

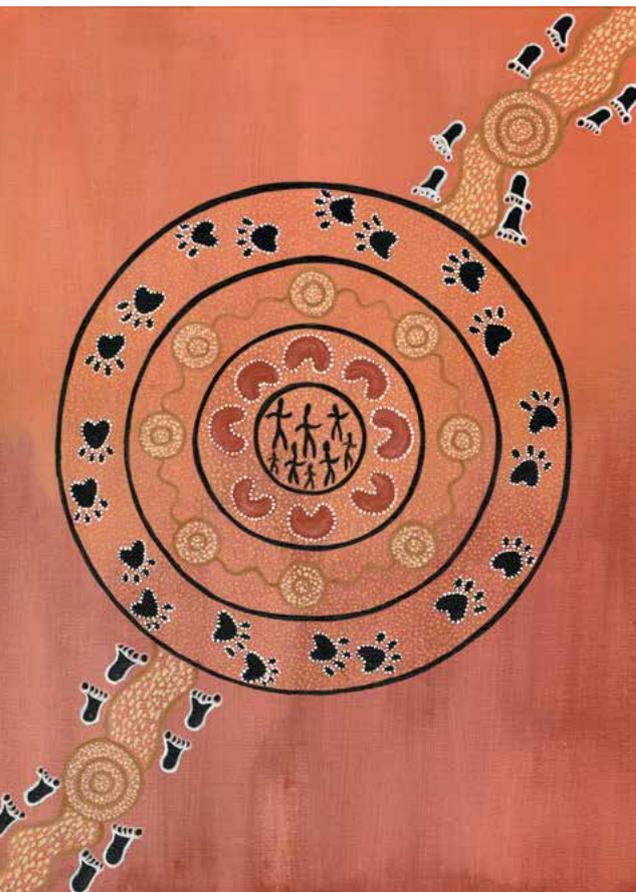
**Reconciliation
Action Plan
2017 / 2018**





Daphne Rickett, Kurna/Ngarrindjeri woman

Self taught artist. My painting represents my Identity my people my culture. My personality represents who I am with my brightness and colours in my life. My journeys of who I am where I come from and my stories.



This painting by Aboriginal artist Daphne Rickett tells Guide Dogs' story.

The background colour deep ochre represents the earth, moving through and up to the more orange background colour which represents Guide Dogs SA/NT colours. Our rich and diverse country where two states come together with the richness of the colour of the earth.

From the bottom of the painting footprints into the circle is Guide Dogs SA bringing services and caring into communities. As with this theme, we see Guide Dogs Northern Territory coming into communities in the Territory at the upper part of this painting.

Together, in both SA and NT Guide Dogs is working with community, to develop and build understanding both with and between the people of these communities and Guide Dogs. From the inner circle we see the people in community, moving out then to the local and then the wider communities, representing Guide Dogs caring in the community. The dog paw prints in the outer circle are a big part but not all of our story.

Guide Dogs, reaching out to the people in these communities.

**Guide Dogs SA/NT
acknowledge and thank
Daphne for her support
and contribution on our
journey of Reconciliation.**



CEO foreword

I am pleased to present Guide Dogs SA/NT's Reconciliation Action Plan. This was truly a journey of discovery for our organisation; a journey of genuine reflection.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians deserve parity with other Australians in terms of opportunity and access to services to redress disadvantage.

Guide Dogs SA/NT is proud of its vision services to many communities particularly in the Northern Territory. However the need is great. Through the RAP process we recognise that as a caring organisation we can and must do much more to ensure all Australians have every opportunity to lead lives with opportunity and success.

Sight is such an integral part of the totality of how we live and interact. In fact, nine out of 10 Australians say that sight is their most valued sense. Without it there is a sense of loss, but also importantly low vision can put people at risk of falls, isolation and depression. Add remote location or disadvantage and the risk becomes so much more a reality.

With our ageing population, the issue of low vision and how we as a caring community find ways where together we can ensure no one is left waiting in the dark becomes that much more critical.

Blindness rates in Indigenous adults are six times the rate of blindness in non-Indigenous Australians; yet 75% of vision loss in Australia is preventable or treatable, this increases to 94% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The statistics are stark. Hearing loss and ear disease is widespread and much more prevalent amongst

Australian Indigenous people. The World Health Organisation defines a prevalence rate of middle ear disease higher than four percent in a population as being a "massive health problem". Many Aboriginal communities have a prevalence rate up to 10 times higher than this.

