

Stronger Together

Australian Red Cross
Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2018–2021



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH



teralba park
stolen generations

the
power of
humanity



Red Cross pays our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Custodians across this country. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We draw upon their wisdom, knowledge and leadership to guide us in changing hearts and minds.

Moments that moved us.

These words belong to members of the Red Cross Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership group. These are moments that have moved them to reflect, to act and to lead.

As you read them and this document. We encourage you to think of your own moment and share with us to build the foundation for genuine reconciliation.

Contemporary performer Jeanette Fabila leads Red Cross volunteers, staff and clients at the Jeays Steet Community Centre during Reconciliation Week 2018. Image: Australian Red Cross/Susan Cullinan.

This document may contain the names and/or images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are now deceased.

“Walking across the Tasman Bridge with 20 thousand other people, made me feel the power behind Reconciliation and what it could mean if it was used properly.”

Lee Prouse

“Sorry Day makes me realise reconciliation has a way to go, until we share the untold stories and the histories of our people.”

Natalie Little

“It’s about listening to our stories, learning from what has happened, being accepted and making the right changes to build a better future.”

Stan Law

“My brother-in-law from Ireland didn’t know what our past was and that’s when I knew reconciliation not only has to start with us here in Australia but all around the world, let our stories be heard whether it’s bad and good. All people need to hear the stories.”

Max Jetta

“A six year old told me I didn’t look like I came from Australia because my skin is brown. I realised reconciliation starts at home.”

Kerry Klimm

“Realising that just that one word, Sorry, had such an impact and meaning to our healing was very profound and emotional.”

Andrea Lee

Reflect Act Lead



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Forward

A personal note from Judy Slatyer, CEO

I believe in the power of humanity. In our capacity to reach out to each other in times of crisis, to take pride in our achievements, to negotiate our differences, and to learn and grow together.

And so I am on a journey, and so are thousands of my colleagues. On this journey, I see my country through new eyes – or rather, ancient eyes. I see its trees and its rivers, its animals and its fish, its development and its cultivation, in ways I had never known before.

I see things I find hard to bear: two centuries of dispossession and displacement, the sundering of families and the denial of humanity. I see a legacy of pain and systematic, unthinking oppression. I see where I have benefitted from this oppression.

It is not a comfortable journey. Nor should it ever be.

My friend Leann Wilson, a Bidjara and Kara-Kara woman, often reminds me and other Red Cross leaders that “we need to be a bit nervous to find our courage” in this space.

This is how we see our third Reconciliation Action Plan. As a journey away from an organisational focus towards a personal commitment made by every individual who is part of Red Cross. A journey from denial to understanding. From estrangement to common ground. From head to heart.

On this journey, Elders teach tenacity and resilience. Young people inspire with their compassion, ambition and pride in who they are. Communities unite to heal our country’s most grievous hurts: family violence, substance abuse, racism, suicide, youth imprisonment.

Together we learn from the world’s oldest continuing culture. We learn to listen deeply, speak thoughtfully, take time to build trust, reflect on our mistakes and seek healing.

The Reconciliation Action Plan on the following pages is our commitment to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, clients and friends. Together we will create a culturally safe organisation and workplace; we will work respectfully with families, communities and organisations to create opportunity; we will amplify First Nations voices, cultures and achievements. We will walk side by side towards a future we determine together.

The plan represents the next stage of our reconciliation journey. Within it, I hope every Red Cross person finds ways to express their own commitment to reconciliation – in the workplace and beyond.

In a reconciled Australia, we can all thrive.

A message from Ross Pinney, President

I was born on the land of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. It is a fact I did not truly understand until I was an adult: that the place where I was born had thousands of years of rich history and culture.

Now, every time I attend a Red Cross meeting or speak at an event across the country, I pay my respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land my feet stands, be it in the boardroom, or under a tree. To those who have come before and to those who continue to uphold their culture and to share their knowledge, wisdom and learning. That is part of my journey of reconciliation and I make it with pride.

I am learning to be patient. To listen, hear, think, feel, act and do things differently. I invite you to do the same.

Together we can work towards a reconciled Australia: by being truth tellers and change agents. By challenging negative stereotypes, busting untrue narratives and fostering understanding.

As we build an organisation that is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, volunteers, clients and visitors, we receive the gift of a First Nations perspective. It can’t be replicated through a set of written rules for others to follow. Instead – through commitment, practice, ongoing learning, trust and relationship building – two ways of working can come together.

This is what I ask of you. As we bring this plan to life within Red Cross, think about what reconciliation means to you as a Red Cross person, as an Australian. Make your own commitment to it, make it deep and unique.

