

Last updated September 2018

REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) template

Reflect RAP:

A Reflect RAP is used to lay the foundations and prepare your workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives. A Reflect RAP is a public commitment published on [Reconciliation Australia's website](#). It should take approximately 1 - 2 months to develop a Reflect RAP and 12 - 18 months to implement.

Before you start:

Before you commit to developing a RAP, it is important that you read and understand the [RAP framework](#), consisting of the three core pillars (Relationships, Respect and Opportunities), four RAP types (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate) and mandatory actions and deliverables that guide the development of RAPs. It is also important to read and understand the [RAP development, review and endorsement process](#), starting with assessing whether a RAP is right for your organisation.

How to use this RAP template:

The Reflect RAP template is designed to provide workplaces with a roadmap to begin their reconciliation journey. As such, the Reflect RAP template is pre-filled with all the mandatory actions and deliverables that workplaces are required to commit to in order to receive Reconciliation Australia's endorsement. Please complete the template by addressing the questions outlined in the 'Our Business', 'Our RAP' and 'Our partnerships/current activities' sections, and assigning a responsibility and timeline to each deliverable provided in the template. Additional actions and deliverables specific to your workplace's unique [sphere of influence](#) may also be added, but are not required for Reconciliation Australia's endorsement.

Throughout this template, all *italicised* font is instructional only, whilst regular font indicates fixed text you need to include in your RAP. In addition, please review the following resources for good practice guidance on completing RAP templates.

- [Developing a S.M.A.R.T. RAP](#).
- [Demonstrating inclusive and respectful language](#).

RAP review and endorsement process:

Once you have completed your first draft RAP, please [submit for review](#) via Reconciliation Australia's website. A RAP team member will be in touch to provide feedback and tailored assistance within three weeks. Once Reconciliation Australia is satisfied your RAP meets requirements for endorsement, you will be provided endorsement in two stages.

1. **Conditional Endorsement** – Reconciliation Australia will provide in-principle endorsement of your RAP (content only) allowing you to seek internal sign-off from your senior leadership with confidence. Reconciliation Australia will also provide you with the RAP logo and branding to include in final design of your RAP.
NB: RAP logos are trademarked through IP Australia, and must not be used publically until you have received Reconciliation Australia's final endorsement.
2. **Final Endorsement** – Reconciliation Australia will check that your final designed document includes the conditionally endorsed content and the RAP logo and branding before providing final endorsement.

Snowy Valleys Council

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan [April, 2020] – [April, 2023]

Our business

The purpose of this section is to provide staff and stakeholders with context about your workplace. In paragraphs, address the following questions as a minimum.

What is your core business?

Our Region

The Snowy Valleys Council is a local government area located in the South West Slopes region of New South Wales. The region encompasses a total land area of 8,960 square kilometres and is located at the western foothills of the Snowy Mountains, bordered by Kosciuszko National Park in the south. Tumut and Tumbarumba, the two main industrial and population centres, are both located within a three-hour drive from the nation's capital of Canberra and a five-hour drive from Sydney. The region encompasses the towns and villages of Adelong, Batlow, Brungle, Jingellic, Khancoban, Rosewood, Talbingo and Tooma, and includes the lands, waters and communities of Wiradjuri, Ngarigo and Wolgalu people.

The Snowy Valleys region is endowed with an abundance of fertile soil, water supply and climatic conditions conducive to agriculture and plantation forestry. The region has a diverse human resource base, a good climate, affordable quality housing, an abundance of water, exceptional community services and facilities, quality physical infrastructure and a supportive business environment. The agriculture and softwood timber industries, including Australia's largest softwood processing mill, underpin the region's economic base.

The softwood timber industry is the Snowy Valleys' largest employer, centred around the Visy and Carter Holt Harvey softwood processing mills in Tumut and the Hyne mill in Tumbarumba. Beef cattle farming also employs a significant portion of working residents of the Snowy Valleys with other key industries including viticulture, retail, healthcare, hydro-electricity generation, tourism, horticulture and National Parks.

Our Community

The Snowy Valleys council area was established in May 2016 following the merger of the former Tumut and Tumbarumba Shire Councils. The total population of the Snowy Valleys is 14,395 people, of which 4.4% identified as being of indigenous heritage.

In the Snowy Valleys region we live a primarily rural lifestyle, with major town centres in Tumbarumba and Tumut, and smaller towns and villages across the Snowy Valleys council area. We are a region made up of friendly, welcoming communities. A large number of our community work in either the timber or agricultural industries, with many others working in jobs which provide support for these major industries. We have low levels of unemployment (5.4%) with employment rates growing through continual creation of jobs.