The statistics tell only part of a compelling story for action; behind each and every one is a person that deserves an outcome that will enable them to live with dignity and purpose.

At Guide Dogs SA/NT we work with people to maximise their available vision and hearing and provide ways to meet their own aspirations. We are #morethandogs and many of our services in mobility and life skills have changed lives, particularly for people in remote Aboriginal Communities.

I would like to thank the Guide Dogs SA/NT staff and community members who have consultatively developed the Reconciliation Action Plan. It is a document that I believe must be much more than words. It must be a document that sparks action and initiatives to ensure on going progress.

This RAP is not the end of the process. It does not have all the answers. But it is a commitment to working collaboratively in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to redress the balance. It is our commitment – from staff, volunteers, Board Members and others – to ensure that together we can see a world where no one is left waiting in the dark.

Chief Executive Officer
Guide Dogs SA/NT

Our vision for reconciliation

Guide Dogs SA/NT is committed to ensuring all people living with sensory loss have access to knowledge and culturally appropriate services to lead lives with greater independence, safety and inclusion.

We will work to actively break down barriers – whether external or internal – to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are informed and empowered to achieve their individual goals and overcome disadvantage.

Our values

Achievement

We deliver outcomes.

We deliver our services to the highest possible standard.

We deliver results that have value for customers.

We deliver on time as promised.

We recognise and celebrate achievements.

We hold ourselves accountable.

Collaboration

We actively engage with others.

We work together to achieve our goals.

We work in partnership with other teams.

We seek the input of others in matters that impact them.

We share our expertise and knowledge freely.

We actively listen to others.

Integrity

We are ethical, honest and respectful.

We respect the uniqueness of individuals.

We are transparent in our communication.

We act in the best interests of customers.

We do what we say we will do.

We are non-judgemental in our dealings with others.

Fun

We play our part in making this an energetic and enjoyable place for ourselves and others.

We show enthusiasm for what we do.

We balance life and work.

We contribute to a vibrant working environment.

We support and encourage one another.

We create opportunities for celebration and camaraderie.

Innovation

We are forward thinking.

We are open to new ideas.

We are solutions-focussed.

We take responsibility for developing ourselves.

We proactively seek new ways to create value for customers and the organisation.

We continually look for ways to improve our services.

Our business

Our workplace

We are passionate about creating a dynamic, customer-focused, progressive and high achieving organisation; a place where people are valued and respected; where people want to come to work and where fulfilling partnerships are realised.

Objective

We currently support people living with Sensory Disability through a range of tailored services and programs. We assist the individuals and their families to actively and positively participate in the community.

We deliver client services which incorporate Sensory Services (case management), Vision Services, Guide Dogs Services and Hearing Services for people with disabilities, in addition to offering specialised services for children with Autism and Sensory Disability. We are the first Guide Dogs organisation in Australia to utilise its expertise in training dogs to introduce an Autism Assistance Dog program to improve the lives of families living with a child or children with Autism.

We currently support more than 3000 clients through tailored services to meet needs presented over a lifetime: these range from life skills for children with a sensory disability, to study and employment, the transition to independent living and ongoing support for older Australians. Our focus is to provide training and opportunities to enrich the lives of clients and empower them with greater independence and confidence to thrive within the community.

Our programs include:

- Guide Dogs
- Autism Assistance Dogs
- Pets as Therapy
- Vision Services Low Vision, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Falls Prevention Program
- Children Services
- Orientation and Mobility Services
- Neurological Vision Services
- Hearing Services
- Case Management Services
- Counselling

With offices based in Adelaide and Darwin, we currently provide services to more than 3,000 individuals including many in regional and remote areas throughout SA & NT.

Our 79 full-time equivalent employees could not achieve this without the help of over 350 volunteers. However, currently Guide Dogs SA/NT does not have any employees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Guide Dogs SA/NT Background

Guide Dogs SA/NT (Guide Dogs) has been in operation since 1957. It was founded through a partnership by Apex and Rotary with an objective of supporting people who were blind and vision impaired to be more independent and mobile. The first Guide Dog in South Australia, 'Faye' was placed in 1957.

In 1962, Guide Dogs expanded to include the Northern Territory and in 1972, the introduction of Orientation and Mobility Services significantly increased its capacity to support the vision impaired. In 1996, following a government grant, Guide Dogs evolved to become a sensory agency. The mandate to support people living with sensory loss expanded to include children and their families living with Autism in 2010.