Above all, make it come from the heart.



Our President Ross Pinney and CEO Judy Slatyer. Photograph: Mark Farrelly Photography.



**A message from Karen Mundine,
CEO of Reconciliation Australia**

Reconciliation Australia congratulates the Australian Red Cross (Red Cross) on its past successes and continued commitment to reconciliation as it implements its third Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP); its second Stretch RAP.

As a RAP partner, Red Cross is a member of a fast-growing collective of over 1,100 organisations in Australia, all working to build and implement plans of action based on the key pillars of reconciliation activity: relationships, respect, and opportunities.

Since starting its reconciliation journey nine years ago, Red Cross has held itself up as a fine example of what RAPs can achieve. It has ensured that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard and respected across all levels of the organisation, and has taken a 'big picture' approach to improving the wellbeing of First Nations peoples through its 2020 Strategy.

Looking to the future, Red Cross' Stretch RAP includes noteworthy targets such as developing formal partnerships with peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support their visions and business objectives, and build on its existing cultural awareness training opportunities for all employees.

I am pleased to see that the Red Cross' collaborative approach to reconciliation also extends to its employment actions, which include goals to create career pathways for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the establishment of an Action Group with an external partner.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Red Cross on its dedication to driving reconciliation, and look forward to following its continued achievements.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



the
powerof
humanity





Listen, learn, sharing

Stephen Collins grew up in the suburbs of Sydney and had very little knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. He had never heard of Woorabinda, and never worked in an Aboriginal community.

How Stephen ended up in Woorie, well, “some of the Elders have told me it’s just some things are meant to be.

“Since I’ve been in Woorabinda I’ve learnt everything that I never thought I needed to know, all the lessons that I never knew there were to learn.

“Having spent time in Woorabinda and being adopted into a family here, that’s given me a deeper understanding of issues. I will never feel the impact of intergenerational trauma and I acknowledge there’s things that I will never understand fully in the cultural connections – but, I am able to share my understandings with people I went to school with in Sydney, my family, people I studied with and help them gain more perspective about Indigenous people,” Stephen says.

Red Cross regional manager Sam Meeks says from the moment he arrived, there was just something special about Stephen.

“You don’t normally see someone who just fits.

“One of the best things that you could do as a non-Indigenous person coming into communities is to absorb. Let the community get to know you. Don’t do too much of the talking, but just a lot of the listening.

“Stephen did a lot of that. That’s where he learnt the true essence of what it is living in community with the locals,” Sam says.

“I’d like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Wadja and the Gangulu people, and acknowledge the Elders that came to Woorabinda when there was just dirt and trees and to not only build houses, but build a community out of 52 different tribes. I can’t imagine what that would have been like, to say, ‘We don’t have a choice in this. Let’s make it the best we can.’” – Stephen Collins

Stephen Collins (centre) with young leaders from Woorabinda Stanley (left) and Jobe. Photograph: Australian Red Cross/Dilini Perera Stephen.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for reconciliation is a unified nation built on dignity, safety and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Australian Red Cross sees reconciliation as essential for a community in which humanity is at the centre of how we interact with each other. A community with a rich identity built on trust, respect and understanding. Where we learn about our shared history, its impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and its painful and confronting truths. Where we acknowledge the truth, the history, and take pride in the histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Where all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equal opportunities to succeed and be proud of who they are.

We understand that we have a role to contribute to truth telling in order to unify and reconcile Australia. We see a reconciled Australia as one where communities lead decision-making on the issues which matter to them, where we listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and enable them to implement their own solutions. Red Cross is committed to enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share a prosperous, safe and healthy future with all other Australians.

To achieve this vision, it is critical that we continue to walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, organisations and peak bodies. We will be stronger together if:

Reconciliation is from the heart – we need to connect the head and the heart. We need to make reconciliation personal, supporting the people who work with us to set goals for their own reconciliation journeys. We need to get to know each other, to work harder to gain trust which is the necessary foundation for genuine reconciliation. We will deepen our learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions, connection to land and identity, of customs and protocols, and celebrate achievements.

We create a culturally safe environment – we need to ensure our organisation is a safe and inclusive place, where we can learn from each other and increase our understanding of reconciliation, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultural ways of doing business. We will be an organisation which does not only provide opportunities for the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, but actively supports and promotes the development of those who we engage with. We will build a ‘cultural ladder’ which will support the continuous cultural learning of Red Cross people and will transform the way we think, feel and act. From this place of deeper understanding we will all be empowered to engage respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and confidently challenge and counter racism and prejudice.

We connect with others along the reconciliation journey – reconciliation is everyone’s business. We need to connect with others over our shared values and strengthen partnerships to amplify the impact of collective reconciliation actions. Through accountable leadership we need to ensure we respect, support and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led solutions and processes. We need to collaborate and work through our networks to make investment in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service sector and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

“A reconciled Australia would place value on and appreciate differing cultural values, ways of behaving, knowledge and sense of community. It ensures that our people, including vulnerable people, are protected and are provided the opportunity to create and realise their own dreams and aspirations, both individually and collectively.” Belinda D’Souza, Head of Finance

WHO WE ARE

Australian Red Cross is building a better society based on people helping people. We support people during emergencies, in personal crises and through ongoing hardships. We build partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, help people who are experiencing exclusion from social connections, support vulnerable migrants, and stand with communities as they prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Our purpose is to reduce suffering across Australia and internationally. We mobilise people to provide support to others in their own communities and beyond – that’s the power of humanity.

This work is delivered with the support of over 1,800 staff and 15,800 volunteers, spread across the country with 365 offices in urban, regional and remote locations. Of our staff, over 7% or 131 staff members identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Through our Strategy 2020, we aim to help more people in more ways and make a greater difference. We want to:

- Unleash the power of humanity by supporting millions more Australians to take voluntary humanitarian action in their communities and provide the tools and knowledge for them to organise this work themselves.
- Support increased community resilience, both here and in the Asia-Pacific, so that community members are able to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters and other crises more effectively.
- Contribute to a more peaceful world where the laws of war are upheld by all and we are actively partnering with our colleagues in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement delivering positive change to some of the globe’s most pressing modern challenges.
- Support the most vulnerable in our community by reducing the number of people who are deeply socially excluded, supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reach their potential, ensuring migrants are welcome and active participants in our communities, empowering the most vulnerable communities in Australia to build a better future together, and reducing the number of people in prison where better alternatives exist.
- Deliver one of the world’s safest supplies of blood and blood products, strategically striving to secure Australian plasma and make a greater contribution to healthcare more broadly.

“Reconciliation really is this nation’s ability to honestly see the history, and seek new ways of addressing racism. If you see something or hear something please say something or we are condoning it.”

Deb Moyle, a Ngarrindjeri woman and our Senior Project Officer with our Justice Reinvestment team.

OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY SO FAR

This is our third Reconciliation Action Plan. We started the journey with an 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan in 2009, committed to turning the principles on which we were founded into real actions. We worked hard to be an organisation that was culturally respectful, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had opportunities and access to employment, business, strategy, and programs. Our second Reconciliation Action Plan in 2015 was a 'Stretch' Plan, building on the strategies and approaches for reconciliation we had developed, with a focus on longer-term goals and embedding reconciliation into our business. We strengthened our approach to working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through making an investment in community-led solutions.

We made significant progress through our last Reconciliation Action Plan, particularly in the following areas:

- Elevated the role and voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all levels, including through the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the Red Cross National Board, State/Territory Divisional Advisory Boards, and in organisational leadership positions.
- Convened regular meetings between the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team and Executive to define leadership accountability, reconciliation progress, and positive change to make a difference for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations with whom we partner.
- Invested in developing our state and territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams. Based on the Wominjeka model in Victoria, leadership teams were established in South Australia – Kumangka Pirku, Tasmania – Palawa, and New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, while Queensland continued with their Local Evidence Groups. This will continue to be a focus during the period of this Reconciliation Action Plan, having newly established groups in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.
- Continued investment and implementation of our place-based approach, where eight of the ten place-based sites are communities with a large population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This place-based approach draws on community development principles to build community capacity, and is supported by a workforce where 70% of the staff identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- Progressing our Strategy 2020 outcome focusing on the improvement of the wellbeing of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including investment in a co-design project working with two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify and address issues impacting on the wellbeing of their young people.
- Honouring, recognising and awarding staff for contributions made to Red Cross and their communities through their work. This recognition has extents to the awarding of NAIDOC Week Awards for categories including Leadership, Community Service, and Creative Culture.
- Strengthening our procurement policy to invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers, as a member of Supply Nations.
- Developed and launched our position on reconciliation during Reconciliation Week 2018, through our "What we stand for" document, which also supports this Reconciliation Action Plan.
- In partnership with Reconciliation Australia, we brought together stakeholders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies, corporates, government, academia, and not-for-profit organisations to identify opportunities for collaboration and develop change strategies to drive meaningful reconciliation. It was the first cross-sector reconciliation event of this kind for the Red Cross.
- In developing this Reconciliation Action Plan we adopted a co-design approach where staff, volunteers, members, and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams participated and generated more than 100 ideas many of which have been incorporated in this plan. Additionally, staff, members and volunteers are participating in events recognising and celebrating the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including in external major events such as NAIDOC Week.

In addition to celebrating these successes, we have reflected on our challenges on this reconciliation journey and included measures to address these through the development of this Reconciliation Action Plan. The key lessons we have identified are:

- A need to work across all areas and levels of the organisation, to build our cultural knowledge and make reconciliation personal for all Red Cross people, making commitments from the heart.
- Improved recruitment, support and retention measures for staff and volunteers. This includes improving the cultural safety of the organisation and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support the development of stronger retention measures for management and service delivery roles.
- Ensuring our programs and activities are culturally relevant, accessible and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We must ensure our work reflects local cultural protocols and practices.
- Connecting with others to learn from organisations who are well underway with their reconciliation journeys.
- Strengthening the influence of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams across the whole organisation.
- Having fewer more targeted actions that are specific and meaningful with actions across the organisation.



Photograph: Australian Red Cross/Kevin Leeder.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our reconciliation journey is guided by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, which provides leadership and guidance for cultural change, with added advice from our State/Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams. Their leadership is critical to shape and guide our strategy, initiatives and approaches so that we can genuinely walk alongside communities to have more impact through:

- Demonstrating culturally responsible practice
- Drawing on their extensive experience and networks
- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are central to decision making
- Being creative and courageous in striving for change.

These Leadership Teams will continue to be influential in guiding our reconciliation journey as influencers, enablers, and connectors with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and other key partners.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan implementation is led by the Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group (RAPIG). This group is co-chaired by the Director of Strategy, People and Performance and the Director of Engagement and Support, supported by the National Lead, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Co-Chairs of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team. Members are senior staff members from each Business unit who hold authority to mobilise resources, make decisions, and be champions of the RAP. Other members will include representation from the State/Territories, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. All members of the RAPIG will support their Directorates to deliver the key actions of the plan. The group will be responsible for contributing to the reporting to the Executive and the Board to monitor the implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

HOW WE DEVELOPED OUR NEW RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

In developing this Reconciliation Action Plan, we took a co-design approach. This meant working across our organisation and engaging a broad cross section of staff, volunteers, members, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams, National Leadership Team and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members from Divisional Advisory Boards. The process included several phases, from understanding the impact of our current Reconciliation Action Plan, to generating more than 100 ideas for our new Reconciliation Action Plan, and prototyping and testing those ideas to create the Reconciliation Action Plan.

This Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan focuses on making reconciliation personal and looking outside our organisation to have a broader reconciliation impact with others. We aim to look beyond the Reconciliation Action Plan as a plan, to how reconciliation will be lived by every Red Cross person, moving from what Red Cross as an organisation can do, to what I as a Red Cross person can do. We believe that reconciliation can lead us to new ways of thinking and doing, and can profoundly positively change the way we interact with each other.

THE FOUR SKINS GROUP

The Tiwi people have lived on the islands since time immemorial. Every Tiwi is born into one of four Skin Groups or family groups: “Wantarringuwi” (sun), “Lorrula” (stone), “Miyartwi” (pandanus) and “Takaringuwi” (mullet). The skin group of a Tiwi is matrilineal; it is inherited from the mother and determines the marriage line.

It determines their identity, relationship to every other Tiwi and who you can and cannot marry. It resolves disputes, discusses important issues and is essential to community cohesion.

Lynette Johnson from the Pandanus Skin Group works for Red Cross supporting Tiwi people with mental health worries. Lynette explains how Skin Groups resolve disputes” “Sometimes each tribe has a difference and we have to work it out, especially if there’s fighting going on. Like, for instance, Stone, this tribe, if they end up fighting, we can’t stop them or interfere.

“We can just listen. So Stone can sort it out, get their family to sort it out. If it doesn’t (work) then Sun can come in. If that doesn’t (work) then the whole skin group, Pandanus, Mullet, Sun and Stone, try to work out what is the problem, how can they stop.

“So Mullet and Pandanus they can’t just go in and say ‘you mob shouldn’t be fighting’. We can’t. They (Stone) got to do it on their own. Or then Sun. “When everything’s settled down, then later we get together. The Elders get together or Strong Women, Strong Men get those people that are fighting to say sorry. Get together and then there’s special healing.

“If there’s a meeting with the whole community, then we separate Pandanus one side, Mullet one side, Sun one side and Stone one side. Get together and talk about it.”

Keeping culture strong

The impact of colonisation and western models of governance has over time eroded the role of Skin Groups.

Red Cross is supporting the revival of the group to engage with the local community on cultural and community issues.

Manager Kevin Doolan says there’s been great interest and support in getting the Skin Group Project going.

“It’s only early days and we’ve had a couple of meetings, but those meetings have had strong attendance.”

“The meetings are looking at a variety of issues, not just about Red Cross programs, but programs, services and issues across the community, from school attendance to public safety and rubbish removal.”

Kevin thanks his team who have been instrumental in reigniting support, keeping that momentum going and building on each meeting. .

The team in Kalgoorlie-Boulder ran an inter-agency school holiday program. A day out bush including straw and wool animal weaving, tin truck making, sports. The aim is to get the kids out of town and their feet on the ground.



Staff in Melbourne ready for NAIDOC March 2018, celebrating the theme Because of Her We Can and the achievements and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.



Photograph: Australian Red Cross/Shelly Wills.

OUR PLAN FOR ACTION

A MESSAGE FROM JENNY BROWN NATIONAL LEAD, ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ENGAGEMENT

I acknowledge the amazing, strong, resilient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who previously or now work with Red Cross as staff, volunteers, members or partners. It is their determination to make change that created a path for us to follow on our reconciliation journey. I look forward to the next part of this journey where we build on this determination and join together in action.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, members and volunteers can guide us in achieving the many challenges we have set for ourselves. Like the action to build a 'Cultural Ladder', a framework to help Red Cross people connect, engage and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures; or the actions that put greater emphasis on career aspirations and professional development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. These are the practical steps that will deliver deeper impact.

I look forward to Red Cross being enriched by stronger relationships with my people. I see those relationships driving us to make real tangible changes. Now it is time to turn to the work ahead of us all, to dedicate ourselves to achieving our targets and to emerge as a leading organisation in advancing reconciliation in Australia.



Caring for seniors: Closing the gap in life expectancy

While most Australians enjoy a long life, it is not so for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Indigenous men live to 69 years compared with 79 for non-Indigenous men and Indigenous women live to 73 years compared to 83 for non-Indigenous women.

At Kalano Flexible Aged Care Service in Katherine, the average age of its Aboriginal residents is 88 years. The centre has 18 beds and its guests come from Katherine or the many remote Aboriginal communities in the area.

In August 2016, Red Cross took five residents from Kalano back to country, Kalkarindji to celebrate 50 years of the Wave Hill walk-off. Red Cross recognises the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to country and family is integral to health and wellbeing.

Red Cross staff worked for nearly a year to make this happen, taking into account the health and safety of the residents. Two of the residents were actually involved in the walk-off 50 years ago. One resident launched his second Gurindji Language Book "A Handful of Sands: The Gurindji Struggle, After the Walk-Off" during the anniversary.

Manager Sue Pszkit says they run an innovative program of share bedding, supporting guests' health and wellbeing by re-connecting with their traditional lands, community and family. "This means that clients that come from the same community can get to go home. So when one client's in, the other gets to go home and it's been really successful."

*Kalano resident Theresa with Sue Pszkit.
Photograph: Australian Red Cross/Dilini Perera.*



RELATIONSHIPS

We are committed to building long-term sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our humanitarian values are strengthened by walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and gaining greater insights into cultural identity, knowledge and protocols.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are empowered to have voice, control and lead their decisions and solutions. This will be supported by the development of long term, sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We will use our position within the sector to work with external partners, including through a Reconciliation Industry Network Group, driving collective action and collaboration on reconciliation.

“You can make a difference in your own small way. By teaching, or not teaching but telling people, telling all these people of different nationalities about my life. About what it is to be Aboriginal. This is our country. I’d say listen to what they have to say. Never be judgemental. Never be racist towards other people.” Lynette Johnson, a Miyartiwi Tiwi woman and Red Cross Support Worker

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities determine their own futures.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
1.1 Complete co-design trials in two communities to improve the wellbeing of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples where knowledge, culture and practice are at the centre of these solutions, and implement the co-designed solutions.	Complete by 31 July 2019	Director Community Programs
1.2 Recognising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are best placed to address the needs of their own communities and that we have a role in promoting self-agency, implement the policy principle of ‘not competing’ against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations for Indigenous Advancement Strategy Grants or other specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program funding. ¹	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Community Programs
1.3 Develop four formal partnerships with peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community providers at national and state/territory levels to support their visions and aspirations.	Complete by 30 June 2020	Director Community Programs

Reconciliation actions are amplified and have a greater reach through collaboration with external agencies.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
2.1 Establish a Reconciliation Industry Network Group with sector partners and co-facilitate at least two group meetings per year to increase our reconciliation reach through collaboration, sharing ideas, and identifying collective opportunities.	Establish by 30 June 2019 Track annually June	Director Community Programs
2.2 Develop a minimum of two collaborative external partnerships to increase employment pathways and training opportunities for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Community Programs
2.3 See a positive shift in the Humanitarian Index on the issue of reconciliation by testing and trying actions arising from the Red Cross Humanitarian Attitudes Research and/or sector research.	Complete by 30 June 2021	Director Strategy, People and Performance

This may include: walking alongside Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander led organisations to support their funding applications and program implementation; and overtime not be a service provider for Indigenous specific programs and developing exit plans with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, with a focus on capacity building and mentoring.

Red Cross decisions which impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are influenced, shaped and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, volunteers and members.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
3.1 Increase the influence of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team through at least two annual meetings with Executive.	Commence by 1 December 2019 Track annually June	Director Community Programs
3.2 The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team acts as the clearinghouse and provides guidance on national decisions and/or initiatives which impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Complete by 30 June 2019 Track annually June	Director Community Programs
3.3 Strengthen the connection between State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Teams and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team through presentations between the teams at least twice per year.	Complete by 1 December 2019 Track annually June	Director Community Programs

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented at all levels within Red Cross.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
4.1 Representation by at least one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person on the Red Cross Board and each State and Territory Divisional Advisory Board.	Complete by 30 June 2019 Track annually June	President, Australian Red Cross Board
4.2 Divisional Advisory Boards develop and implement at least one initiative to progress reconciliation within their state/territory per year.	Track annually June	Divisional Advisory Board Chairs
4.3 Strengthen the connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives on the Divisional Advisory Boards, Youth Advisory Committees and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team.	Completed by 30 June 2019	Director Community Programs
4.4 Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people on State/Territory youth Advisory Committees- two members per Committee.	Complete by 30 June 2020 Track annually June	Director Vounteering
4.5 At least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples are represented in the emerging National Youth Network.	Complete by 30 June 2021 Track annually June	Director Volunteering

Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) to strengthen and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and other staff.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
5.1 Organise at least 24 internal NRW events each year.	Track annually May	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
5.2 Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	Track annually May	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
5.3 Encourage staff, volunteers, members and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	Track annually May	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
5.4 Review and update organisational wide survey, benchmark against the 2017 baseline results to assess level of engagement and awareness of reconciliation by staff and volunteers.	Track annually May	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
5.5 Ensure members of the RAP Implementation Group participate in at least 5 external NRW events each year.	Track annually May	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group

Raise internal and external awareness of our Reconciliation Action Plan to promote reconciliation across our business and sector.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
6.1 Publish a printable and interactive version of our Reconciliation Action Plan on the Australian Red Cross website.	Complete by 31 December 2018	Director Engagement and Support
6.2 Mobilise our corporate network to engage their staff in reconciliation and encourage them to develop their own Reconciliation Action Plans, including by linking them with other corporates who are further along their reconciliation journeys.	Track annually June	Director Engagement and Support
6.3 Encouraging the schools we currently work with through service delivery and community engagement to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan using the Reconciliation Australia Narrangunnawali online platform.	Track annually June	Director Community Programs



RESPECT

All Red Cross people understand how the work of Red Cross contributes to the Reconciliation Movement and Red Cross' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff affect positive change within Red Cross. A 'cultural ladder' will help Red Cross people move beyond awareness, to becoming culturally proficient. This will strengthen our credibility as an organisation in respecting the rights, cultures, knowledge and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with willingness to develop our learning further.

"There are a lot of misconceptions about Aboriginal people; I personally get asked regularly why I am so white if I'm Aboriginal (my cousins have even nicknamed me Cilla Vanilla because I'm the whitest out of all of us!) But being Aboriginal is not how you talk, dress or look, it's just simply who you are. To me cultural awareness means taking all those misconceptions, like how dark a person has to be to be Aboriginal, and finding out for yourself the truth about Aboriginal people and culture, all you have to do is ask." Priscilla Copian, a Kamilaroi woman and the Client Assessment and Review Officer in our Community Programs team.

² A 'cultural ladder' will help Red Cross people move beyond awareness, to becoming culturally proficient.

