



INNOVATE **RECONCILIATION** **ACTION PLAN**

JULY 2021 – JULY 2023



ACCAN acknowledges and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of the lands and waters of Australia. We acknowledge their historical and ongoing custodianship of Country around Australia, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Cover Art: Sarah Richards, Marrawuy Journeys
Page 3: ACCAN Director, Heron Loban
Pages (various): Shutterstock
Pages 10-11: Staff Artwork produced during reconciliation training
Page 26: Artist, Sarah Richards
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STATEMENT FROM ACCAN DIRECTOR



I am proud to recommend the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network's (ACCAN) second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

ACCAN has had a long record of engagement with First Nations communities including ensuring a First Nations person holds a position on the Board as a Director. Throughout my involvement with ACCAN over the past 12 years I am pleased that the organisation has continued to build on its work to improve communications

services for First Nations communities and ensure better practices in providing connectivity for First Nations consumers across Australia from the city to the bush.

One of ACCAN's key strengths is the organisation's ongoing engagement and consultation with its members as we work to improve communications access for all. ACCAN's Innovate RAP will build on this strength as we practice and embed culturally safe engagement with First Nations communities in all aspects of our work and ensure First Nations members and/or employees of ACCAN are valued for their unique perspectives and experiences.

Heron Loban

ACCAN Director

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATIONS CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communications consumer organisation representing individuals, small businesses and not-for profit groups as consumers of communications products and services. ACCAN focuses on goods and services encompassed by the converged areas of telecommunications, broadcasting, the internet and online services, including both current and emerging technologies.

OUR VISION

Communications services that are trusted, inclusive, accessible, and available for all.

OUR MISSION

ACCAN's purpose is to:

- Represent consumers and the public interest, with particular attention to the needs of consumers for whom the market is not working;
- Inspire, inform, enable and equip consumers to act in their own interests; and
- Research emerging consumer communications issues to provide evidence-based policy advice.

OUR VALUES

As an organisation we will:

- Act with courage, integrity and independence.
- Operate openly, efficiently, and effectively.
- Be accessible and inclusive, consistent with the high value we place on diversity.
- Recognise that building relationships with members, community groups, industry, regulators, and government is critical to achieving our goals.
- Value volunteers, staff and members for their crucial role in our organisation.

THROUGH OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP), ACCAN AIMS TO:

- build and maintain positive relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities;
- ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and/or employees of ACCAN are valued for their unique perspectives and experiences;
- support story telling as a culturally important form of communication for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- assist in reducing the digital divide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- demonstrate culturally safe engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

ACCAN's vision for reconciliation is a united Australia that acknowledges its past and values the unique culture and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Within our sphere of influence, we are committed to contributing to the elimination of systemic racism that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience in Australia.

In the context of our organisation, this means fighting for equitable communications access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and ensuring we build a culturally safe workplace that celebrates the rich culture and history of our First Peoples.

OUR BUSINESS

ACCAN aims to empower consumers to make good choices about products and services. As a national peak body, ACCAN represents the views of our broad and diverse membership base to policy makers, government and industry to get better outcomes for all communications consumers. Although ACCAN has an office on Gadigal land in Sydney, our members and staff are located all around Australia. ACCAN members include groups such as community legal centres, disability advocates, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, financial counsellors, regional organisations, farmers' federations, parent groups and seniors' organisations, as well as individual members. ACCAN has 8 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational members. ACCAN is supported by standing advisory forums as part of our consultation strategy. These consultative forums include a Members Advisory Forum, an Indigenous Advisory

Forum, a Disability Advisory Forum and a Small Business Advisory Forum.

ACCAN currently employs around 20 staff members, working across areas such as administration, policy, research, media and communications, events and outreach. While we currently do not know how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples ACCAN currently employs, as part of this RAP ACCAN will determine culturally appropriate ways to understand and collect this information. ACCAN is an equal opportunity employer and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to apply for all of our advertised jobs.

The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.

OUR RAP

ACCAN has developed this RAP to strengthen our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, so that we can work with First Peoples to understand and represent their communication needs. Our RAP will help ensure that reconciliation is a key part of our organisation, embedded within our culture, policies and practices at every level.

Staff members from all sections and levels of the organisation are represented on the RAP Working Group (RWG). Membership of the RWG is voluntary. The job titles of the current RWG members are as follows: Director of Inclusion, Policy Manager, Economic Adviser, Grants and Research Manager, Media and Communications Manager and Policy Officer.

The RAP is internally championed by our Director of Inclusion. Our RWG also includes former ACCAN

Indigenous Policy Officer and member of the Yindjibarndi Nation, Michael Charlton, who has worked closely with ACCAN staff in the development of our RAP.

