enterprise contribution
8. Demonstrate respect through embedding of cultural protocols.	Review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols and Event Checklist, ensuring the document explains the purpose and significance of cultural protocols, and includes for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Communication First Nations Office
	Promote the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols and Event Checklist through internal communications to staff, with focus communicating the importance of these protocols.	June 2025 Promote annually	General Manager Communication, First Nations Office
	Acknowledgement of Country continues to be performed at the beginning of all formal Bureau meetings and all public events.	January 2025 Review annually	Enterprise contribution
	Acknowledgement of Country to be included on the Bureau's mobile phone application.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager DCCED
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	May 2025 Annually	Enterprise contribution

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's cultural heritage and land rights through appropriate management of the Bureau's operational footprint.	Engage a cultural heritage management consultant to review and inform property management and local community engagement processes relating to legal instruments such as native title and other cultural heritage overlays.	June 2025 Review annually	Group Executive Enterprise Services Group, BSG, DDG, OSO, Property Services, Organisational Resilience
	Infrastructure project documentation to be updated regarding dual naming, including socialisation with stakeholders and ratification.	June 2025 Reviewed annually	General Manager Observing Systems and Operations
	Explore options for development of an Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Hub for all program areas to share relevant knowledge and experiences in program engagement, design and delivery relevant to First Nations engagement.	June 2025 Review annually	First Nations Office, Enterprise contribution
10. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning, open to all staff, not just in the cities.	July 2025, 2026 Annually Reviewed annually	Enterprise contribution, First Nations Office
	Encouraging all business areas to engage with the online learning packages with a target of 70% of all staff completion rate.	July 2025, 2026 Reviewed annually	Indigenous Champion, General Manager Communications First Nations Office





# Opportunities



The Bureau is committed to providing and creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses. We aim to improve the attraction, retention and career progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our organisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the Bureau. We will also help to improve economic outcomes by strengthening and growing our procurement pipeline.

**Focus area:** Creating opportunities that will support equality in education, employment and economic development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and our customers.

## Case study: Giles Station in remote Western Australia

Giles weather station is located on Ngaanyatjarra Lands near the Northern Territory border, 330 kilometres west of Uluru, at the western end of the Rawlinson Ranges. It is an important part of the Bureau's forecasting network, collecting data to predict weather that will impact the east coast populations of Australia.

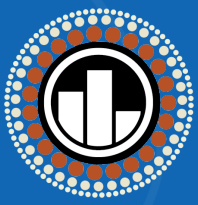
The construction of the Gunbarrell Highway allowed for the establishment of the Giles Weather Station in 1956. With the road and the weather station came the establishment of the Warakurna Community, Warakurna meaning waterhole, which is an active community with close ties to the weather station.

Local schoolchildren regularly visit the station to learn about the station work, weather observations and to see a weather balloon release. Giles teams help in town including joining the local AFL team, making "trains" out of oil barrels, volunteering at the school, and helping with community functions. Giles may be a remote posting, but our people are often surprised how social and busy the place can get!

In 2023, Hana Glencross, stationed at Giles, spent time engaging with local women to paint up car bonnets for signage at the weather office. The signs are located around Giles, letting visitors know where to go. Warakurna school students have also painted a weather calendar at Giles which displays local seasons, the availability of foods and medicines and when weather events occur annually.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2025 Reviewed annually	General Manager Organisational Development
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development plan.	June 2025 Reviewed every 6 months	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	January 2025 Reviewed annually	General Manager Organisational Development, Enterprise contribution
	Ensure affirmative measures job advertisements as standard practice across the Bureau to increase First Nations employment levels, in line with the targets listed in the corporate plan.	June 2025 Reviewed annually	General Manager Organisational Development, Enterprise contribution
	Review HR and recruitment procedures, policies and flexible working arrangements and locations to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention is in line with new the provisions of the Bureau's EA.	June 2025 – December 2026	General Manager Organisational Development
	Provide opportunity for up to one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to attend and study a relevant post-graduate university course over the life of the RAP.	January 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development
12. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Strengthen, promote and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	January 2025 Promote annually	General Manager Portfolio Management
	Continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business as a Supply Nation member.	January 2025 Ongoing	General Manager Portfolio Management
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to managers and staff planning or undertaking procurements.	June 2025 Annually	General Manager Portfolio Management
	Review and update procurement practices to remove or mitigate agency-specific barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2025 Review annually	General Manager Portfolio Management
	Each business area to explore opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Portfolio Management



## Profile: Paul Feikema



### Team Lead, Water Forecasting and Jarwun secondee

During 2022 Paul Feikema, Team Lead Water Forecasting was seconded to the Jawun program and based in Alice Springs / Mparntwe (pronounced M-ban tua, which is the local Arrernte name for Alice Springs) in Central Australia. Paul's project looked how and what the Central Lands Council monitor to report against its native title functions across the organisation, and to then identify overlaps and gaps. This was an important step for the organisation to be more efficient in capturing the information needed.

'I gained a greater appreciation for the deep and enduring relationships that Aboriginal people have with the land...the secondment provided a unique opportunity to immerse myself in that environment, and to engage with issues affecting Aboriginal communities in the region. I am so grateful to The Bureau and to Jawun for having made this possible'.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group	January 2025	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office
	Review Terms of Reference for the RWG annually or as needed.	June 2025 Review annually	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February 2025 Meet quarterly	General Manager Organisational Development, First Nations Office
14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs and review annually or as needed for RAP implementation.	April 2025 Review annually	Enterprise contribution
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments as a part of the regular reporting cycle.	January 2025 Annually	Enterprise contribution
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January 2025	General Manager Organisational Development
	Support our internal Indigenous Champion	January 2025	Enterprise contribution First Nations Office
	Elevate RAP actions into Group Plans to provide greater visibility and accountability, and to ensure teams are resourced to effectively deliver them	March 2025 Review 6-monthly	General Manager Strategy & Performance, Enterprise contribution
15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2025, 2026, and Annually	General Manager Organisational Development
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	March 2025 Report quarterly	General Manager Communications General Manager Organisational Development
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	June 2025 Annually	Indigenous Champion, CEO
	Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2026	General Manager Organisational Development
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2026	General Manager Organisational Development

## Contact details:

First Nations Office

[FirstNations@bom.gov.au](mailto:FirstNations@bom.gov.au)



Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology

