



Australian Government  
Comcare



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN  
INNOVATE

# COMCARE

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

NOVEMBER 2021 – NOVEMBER 2023



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Reconciliation Australia logo ©

### Acknowledgement of artist

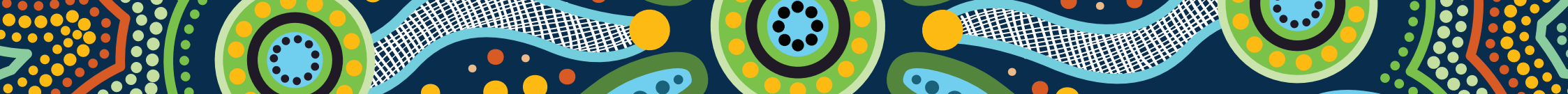
#### Healing Hands – Cover artwork by Dion Devow of Darkies Designs

This piece is entitled Healing Hands. Darkies Designs has created this particular design to represent and share through an Indigenous lens, Comcare's RAP and purpose as an organisation, which is to **promote and enable safe and healthy work**. Corporate colours have been used in the designs, with different types of art techniques and symbols such as dots, and cross hatching which are used in different parts of the country and represent Comcare's national reach and focus. The different colours in the design also portray Australia's land, rivers and seas. At the centre of the design are dots that symbolise the people and communities that Comcare is working and supporting through their healing process. In many cultures, the healing processes is initiated through and comes from touch, and the hands and symbols in this design represent this along with the healing power of touch. The hands are also symbolic and say that there is support for individuals to assist them physically, spiritually, emotionally and financially, all of which are very important in terms of the process of ones healing, and in Aboriginal Culture ones health is wholistic and takes into account many factors, not just ones physical health.

The cross hatching paths that are reaching into the centre piece of the design indicate the transition of the people going through the healing process and the busyness of the piece tries to reflect movement, and transition to a place of wellbeing, whilst the four half healing circles represent the focus that is being place on the people before the transition of movement takes place. The centre piece is adorned with specks of colour and dots to indicate the power of the healing process, and the crossed hatched paths lead out to the edges of the artwork to depict that the healing and journeys of individuals is ongoing and sometimes lifelong.

The piece really depicts the coming together and connecting of communities for an important purpose, and this is also a big part of Reconciliation. We are as Australians are all part of one big community. Reconciliation gives us a multicultural society the opportunity to understand the importance of community, and the richness that diversity brings to us as a Nation, along with education about our history, in particular the history of our First Nations Peoples. Healing is also a part of this process and we can, as a nation, all have a hand in this important journey.

Dion Devow Designs 26/10/2021



## OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for reconciliation is a culture that embraces unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to positively influence the journey towards reconciliation in our community and promote a diverse and inclusive workplace at Comcare. We strive for a culture that represents equality and equity, historical acceptance of our shared history and an end to racism.

## OUR BUSINESS

Comcare is a work health and safety regulator, a scheme administrator and an insurer and claims manager. Our organisational purpose is to promote and enable safe and healthy work. This reflects the connections between our different functions along the prevention – early intervention – injury management – compensation and rehabilitation continuum. Comcare aims to deliver a national scheme that is not only outcome focused and cost effective but also reduces the administrative burden for employees and employers alike. Our scheme covers employees from a broad range of occupations and industries including government services, defence, law enforcement, transport, logistics, financial, banking services, manufacturing, construction, telecommunications and postal services. We have offices in:

- > Canberra
- > Adelaide
- > Brisbane
- > Melbourne
- > Newcastle
- > Perth
- > Sydney
- > Darwin
- > Launceston

As at 31 January 2021, the Comcare scheme comprised of 409,008 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees covered under the *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRC Act). Of these, 183,555 were Australian Government employees and 225,453 worked for licensee organisations who self-insure their workers' compensation. Comcare also had 417,181 FTE employees covered under the federal *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), of whom 186,987 were Australian Government employees and 168,194 were employees of licensee organisations. We also cover 62,000 Australian Defence Force personnel.

As at 6 April 2021, 1.8 per cent of our total workforce or 11 out of 592 Comcare employees across Australia, identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.



## OUR RAP

Comcare recognises the important role we play in the reconciliation process between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community, and the importance of reconciliation to Australia's future. Developing an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan is crucial to our vision to move towards reconciliation and demonstrates our commitment to play our part in achieving this.

The pillars for our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021–23 – Relationships, Respect and Opportunities – support Comcare's values of:

- > Act with integrity and respect
- > Collaborate and innovate
- > Strive to have a positive impact

The RAP 2021–23 provides practical actions to contribute and complement our values, with the overall aim of creating a diverse and inclusive workplace culture – one that supports and champions difference and ensures everyone has equal opportunities to participate, contribute and achieve their full potential.

This RAP builds on our activities from our RAP 2018-20 and outlines our commitments to advance our reconciliation journey. We will build strong and respectful relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and stakeholders and be guided by their voices and perspectives to support our development of innovative strategies in the areas of inclusion, employment, cultural awareness and capability building.

Our RAP will be promoted by our Diversity and Inclusion Group (DIG) and championed by our Diversity Champion and our Executive. The DIG is supported by Comcare's Diversity team which reports quarterly to Comcare's Operational Committee against our RAP. Our RAP will be publicly available on the [Comcare website](#) and will be reported on annually to Reconciliation Australia.

Our approach to developing this plan is informed by better-practice activities across the Australian Public Service (APS). We utilised guidance from Reconciliation Australia and drafted our RAP in consultation with Comcare's workforce and stakeholders through our DIG. Our DIG has Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation and comprises a team of employees who work across various groups within Comcare and are committed to working together to ensure we have a workplace that is free from discrimination, that fosters inclusion and recognises the diversity of the Australian community. After incorporating feedback from our DIG, we conducted an agency-wide consultation process in which we allowed input and feedback from all employees including our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Employees.

We are committed to ensuring that the actions we take to implement our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–23 are monitored and reported on quarterly to ensure that the plan's deliverables are achieved. The DIG meet monthly to participate and contribute to progressing our actions. There is an open invitation for all employees to join our DIG at any time. The Workforce Strategy Team promote this through regular internal communications, and stakeholder meetings with all business groups.



Our previous Innovate RAP 2018–20 supported and drove our progress toward reconciliation and aligned with our People Strategy 2019–2022. Our key learnings, achievements and significant changes resulting from our RAP 2018–20 include:

- > Delivering a new *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017–2020* communication protocols for our Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country, and awareness communications to employees.
- > Participation in a range of activities during National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week each year providing employee's the opportunity to acknowledge the history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We celebrate each year through a variety of engaging and interactive initiatives which are always very well received with high rates of participation and interaction each year.
- > Provision of online cultural awareness training to all employees, including DIG members, RAP champions, HR managers and other key leadership employees.
- > Promotion of Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' CORE Cultural Learning modules and provided this to all employees and managers.
- > Delivery of Comcare's Procurement Framework, which outlines how Comcare can support and/or source from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, through Supply Nation and in alignment with the Indigenous Procurement Framework.
- > Maintaining and supporting the DIG, ensuring that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events, training and communications are promoted across Comcare to provide opportunities for building on cultural awareness and knowledge.
- > Continuing to consult with, provide and promote employment opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



## ACTIONS/DELIVERABLES

### Relationships

Building strong and mutually beneficial partnerships is integral to Comcare’s business. This RAP reflects our commitment to strengthening respectful relationships with our employees and stakeholders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the wider Australian community.