Our Working Group aims to build relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations with expertise in the telecommunications and digital communications technology sectors, and actively champions the implementation of the RAP in ACCAN's day to day work.

OUR RAP JOURNEY

ACCAN originally adopted a Statement of Commitment in 2010, after which ACCAN developed our first 'Reflect' RAP. Since our establishment, ACCAN has held a Welcome to Country ceremony for all major public events such as conferences and seminars, and an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of internal meetings.

ACCAN staff have also undertaken cultural awareness training as a group and individually.

Over the years, we have attended and sponsored numerous Indigenous Focus Day events and have attended the Remote Indigenous Media Festival and Yabun Festival on multiple occasions.

Our grants program has funded research into communications issues experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia, and we use this research, feedback from our Indigenous

Advisory Forum and input from member consultations in preparing policy positions and submissions.

In addition, all ACCAN staff now include an Acknowledgement of Country in their email signatures.

Our 2021-2023 RAP is a reflection of our continuing journey and is designed to extend ACCAN's knowledge and practices in relation to reconciliation. It is based on Reconciliation Australia's 'Innovate' framework.

ACCAN supports the Racial Discrimination Act and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. ACCAN has a growing collection of resources including an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia map as well as books and DVDs. ACCAN staff members are encouraged to use these resources and attend events to build on their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

Due to staff turnover and resource limitations, ACCAN's previous RAP was not reviewed after it expired in 2014. This forms one of our key learnings moving forward: the need to ensure that ongoing review and reporting about our RAP becomes part of business as usual for our organisation. Going forward, our RAP and its deliverables will be appropriately reflected in staff work plans, ensuring that reconciliation and improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is a key focus of ACCAN's work.





RELATIONSHIPS

Respectful and mutually beneficial relationships are critical to ACCAN’s strength as an organisation, allowing us to effectively represent the communications needs of consumers.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are amongst the most digitally disengaged in the country due to issues of affordability, lack of infrastructure or community access facilities, issues with service reliability and barriers to engagement with online services. ACCAN’s ability to address issues and improve digital inclusion relies on strong relationships with those in community. ACCAN understands our role in facilitating connections and information sharing between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and other organisations working in the telecommunications consumer space.

Focus area: We will work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and members to ensure their interests are included in communications policy, campaigns and research work.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Plan.	August 2021	<i>Director of Policy</i>
	Review the implementation of the Engagement Plan.	August 2022	<i>Director of Policy</i>
	Establish a new relationship with at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media outlet each year and explore ways to work together.	December 2021-2022	<i>Media and Communications Manager</i>
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May-3 June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May-3 June 2022-2023	<i>CEO</i>
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May-3 June 2022-2023	<i>Consumer Engagement and Membership Officer</i>
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website .	May 2022-2023	<i>Consumer Engagement and Membership Officer</i>



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Engage our staff in reconciliation through an annual reconciliation awareness event, such as a morning tea or group discussion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources (e.g. a book, documentary, art or other resource).	First week in July 2021-2023	<i>Executive Assistant and Events Coordinator</i>
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	July 2021-2023	<i>Media and Communications Manager</i>
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Collaborate with RAP/ reconciliation network and other organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation. Provide information about this regularly at staff meetings.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Provide information about ACCAN's RAP and RWG in the Inclusion Induction for new staff and ensure information about the RAP is provided regularly at staff meetings to encourage understanding of ACCAN's RAP.	July 2021-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	January 2022	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	January 2022	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	March 2022	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Engage all staff in discussions on the effects and mechanisms of racism.	First week in July 2021-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
5. Collaborate with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to ensure we are meeting their needs as communications consumers, and to assist policy, campaigns and research work.	Retain our current level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership and aim to increase this by at least two organisations per year and build our contact list.	June 2022-2023	Consumer Engagement and Membership Officer
	Sponsor at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational representative to attend our annual conference.	September 2022	Executive Assistant and Events Coordinator



RESPECT

ACCAN recognises the unique knowledge, experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and values conversations that improve our understanding of communities, Country and cultures. We respect Australia's First Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands we live and work on and are committed to observing and incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols into our work practices. ACCAN's core business is consumer rights in communications. To best represent consumers, understanding of different cultures and respect for diversity is essential. ACCAN recognises that as we are not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation, it is vital for us to respect and listen to the experiences and cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We are committed to conversations that respect the cultural rights, practices, values and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Focus area: We will recognise and respect the unique experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communications consumers.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	January and June 2022-2023	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Consult local Traditional Owners or Custodians and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	February 2022	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff, with supervisors ensuring that cultural learning is included within individual work plans.	April 2022	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	January and June 2022-2023	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Encourage staff to share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander news and events, to ensure our staff are keeping up to date about issues impacting those in community.	January and June 2022-2023	<i>CEO</i>