Like much of New South Wales, we have an ageing population. Most our community live in a single house, with smaller numbers of people living in medium or high-density dwellings. Notwithstanding statistics, the region is becoming increasingly popular with young professionals and families as the desire for a quieter regional lifestyle surpasses that of a bustling metropolitan city.

We are proud of our region, its history and culture. We recognise there is a need for growth and innovation and strive for new and broader education and employment opportunities.

We welcome visitors and tourists and are invested in showcasing the unique and beautiful offerings of our region. Our events and festivals attract people from all across Australia and are a fantastic way of highlighting our local industry, produce and culture.

The Snowy Valleys region has a long history of welcoming people from all cultural backgrounds and is proud of embracing multiculturalism. This welcome extends to the refugee community, many of whom have already made a new beginning in the local area.

Traditional Custodians

Snowy Valleys Council recognises the Wiradjuri, Ngarigo and Wolgalu (Walgaloo) peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which we are predominantly located. Council also recognises the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the region who make up the vibrant communities to which our organisation provides services.

We commit to working positively today and in the future with the Wiradjuri, Ngarigo and Wolgalu (Walgaloo) peoples and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to learn, acknowledge and move forward together with the whole community.

Brungle township was originally developed as a station whereby the uniqueness of Brungle Station established in 1887 as a settlement for Wiradjuri and the Wolgalu (Walgaloo) peoples between Gundagai and Tumut and the dwellings are on ground officially described as a station yet know as a settlement, reserve or mission and was the responsibility of the Aboriginal Welfare Board of NSW in which a white Manager was in charge of managing the station.

In 1945 the manager was removed and in 1955 the Aboriginal Welfare Board decided that the land was of no further use and the housing is either owned privately or is now managed by the Brungle/Tumut Local Aboriginal Land Council. The land at Brungle remains very important to these Wiradjuri and the Wolgalu (Walgaloo) peoples, as a site of shared memories and links with past traditions.

About Council

Snowy Valleys Council is committed to our vision of leading, engaging and supporting strong and vibrant communities. This vision is built into our everyday activities, actions and the extensive suite of services we deliver across the Snowy Valleys local government area. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Children's Services
- Utilities, Open Spaces and Facilities
- Survey and Design (Roads and Design)
- Library Services
- Fleet and Depots
- Growth and Activation

- Independent Living
- Multi Service Outlet
- Community Transport
- Outdoor Construction and Maintenance
- GIS and Asset Systems
- Utilities and Waste Business
- Swimming Pools
- Project Delivery
- Customer Experience
- Information Management
- Place Activation
- Ranger and Biosecurity

Snowy Valleys Council is a major employer in the local government area, employing 313 people, of which 4 people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The main Council chambers are located in the towns of Tumut and Tumbarumba. Council depots, libraries and community services are located right across the region, in the towns and villages of Adelong, Batlow, Brungle, Khancoban, Talbingo, Tumbarumba and Tumut.

Council's activities are aimed toward achieving its vision for the future of the Snowy Valleys and are focussed into five key strategic themes:

- **Towns and Villages** - We celebrate and nurture the unique character of our towns and villages
 - **Growth Through Innovation** - We have economic development activities which provide community longevity, vibrancy and a sustainable future
 - **Our Natural Environment** - We care and protect our natural environment to ensure future generations can experience and enjoy its beauty
 - **Communication and Engagement** - We have engaged communities that actively participates in local decision making
 - **Our Infrastructure** - We strive to continually improve our local infrastructure
- *How many people does your workplace employ in Australia?*
 - *How many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff does your workplace currently employ (if known)?*
 - *What is your organisation's geographic reach (regional, national, or global)?*
 - *How many office locations does your workplace have in Australia and where are they?*

Our RAP

The purpose of this section is to provide readers of your RAP with background about your workplace's interest in reconciliation. In paragraphs, address the following questions as a minimum.

Our Reconciliation Journey

Snowy Valleys Council was established following the amalgamation of the former Tumbarumba Shire Council and Tumut Shire Council. Both these shires had varying degrees of relationships with traditional custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. Following the amalgamation, and with Snowy Valleys Council's unwavering commitment to building better communities, the need for a formal reconciliation journey was identified not only for us as an organisation, but also for the communities in which we live and work.