All Red Cross people have taken the opportunity to advance their cultural awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to develop a personal commitment to reconciliation, connecting commitments of the head to the heart.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
1.1 Design and implement the 'cultural ladder' and supporting resources, to support the continuous cultural learning needs of all Red Cross people in collaboration with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.2 70% of Red Cross staff develop cultural understanding and respect by undertaking combined on-line with face to face cultural learning and immersion activities as guided by the cultural ladder.	Complete by 30 June 2020 Track annually June	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.3 100% of new staff will complete the cultural learning component as part of the on-line induction process.	Complete by 1 December 2019 Track annually June	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.4 Red Cross staff make a personal commitment to reconciliation through an "I Will" plan, detailing how individuals can develop personal actions to contribute to reconciliation.	Complete by 30 June 2020 Track annually June	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.5 Develop a two-way mentoring initiative and cultural exchange between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the Red Cross National Leadership Team and managers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as part of our commitment to cultural empowerment, commencing with all Executive members (8) having mentoring agreements, overtime extend to all Leadership Team members.	Complete by 30 June 2020	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.6 Develop engagement, resourcing and support to embed practical reconciliation steps into membership practices, including developing a Reconciliation Action Plan toolkit for branches and units.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Volunteering
1.7 Acknowledgement of Country protocol to be part of all Red Cross meeting agendas and events, including volunteer and branch events.	Track annually June	National Leadership Team
1.8 Invite a local Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country, at a minimum of 16 significant events each year.	Track annually June	National Leadership Team
1.9 Create and display an Acknowledgement of Country plaque in all new office premises and retail stores.	Track annually June	National Leadership Team

² We have developed the concept of a "cultural ladder" to help Red Cross people to connect, engage and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples their traditions and customs with a willingness to develop their learning further. This will be supported through more cultural learning opportunities, development and active promotion of Red Cross' commitment to reconciliation, and designing career development frameworks and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff adopting co-design methodology.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are better understood when all of Red Cross celebrates, learns and engages with achievements.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
2.1 All Red Cross people are supported and invited to participate in NAIDOC events, internally and externally, including supporting State and Territory Reconciliation Committees.	Track annually July	National Leadership Team
2.2 Review and update current policies and procedures which ensure that staff are encouraged and enabled to participate in NAIDOC Week.	Complete by 31 December 2018	Director Strategy, People and Performance
2.3 Encourage all staff, members and volunteers to participate in a community NAIDOC Week event.	Track annually July	National Leadership Team
2.4 Formally recognise and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, members and volunteers annually, during NAIDOC Week, for their commitment and contribution to Red Cross and communities, including through the Red Cross NAIDOC Awards and nominating staff, members and volunteers for external NAIDOC Awards.	Track annually July	Director Engagement and Support

Take account of those elements of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which are consistent with the Fundamental Principles to strengthen our reconciliation commitments.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
3.1 Actively communicate our commitment to reconciliation, including through building on “What we Stand For” on reconciliation. ³	Complete by March 2019 Track annually June	Director Engagement and Support

³ “What we stand for” launched during Reconciliation Week 2018: <https://www.redcross.org.au/stories/together-as-partners-blog/celebrating-reconciliation-week>



OPPORTUNITIES

Red Cross will be a culturally safe environment, where opportunities for best cultural practices, recruitment, career development, and the support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses will be guided through accountable leadership. Red Cross people will be encouraged to be curious and supported to take action on reconciliation.

“The fact that people from different backgrounds are wanting to understand more about Aboriginal people and culture and work toward a positive change together is great to see. But we should be mindful that this is something we need to invest in over a lifetime. And to teach our children to work toward the same goal.” Tatum Ritchie, a Wirangu woman and the Aboriginal Community Development Officer in our Justice Reinvestment team

Workforce Empowerment

Red Cross workforce has been strengthened through recruitment and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
1.1 Career development frameworks, pathways and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Red Cross people are designed to enable continuing professional development.	Complete by 30 June 2021 Track quarterly	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.2 Aspire to maintain a 7% workforce target, with a focus on the retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Complete by 30 June 2021 Track quarterly	Director Strategy, People and Performance
1.3 Aspire to have 3% of Red Cross staff in senior management positions (Grade 8 and above) ⁴ who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Complete by 30 June 2021 Track quarterly	National Leadership Team

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples' future wellbeing is improved by the creation of employment pathways.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
2.1 Commit to supporting at least 10 CareerTrackers interns for 10 years.	Complete by 30 June 2019 Track annually June	Director Strategy, People and Performance
2.2 Establish an external partner action group to increase volunteer and employment pathways for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Community Programs

⁴ An individual at Job Grade 8 is responsible for some or all of the following: people, financial, functional, thought, or change leadership outcomes. They lead specialist or complex, multi-disciplinary teams and typically report to a National Leadership Team member.