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. This document should also outline how to acknowledge Traditional Owners and Custodians within ACCAN documents.	July 2021	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	September 2021-2023	<i>Meeting or event coordinator</i>
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of meetings.	July 2021-2023	<i>Meeting or event coordinator</i>
	Use culturally appropriate and representative images and materials in ACCAN's publications, online presence and consumer education resources.	July 2021-2023	<i>Media and Communications Manager</i>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2021-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2021-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>



OPPORTUNITIES

ACCAN strongly believes that increased opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities supports practical reconciliation, and in turn, the development of accessible, available and culturally safe communications products and services. In particular, more opportunities in research will help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are involved in the production and dissemination of relevant communications. ACCAN is committed to ensuring the views and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented across our organisation and in the important work we do for consumers.

Focus area: We will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and members to make our recruitment and procurement practices more inclusive.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment opportunities by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	September 2021	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2021	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2022	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to identify and remove barriers (as needed) to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 2022	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Develop partnerships and/or networks through which job vacancies can be advertised to ensure that information is disseminated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Take positive actions to increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Operations</i>
	Identify internship and training opportunities to be offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a view to start offering an internship/ training opportunity in 2022.	October 2021	<i>Director of Policy</i>



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	July 2021	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	July 2021	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	August 2021	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2021	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2021	<i>Business Manager</i>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Support equitable access to communications research opportunities and consumer information.	Review and update ACCAN's research and knowledge management tools to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources and materials are represented.	September -December 2021-2022	<i>Grants and Research Manager</i>
	Consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities regarding appropriateness of the Independent Grants Program's promotion, application and selection processes.	September -December 2021-2022	<i>Grants and Research Manager</i>
	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations and consider how they may be involved in delivering our commissioned research.	September -December 2021-2022	<i>Grants and Research Manager</i>
	Maintain, and increase annually, a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations where the Grants Program is promoted.	September -December 2021-2022	<i>Grants and Research Manager</i>
	Review the Grants Panel membership and Terms of Reference for opportunities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation.	September -December 2021-2022	<i>Grants and Research Manager</i>
	Publish at least four articles annually in ACCAN web news on topics relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communications issues.	January and June 2022-2023	<i>Media and Communications Manager</i>
	Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories and vignettes relating to communications issues.	June 2022-2023	<i>Media and Communications Manager</i>



GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	July 2021	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation in annual budget process.	June 2022-2023	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments and ensure that the RAP is integrated into staff work plans.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments, including the evaluation of staff and board members' understanding of cultural protocols.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management (Director of Inclusion).	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2021-2022	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly, including the ACCAN board.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually, by uploading updates and information about the RAP to our website.	June 2022-2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2022	<i>Business Manager</i>
	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	February 2023	<i>Director of Inclusion</i>

ABOUT THE ARTIST SARAH RICHARDS



head to the About section on her website:

www.mjourneys.com.au

About Marrawuy Journeys:

Marrawuy Journeys is a Supply Nation registered, 100% Aboriginal owned business with a vision of healing as individuals so we can heal as a country.

Marrawuy (Mar-ra-way) in her ancestors' language of the Wongaibon people means Red Kangaroo and was the totem of one of her ancestors, Richard King. This is one of the reasons she has chosen to go by Marrawuy Journeys but the other is the fact that a Kangaroo can't easily jump backwards. This also resonates strongly with Sarah because no matter what challenge she is thrown, she keeps moving forward.

“For me personally, having a creative outlet has allowed me to undergo a journey of healing and I want to create an opportunity for others to be able to experience the same. I believe that we all have something to heal from and if we can heal as individuals, it will contribute to the healing as a country.”

Sarah Richards

Sarah Richards is a Ngiyampaa woman born on Gadigal land (Sydney) who grew up on Wiradjuri (Griffith) and Yugambah (Gold Coast) country before moving down to Ngunnawal country in 2012. To read more about Sarah's journey,



Title: Together (24x24 inches) Jan 2021

'Together' was inspired by Robert Ingersoll's quote 'we rise by lifting others up' and the cohort I completed Xplore's Advanced Career Resilience course with last year.

Over 8 weeks, a bunch of amazing like-minded women came together and went on a journey together that ignited and continues to ignite our potential. Three months on and we continue to encourage and celebrate each of our successes and are there to support each other when we're struggling. So when this piece is viewed, I hope it acts as a reminder that we rise when we lift others up with us.



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