Snowy Valleys Council recognises the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australian culture, history and identity. Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a commitment to address the gap and make a genuine contribution to reconciliation through our business and activities.

Creating this Reflect RAP supports Council in recognising the areas where we need to build deeper and more meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and peak groups across all areas of our business and community. Our journey in reconciliation has

just begun. Through practical application at all levels and commitment to the plan, our RAP will be woven into our everyday practices throughout all our services, activities and community engagement.

Our partnerships/current activities

- *Community partnerships*
- *Internal activities/initiatives*

Snowy Valleys Council values the current relationships it has with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our communities and workplace.

Partnerships and activities that are inclusive and foster a sense of pride, belonging and community harmony are of utmost importance to Council and have been undertaken for a period of time now, leading into the formal beginning of our reconciliation journey – our Reflect RAP. These partnerships and activities have included:

Aboriginal Liaison Committee

The Aboriginal Liaison Committee was formed as a committee of Council to provide communication between Council and the Aboriginal Community. The main objectives of this committee are to raise the profile of Aboriginal issues within the Council, to facilitate and support objectives to create and enhance the quality of life for Aboriginal people; and to work with Aboriginal people to obtain common goals.

The Aboriginal Liaison Committee has been instrumental in identifying the needs of the Aboriginal community across the Snowy Valleys and has provided support for a number of projects and activities including:

- **Collaboration and Recognition** - NAIDOC week activities, Welcome to Country and opening of events are collaborated through Council's relationship with the Aboriginal Liaison Committee.
- **Bila Park** - The "Bila - Park – Gathering Place" project of a parkland sculpture aims to revere and respect the local Aboriginal history and culture, by telling the traditional story in artistic elements within the landscape site. The 'Gathering Place' is located in parkland acquired by Tumut Shire Council in 2002 adjacent to the Tumut River bounded by Fitzroy, Merivale and Wynyard Streets in Tumut. The Gathering Place has a local and regional level of significance.
- **Brungle Health Facility** - The Brungle Health Facility was officially opened in June 2005. The Management Committee are citizens from the Aboriginal Community in Brungle.
- **Shared Responsibility Agreement** - Tumut Shire Council supported a Shared Responsibility Agreement between Tumut and Brungle Indigenous community and the Commonwealth of Australia through the Wagga Wagga Indigenous Coordination Centre. Council was the host employer for a CDEP training program that involved between three and seven workers at different times over a 6-month period.
- **Feasibility Study for Aboriginal Cultural Centre** - A feasibility study for the proposed Aboriginal Cultural Centre, to be situated at the corner of the Snowy Mountains Highway and Capper Street, was carried out in early 2005 by the Riverina Business Enterprise Centre. The project will require considerable finance to become a reality.
- **Memorandum of Understanding** - In March 2010 Tumut Shire Council adopted the Memorandum of Understanding with the Aboriginal community.
- **Leo Kelly Arts and Culture Award for NAIDOC Week Celebrations** – The Tumut Library, on behalf of Snowy Valleys Council, partnered with the local Wiradjuri community and National Parks and Wildlife Service to deliver events during NAIDOC week 2018. The events included a talk from Nova Peris OAM, the first Aboriginal Australian to win Olympic Gold and Australia's first indigenous female to be elected to federal parliament. The celebrations saw Snowy Valleys Council efforts recognised through receipt of the Leo Kelly OAM Arts and

Culture Award at the NSW Local Government Awards. The Leo Kelly OAM Arts and Culture Award celebrates outstanding achievement by local government organisations in strategic planning for arts and culture.

- **Cultural Education for High School Students** - Snowy Valleys Council are working with Petaurus Education Group and Tumut High School to develop a cultural education program aimed at high school students, enabling them to act as leaders in their own learning regarding appreciating and protecting cultural and environmental Meeting Places. The program has been funded by the NSW State Government under their 2020 Stronger Country Community Fund Program.
- **Eastern Riverina Arts Cultural Programs** – Snowy Valleys Council regularly work with Eastern Riverina Arts supporting cultural art programs and initiatives within the region such as the [2020 Lagoon Project](#).

Reconciliation Working Group

The Reconciliation working group is formed of Indigenous and non – Indigenous staff, who are responsible for developing, creating understanding, accountability and ownership by Council staff to ensure adoption, implementation, reviewing and updating of Snowy Valleys Council Reconciliation Action Plan.