Business and Procurement

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses have been increased.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
3.1 Through implementation of our procurement policy, procure goods and services from at least 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses, accounting for at least 3% of procurement spend annually.	Complete by 30 June 2019 Track annually June	Chief Financial Officer
3.2 Develop five new commercial partnerships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Chief Financial Officer
3.3 Implement the Procurement Corporate Social Responsibility tool to share our commitment to reconciliation with suppliers and seek an understanding of the supplier's commitment to reconciliation.	Complete by 30 September 2018	Chief Financial Officer

Volunteers and Membership

Red Cross members and volunteers choose to lead reconciliation initiatives relevant for their local communities/contexts.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
4.1 Seek to have 2.8% of our active volunteers and members identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ⁵	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Volunteering
4.2 Actively pursue engagement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in international work by increasing representation by at least 2 additional people.	Complete by 30 June 2020	Director International Programs

⁵ 2.8% target reflects the current proportion of the Australian population who identify as being from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

Other Initiatives

In times of vulnerability, resulting from natural disasters and emergencies, the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities will be met.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
5.1 Reorientate the Red Cross emergency services approach to embed cultural practice and workforce capability, guided through research into the impact of emergencies on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Migration Emergencies and Movement Relations
5.2 Expand the trial of current pillow case concept in at least one additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with the aim of testing the cultural appropriateness of this concept and exploring sponsorship opportunities.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Migration Emergencies and Movement Relations
5.3 Develop three case studies to capture the emergency experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build a two-way learning opportunity, potential to share with other organisations.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Migration Emergencies and Movement Relations
5.4 Explore existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and resilience measures as part of a community resilience building pilot in at least three Aboriginal communities (Tiwi Islands, Daly River and Galiwin'ku region), supporting communities to prepare psychosocially in ways that are culturally appropriate by using a place-based community development model.	Complete by 30 June 2019	Director Migration Emergencies and Movement Relations

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are equipped to provide initial response to accidents and injuries.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
6.1 In partnership with and as requested by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, provide culturally relevant first aid training to local communities.	Complete by 30 June 2020	Director Engagement and Support

Governance

Red Cross leaders are accountable for reconciliation commitments.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
1.1 The annual plans of Directorates and governance groups include measurable reconciliation commitments, based on this plan.	Track annually April	Chief Executive Officer and Board President

Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group (RAPIG) actively monitors Reconciliation Action Plan development and implementation.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
2.1 Ensure there are at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the RAPIG.	30 October 2018 Track annually July	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
2.2 Meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	Track annually June	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group
2.3 Review and update the Terms of Reference for the RAPIG as required.	Complete by 31 December 2018	Co-Chairs of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group

Transparent reports on progress including achievements, challenges and learnings to Executive and Reconciliation Australia (for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report).

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
3.1 Annual report provided to Executive, Board, and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team.	Completed annually September	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.2 Regular reports on progress on the Reconciliation Action Plan targets to be provided to Executive to ensure corrective action is identified and can be taken as required.	Track monthly, or as determined by Executive	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.3 A summary of progress reports communicated to all Red Cross people.	Track quarterly, October, January, April, & July	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.4 Annual report provided to Reconciliation Australia, with a full progress report provided to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this Reconciliation Action Plan.	Annually September	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.5 Participate in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace Reconciliation Action Plan Barometer.	May 2020	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.6 Report to Reconciliation Australia by completing the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	September Annually	Director Strategy, People and Performance
3.7 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.	Annually September	Director Engagement and Support

Red Cross is committed to learning from the implementation of this Reconciliation Action Plan and incorporating this learning in developing our next Reconciliation Action Plan.

Deliverables	Timeline	Accountability
4.1 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new Reconciliation Action Plan based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	Complete by 31 January 2021	Director Community Programs
4.2 Send draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for feedback.	Complete by 31 March 2021	Director Community Programs
4.3 Submit draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Executive and Board and Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	Commence process for approvals in June 2021	Director Community Programs

Photograph: Australian Red Cross/Lara Cole.



Who runs the world? Girls!

Red Cross is partnering with Role Models and Leaders Girls Academy at Melville High School in Kempsey, for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls, boosting their confidence and school attendance.

“I am a farmer I have had a lifelong affinity with nature and the land. As a little girl I found a small Aboriginal tool on our farm. I had been told by my parents that Aboriginal people had always lived in Australia but it wasn’t until then that I realised they had been on the same actual land before us. When we sold my husband’s family farm, the bond that had been developed affected us greatly, and made leaving very difficult. This gives me some small understanding of how hard it must have been for Aboriginal people to be forced off the land they had lived on, depended on and loved for so long. My heart bleeds for them.

“I was brought up to respect all people and my hope is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are treated with better understanding and the respect they deserve, and that all Australians live in harmony.”

Anne Macarthur OAM, Chair of the VIC Divisional Advisory Board

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