Present Day

The organisation offers client and family focussed services, considering each person holistically in the context of their lives. The organisation works in partnership with clients, families, caregivers and significant people in the client's life to provide a service which is flexible and responsive to their needs, while supporting the client to achieve their maximum potential.

Our RAP

The Guide Dogs SA/NT Reconciliation Action Plan working group was formed in 2016, and has developed this plan in consultation with the Executive and with contributions from other employees within the organisation. Our RAP will be implemented in March 2017 for a twelve month time frame.

Guide Dogs SA/NT provides services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in rural and remote regions of South Australia and the Northern Territory, where there is a high incidence of low vision and blindness. This RAP has been developed to help address the gap in services and the number of clients that the services are able to be offered to, to raise awareness and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation amongst not only clients but staff and volunteers, and to ensure culturally sensitive services are able to be accessed by our clients to assist them to reach their goals.

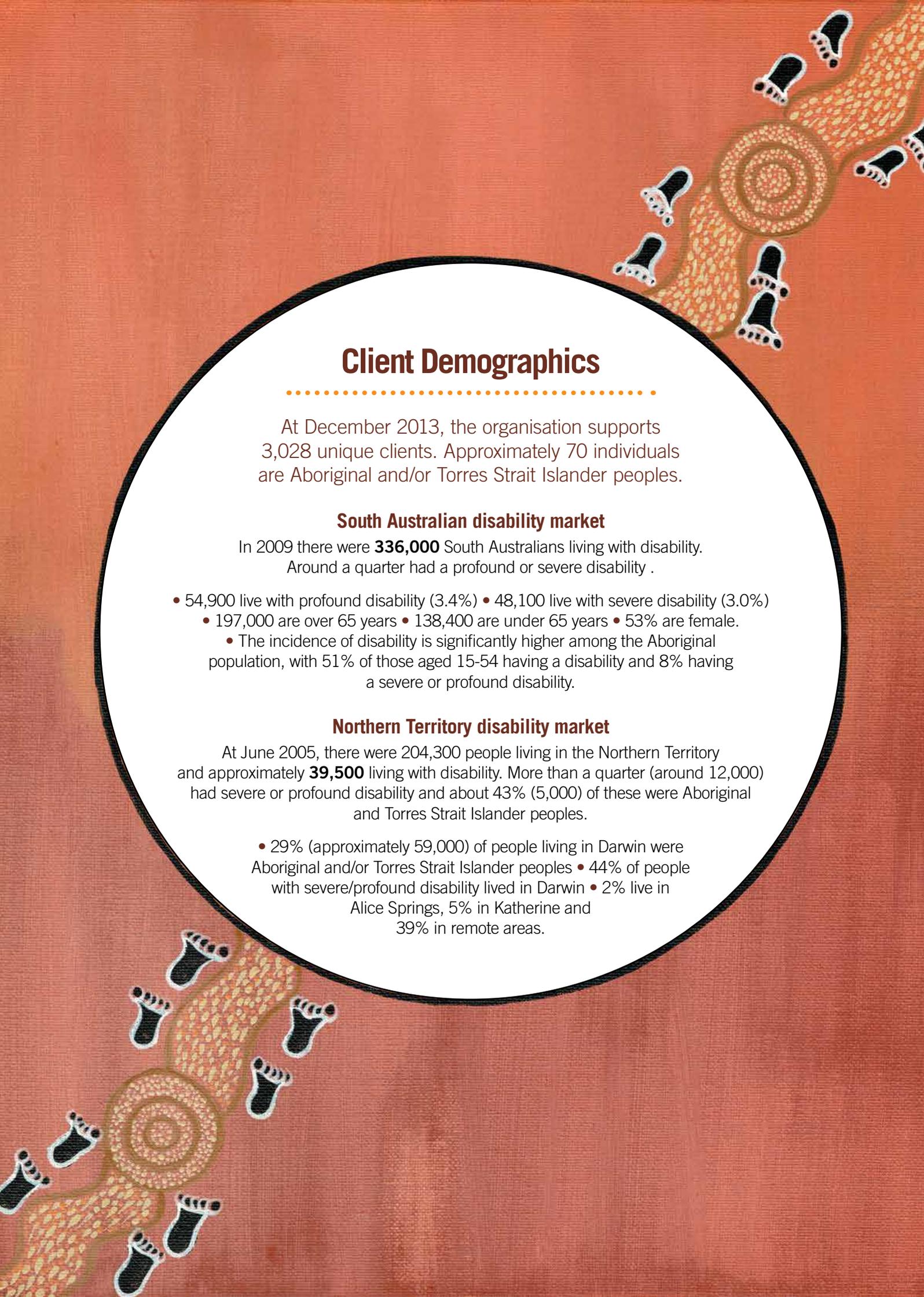
Our RAP represents our dedication to address inequality faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in access to employment and services, by working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; as well as our commitment to providing culturally sensitive services to meet the needs of our clients and the community, to promote understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to proactively seek to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and volunteers. In developing this RAP we also aim to uphold and apply cultural protocols such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country.