**Focus area:** To continue building effective relationships within and outside of Comcare.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.</li> </ul>	October 2022	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security, Director – Corporate Communications and Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s <a href="#">NRW website</a>.</li> </ul>	May – June, 2022, 2023	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Director – Corporate Communications and Strategy, Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our employees.</li> </ul>	May – June, 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DIG members to participate in an external NRW event.</li> </ul>	May – June, 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support employees and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	May – June, 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise, promote and run at least one NRW event each year to continue to educate and build awareness of reconciliation.</li> </ul>	May – June, 2022, 2023	

## Relationships

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**Focus area:** To continue building effective relationships within and outside of Comcare.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement strategies to engage our employees in reconciliation through internal communication articles, resources available on our intranet and our DIG's promotion of internal and external events.</li> </ul>	July 2022, 2023	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security, Director – Corporate Communications and Strategy and all General Managers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.</li> </ul>	November 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to explore opportunities to positively influence and strengthen collaboration with our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes by collaborating with other agencies through Executive level and various APS network meetings.</li> </ul>	July 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include an overview of the RAP as part of staff induction processes.</li> </ul>	May 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with The Reconciliation Sharing Network (RSN) an APS network that meets monthly to share success stories, challenges and develop ways to further advance reconciliation.</li> </ul>	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commit to participate in the APSC Jawun program, with participants sharing lessons learned about their experience to all employees and champion the program to future participants. Jawun alumni will act as champions of our RAP within their business units.</li> </ul>	October, November 2022, 2023	
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	October 2022	Lead: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement and communicate a Respect and Courtesy policy for our organisation.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote awareness among senior leaders about the effects of racism.</li> </ul>	August 2022	

## Respect

Comcare aims to attract, develop and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve. We also place great importance on building a workplace culture where both individual and team contributions are valued, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees can contribute to the best of their ability and are recognised and respected for the perspectives they bring to the workplace.

**Focus area:** To value the experiences of others and welcoming a range of different views in everything we do.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>	February 2022	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our employees.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for DIG members, HR managers and other key employees in leadership roles to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.</li> </ul>	March 2022	
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase employees' understanding of the purpose and significance of cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>	March 2022, 2023	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security and all General Managers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to promote and communicate our cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, in all events.</li> </ul>	March 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at all significant events.</li> </ul>	March 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.</li> </ul>	March 2022, 2023	
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity and Inclusion Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>	July 2022,2023	Lead: Senior Director – People, Property and Security Supported by: Diversity Champion and all Managers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage all employees to participate in external NAIDOC events.</li> </ul>	July 2022,2023	



## Opportunities

Comcare will promote employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and provide ongoing career development for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Comcare is geographically dispersed across Australia, it is important that our employee profile reflects the cultural diversity of the Australian community so that we can better relate to our stakeholders.

**Focus area:** To increase the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the design, development and implementation of Comcare’s business strategies.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a review of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entry level programs, for example Indigenous Australian Government Development Program (IAGDP) or Indigenous Apprenticeship Program (IAP) to ensure that we are offering flexible pathways that support career development opportunities and to improve career prospects both with us and the broader Australian Public Service (APS).</li> </ul>	February 2022	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the barriers to career advancement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees by reviewing and analysing workforce data to inform implementable strategies to support retention and career management.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure access to professional development opportunities are made available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee numbers to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	Lead: Senior Director – People, Property and Security Supported by: Diversity Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</li> </ul>	July 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in our workforce.</li> </ul>	July 2022, 2023		

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**Focus area:** To increase the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the design, development and implementation of Comcare's business strategies.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. 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.	November 2022	Lead: Director – Finance and Assurance Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	• Maintain Supply Nation membership.	June, July 2022, 2023	
	• Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to employees.	November 2022	
	• Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November 2022	
	• Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November 2022	

## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective Diversity and Inclusion Group (DIG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the DIG.	July 2022, 2023	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	• Maintain Terms of Reference for the DIG and accessible to all employees.	March 2022	
	• Meet monthly to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	



## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	November 2022	Lead: Diversity Champion Supported by: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage our senior leaders and other employees in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.</li> </ul>	December 2021, 2022	
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	September 2022, 2023	Lead: Senior Director – People, Property and Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report RAP progress to all employees and senior leaders quarterly.</li> </ul>	January, April, July, October 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings annually.</li> </ul>	November 2022, 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia’s biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.</li> </ul>	April 2022	
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.</li> </ul>	June 2023	Lead: Senior Director – People, Property and Security

## CONTACT DETAILS

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