NOTE:

Green Actions = Mandatory actions and deliverables as prescribed by Reconciliation Australia in order to receive plan endorsement

Blue Actions = Actions and deliverables as proposed internally (note: some wording has been tweaked, initial intent should still remain)

Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	January 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	February 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and disseminate the Engagement Policy to include an Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 	September 2020	Communication & Engagement Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Council staff to volunteer at Aboriginal community events and attend NAIDOC or other events throughout the year. Create networking opportunities between our senior staff, Aboriginal staff representatives, local Aboriginal Elders and key Aboriginal stakeholders. This may include a networking lunch or similar. 	November 2020 - ongoing	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to facilitate the Aboriginal Liaison Committee. As a forum for discussion and a source of information for protocols and key information. 	July 2020 - ongoing	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft an updated Aboriginal Cultural Protocols and Practices Policy for review by the Aboriginal Liaison Committee. 	September 2020	Community Development Officer
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	April, Annually	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. 	27 May - 3 June, Annually	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May - 3 June, Annually	RAP Working Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to host flag raising ceremonies to recognise NAIDOC week annually, and a minimum of two internal events to celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 	May - July, Annually	RAP Working Group / Place Activation Team
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. 	October 2020	ELT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	September 2020	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	September 2020	RAP Working Group
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. 	March 2021	Coordinator People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs 	March 2021	Coordinator People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote our RAP and commitment to reconciliation through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly displaying SVC's RAP vision in the reception area of main Council locations. Maintaining and promoting Council's RAP webpage. Promoting NRW, NAIDOC and relevant events and activities. Council plans, strategies and policies 	January 2021 - ongoing	ELT / RAP Working Group

Respect			
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"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. 	October 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	October 2021	People and Culture Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a provision in the Council induction program to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high-level overview of Council's diverse Aboriginal community. A copy of the RAP and related documents. Cultural awareness information/training, delivered by local Aboriginal people appropriate to country. 	October 2021	People and Culture Team
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. Create a story of the history of the Local Traditional Owners or custodians of the lands and waters within the region. 	June 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	December 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Aboriginal representatives to provide a Welcome to Country through the policy and the events procedure at relevant events. This includes events that we lead and sponsor (for example NAIDOC, s.355 festivals and citizenship ceremonies). 	July 2020 – ongoing	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country on our public website. <i>(Acknowledgment also to be written in traditional Wiradjuri, Ngarigo and Wolgalu language)</i> 	November 2020	ELT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include appropriate wording for Acknowledgement of Country in our email signatures <i>(Acknowledgment also to be written in traditional language)</i> 	November 2020	ELT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display, where appropriate, Acknowledgement of Country plaques across our sites. This includes at customer service, libraries and depots. <i>(Acknowledgment also to be written in traditional language appropriate to Country)</i> 	November 2020	ELT

7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	<i>May - July 2021</i>	<i>RAP Working Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	<i>May – July 2021</i>	<i>RAP Working Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	<i>First week in July, 2021</i>	<i>RAP Working Group</i>

Opportunities			
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"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation including implementation of a EEO strategy or policy. In the business case, consider increasing exposure of Council's employment opportunities, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Services such as NCAP, and Promoting traineeship opportunities through Indigenous Liaison Officers and corporate business. 	<i>October, 2021</i>	<i>HR Team</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	<i>August 2022</i>	<i>HR Team</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for Aboriginal Identified roles within the SVC outdoor and indoor teams, such as an Aboriginal liaison officer, Aboriginal education officer, Parks & Gardens team member and School based traineeships 	<i>August 2022</i>	<i>HR Team</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support staff who identify as Aboriginal to participate as community members in the Aboriginal liaison committee 	<i>August 2021</i>	<i>HR Team</i>
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Procurement Team</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Infrastructure Works Department</i>

Governance			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form an RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	August 2020	ED Corporate & Community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. Including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement for quarterly meetings, Meaningful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff representation, and Membership size. 	August 2020	Governance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	August 2020	ED Corporate & Community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a reporting and evaluation program. 	August 2020	RAP Working Group
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	September 2020	Finance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	September 2020	ED Corporate & Community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	September 2020	RAP Working Group
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 September, 2020	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and present an annual progress report for consideration and endorsement by Council. Include the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire as part of the report. 	July 2021	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share an annual RAP progress report on our RAP webpage. Promote the RAP progress report through relevant networks. 	July 2021	RAP Working Group
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review key achievements and learnings of our RAP and develop priorities for a future plan. 	November 2022	RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	December, 2022	RAP Working Group

Contact details *Include contact details (job title, phone and email) for public enquiries about our RAP.*

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