The working group, (please refer to table 1.0) includes representatives from the South Australian and Northern Territory offices across all departments, client representation as well as external representatives including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The RAP Working Group followed the guidelines as provided by Reconciliation Australia in their RAP toolkit. Our RAP is championed by the Executive Manager of Client Services, Garry Peschel. The Working Group oversaw the RAP's development supported by the organisation's key stakeholders including external representatives.

1. We contacted Reconciliation Australia to gain advice and support to begin our RAP Journey and our intention to develop a RAP
2. We established our RAP Working Group and agreed on our Terms of Reference, planning, processes and time lines, meeting monthly throughout 2016 as we developed our RAP
3. We agreed on our RAP vision
4. We commenced internal and external consultations and sought feedback to assist us in the development of our RAP
5. We worked with Reconciliation Australia to ensure our RAP covered all appropriate strategies to achieve the Reflect RAP
6. We then received endorsement and executive sign off from the Guide Dogs SA.NT Executive and Board, RAP Working Group, and Reconciliation Australia
7. We scheduled our Reconciliation Action Plan launch for March 2017, to be followed by implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our progress

Thanks are expressed to the following people for their contributions to the RAP Process: Tina Summers from Aboriginal Community Care SA; Carmen Dadleh from Aboriginal Health Council SA; Mathew Campbell from GPEX; and Cassandra Jevdenijevec, Guide Dogs Client.



Client Demographics

At December 2013, the organisation supports 3,028 unique clients. Approximately 70 individuals are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

South Australian disability market

In 2009 there were **336,000** South Australians living with disability. Around a quarter had a profound or severe disability .

- 54,900 live with profound disability (3.4%) • 48,100 live with severe disability (3.0%)
- 197,000 are over 65 years • 138,400 are under 65 years • 53% are female.
- The incidence of disability is significantly higher among the Aboriginal population, with 51% of those aged 15-54 having a disability and 8% having a severe or profound disability.

Northern Territory disability market

At June 2005, there were 204,300 people living in the Northern Territory and approximately **39,500** living with disability. More than a quarter (around 12,000) had severe or profound disability and about 43% (5,000) of these were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- 29% (approximately 59,000) of people living in Darwin were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples • 44% of people with severe/profound disability lived in Darwin • 2% live in Alice Springs, 5% in Katherine and 39% in remote areas.



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. Continue to ensure our RWG comprises of a representative from each department from across our organisation and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. The RAP working group will meet bimonthly to monitor and report on RAP progression and implementation. Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	<p>May 2017</p> <p>February 2018</p> <p>Bimonthly from March 2017</p> <p>February 2018</p>	Executive Manager, Client Services
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a culturally appropriate presentation of the services provided by Guide Dogs SA/NT in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to be delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups and services, for the purpose of building relationships and encouraging access to and participation in Guide Dogs SA/NT services. Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations that we could approach to connect and partner with on our reconciliation journey. Develop partnerships with organisations delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients Develop a list of like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. Support our respective reconciliation councils e.g. joining mailing lists, attending Apology breakfasts. Raise staff awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community groups and explore opportunities to collaborate with these communities and services to facilitate positive professional relationships, with the aim of encouraging access to and participation in Guide Dogs SA/NT services. Invite Reconciliation SA to speak at an all-staff meeting. 	<p>May 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>June 2017</p>	<p>Client Liaison Officer</p> <p>Client Liaison Officer</p> <p>Client Liaison Officer</p> <p>Executive Manager, Business Development</p> <p>Executive Manager, Client Services</p> <p>Executive Manager, Client Services</p> <p>Client Liaison Officer</p>



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage our staff to attend an external National Reconciliation Week event. Incorporate National Reconciliation Week events into organisational calendar Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW and reconciliation materials to our staff. Ensure our Working Group participates in at least one event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. Host internal event for National Reconciliation Week and ensure all staff attend. 	27 May – 3 June 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP and integrate into our core business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide relevant updates on RAP at all staff meetings with follow up emails RAP Champion to report to Executive Management at meetings Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP Display RAP in reception areas in both SA and NT. Develop a promotional image signifying GDSA/NT move into the RAP process via a piece of reproducible artwork. Launch RAP through all available internal and external channels e.g. all-staff meeting, social media platforms, website, hard/electronic copy. Promote RAP and our vision for reconciliation through social media platforms/blog. Ensure our vision for reconciliation is reflected in GD SA/NT Interpreter policy (B33 – Working with CALD Clients). 	<p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p>	<p>Executive Manager, Human Resources</p> <p>Executive Manager, Human Resources</p> <p>ICT & Facilities Manager</p> <p>Executive Manager, Business Development</p> <p>Brand & Creative Specialist</p> <p>Brand & Creative Specialist</p> <p>Client Liaison Officer</p>



Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation and encourage/invest in further development for staff. 	May 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement, using surveys and interviews. 	March 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training as part of all new staff inductions. 	November 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to attend an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training session. 	December 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include Reconciliation Australia's 'Share our Pride' online tool in the induction of all new staff and volunteers. 	April 2017	Human Resources, Business Partner
6. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce and encourage our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
7. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our Organisation's sphere of influence. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement protocols that raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including knowledge of local cultural protocols). 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Business Development



Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Acknowledgement of Country is noted as an opening agenda item at Board, Executive and All Staff meetings as well as public and formal events. 	June 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'Welcome to Country' app on work mobile phones. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include 'Acknowledgement of Country' email banner/signature for staff email. 	June 2017	ICT & Facilities Manager



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	August 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities. 	April 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to join our organisation, such as internships or traineeships etc. 	August 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
9. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	June 2017	ICT & Facilities Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	August 2017	ICT & Facilities Manager
10. Investigate improving our services and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate volunteering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation. 	July 2017	Executive Manager, Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the accessibility of offering of vision and hearing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within metro, regional and remote areas. 	October 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a survey of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to assess the cultural appropriateness of our services 	October 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community groups to visit and refer clients to Guide Dogs SA/NT for further information about the services provided and engage these organisations to ensure that Guide Dogs SA/NT consistently delivers a culturally appropriate service 	March 2017	Client Liaison Officer

Tracking and Progress

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation. Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 	June 2017 June 2017 30 September 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services
12. Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop an Innovate RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement. 	September 2017 December 2017	Executive Manager, Client Services

RAP working group members

Current	Role
Garry Peschel	Executive Manager, Client Services
Kristina Link	Project and Business Development Officer
Tanysha Jeffree	Case Manager, Sensory Services
Julie Bryksy	Human Resources, Business Partner
Rosemary Murdock	Client Liaison Officer
Dion Humbler	Breeding and Veterinary Care Manager
Shaun Coulls	ICT and Facilities Manager
Janelle Edmonds	Principal Clinician, Vision Services
Alix Katala	Business Development Support Coordinator

External Representatives	Role
Carmen Dadleh	External Representative
Tina Summers	External Representative
Cassandra Jevdenijevic	External Representative NT
Mathew Campbell	External Representative

We thank the following for their contribution in developing this inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan

Previous	Role
Adrian Riessen	Orientation and Mobility Instructor
Matthew Blanks	Project Officer, Hearing Services
Zinna Aylward	Occupational Therapist NT
Jess Sinclair	Team Leader, Mass Fundraising
Catherine Orme	Administration and Fundraising Assistant NT
Jena Clark	Team Leader, Individual & Community Fundraising
Leo Golding	Orientation and Mobility Instructor NT

Shirley's story

Shirley Daymirringu

Shirley is a Yolngu woman from Yathalamarra in Ramingining, North Eastern Arnhem Land. She came to Darwin in 2010 due to ill health and has remained here since.



Shirley's father taught her how to paint with watercolours, as well as using paint from stone and charcoal to paint on bark or canvas. She uses hair for crosshatching and thin sticks for dotting.

Shirley created an artwork for GuideDogs SA/NT depicting two dogs which represent yirritja. The two dogs sit in the bush at a special meeting place telling stories and making plans.

Guide Dogs SA/NT wish to thank Shirley for her contribution and for sharing her story with us.

**Guide
Dogs**
SA/NT



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