



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan  
Reflect

January 2023 – 2024  
Houston Group

**Houston**

Acknowledgement of Country	04
Message from Reconciliation Australia	06
CEO Statement	08
About Houston Group	10
Our RAP	12
Our RAP Committee	14
Artist Feature – Tiarna Herczeg	16
RAP Artwork	18
Our Action Areas:	22
Relationships	22
Respect	24
Opportunities	27
Governance	28

# Contents



# Message from Reconciliation Australia

6

Karen Mundine

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Houston Group to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Houston Group joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes. These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# Stuart O'Brien CEO Statement



Along with the rest of the team at Houston Group, I am so proud to introduce our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). It's been a long time coming, and it is with this document that we acknowledge the work we will do, as we move one step closer to reconciliation.

When I set up Houston in 2011, I wanted to create a company and a culture that gives back. For over 11 years, I have been a supporter of projects focussed on supporting young people in Western Sydney to dream big and get a head start. I grew up in Mount Druitt and I know first-hand the impact these programs can have. We currently have a scholarship project set up with the Public Education Foundation, enabling five students access to the equipment and support they need to maximise their education.

Over the years, we've also had the great fortune to work alongside First Nations clients and partners: we supported Career Trackers to create their 10-year anniversary logo and event collateral, NITV to shape their brand strategy, and we recently collaborated with Balarinji to launch the new brand for Australia.

But, we know we have so much more to do. This RAP is the beginning of Houston Group's journey to create meaningful change and connect with our First Nations communities, working towards equity for all that call this country home.

It is humbling to live on land that is home to the world's oldest living continuous culture. That's 60,000 years of innovation, creativity and strength that we all can learn from, and grow with.

It is with deep respect and commitment that Houston Group commences our RAP journey.

**Stuart O'Brien**  
Founder & CEO  
Houston Group

As Houston passes its milestone tenth year, the relationships and success of our clients' businesses is what makes us most proud. We are a strategic brand and design agency and have repositioned and transformed some of the most enduring brands in Australia; including Qantas, Lendlease, Ampol and Toyota. It is this experience that provides valuable custodianship to stakeholders and boards around helping define and shape these modern brands. We position organisations to achieve their ambitions. And we drive transformational change.

As an independently-owned consultancy with 22 permanent staff in Sydney and Melbourne, we advise C-suite clients across a variety of business challenges and projects. Currently we have no staff members who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. Because 'no two problems are alike' our work spans from deep business

and brand consulting to communications planning and campaign work. Essentially, we focus on telling brand stories that influence a variety of commercial and organisational outcomes.

Our approach is one of collaboration. It's very important for us to work right alongside our clients and partner agencies so that we can provide real counsel and real value. This is how we effect change from deep within organisations, and how we are able to connect strategic thinking with world class creative execution.

It is this passion for storytelling and the partnerships we have with some of the biggest corporate organisations in Australia, that makes it our duty and privilege to champion reconciliation. We have the network and creativity to influence beyond our sphere, and it is our mission to achieve this.

10



# Houston Group



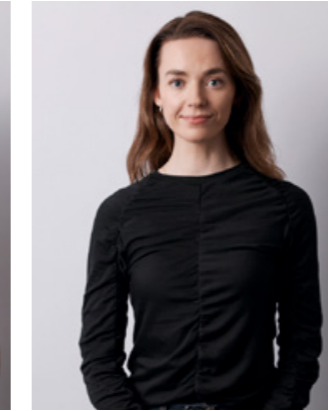
Mururr- Mururr/Same time, 2022  
Tiarna Herczeg, Kuku Yalanji

This artwork is a reminder that we are here at the same time. Like the other two works it highlights the complexities of Indigenous spirituality and connection to the land through mark making that signifies the diversity of Country.



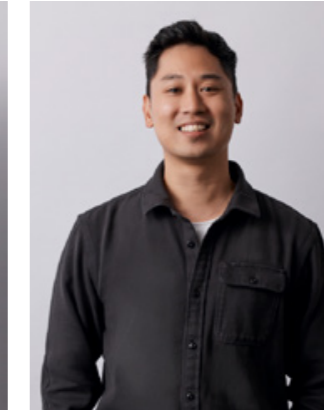
**Stacey Saunders**  
Chief of Staff and  
RAP Working Group Chair

To me, reconciliation is the journey of education and understanding the history of First Nations people, both past and present. I want to carry and drive the respect it deserves. To be a champion of change for the future for all Australians both young and old.



**Cara Meade**  
Strategy Director

Reconciliation is acknowledging the pain and hurt of our collective past, and working actively to champion and celebrate First Nations wisdom, knowledge and creativity. I look forward to deepening my knowledge of this country I am lucky to call home.



**Paul Principe**  
Design Director

Reconciliation is to listen, learn and understand. It's about realising a deeper and more meaningful connection with First Nations people.



**Rachel Taylor**  
Account Director

For me, reconciliation is the relationships, respect and trust that is required to build a stronger future for the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



**Tori Fraser**  
Account Manager

For me, reconciliation is taking action to build a deeper understanding and stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It's my commitment to move into Australia's future as a united nation, dedicated to healing our past. An appreciation that my home was, and will always be, on Darug and Guringai land.

# Introducing our RAP Committee



Tiarna Herczeg is a proud Kuku Yalanji and Hungarian living on Gadigal lands. Their mob's land runs along the east coast of Far North QLD and includes the land and waters between Port Douglas and just South of Cooktown. Herczeg's work is often understood with a comprehension of Indigenous, non western maps. Maps that follow paths, songlines and significant places. Tiarna's practice is intuitive and instinctive as they paint often without a direct idea and rather uses their practice as a ritual for connecting to Country. Herczeg's approach to painting also comes from a sense of urgency regarding their spiritual and cultural identity.

# Tiarna Herczeg

## Artist



Walu Marumal/Reconcile, 2022  
Tiarna Herczeg, Kuku Yalanji

Walu marumal shows a journey of all people coming together in one place (top left spiral). It is a painting about reconciliation and a move towards a brighter future. Symbols represent elements of the land. Circles: fruit/seeds. 'U ||' shapes are men & women. Top left spiral: is a meeting place. To the right of the spiral in top left: is human tracks. The right of the page is a sun.

18

# Walu Marumal

The Walu Marumal artwork was commissioned by Houston Group, and is proudly displayed in our Sydney office.





Wunkun Yindu/Day after tomorrow, 2022  
Tiarna Herczeg, Kuku Yalanji

Wunkun Yindu is a painting that depicts people on Country. The mark making symbolises the diversity of flora in Australia. Circles symbolising fruits and seeds, the 'U' shape symbolising people and the other marks representing trees and plants.

We know we have so much more to do. This RAP is the beginning of Houston Group's journey to create meaningful change.

Stuart O'Brien — Founder & CEO

# Our Action Areas

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Deliverable	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June 23	Chief of Staff
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 23	Strategy Director
	Establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups and organisations to identify opportunities for partnership.	May 23	Account Director
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 23	Chief of Staff
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Account Manager
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Account Manager
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	February 23	Chief of Staff
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	May 23	Account Director
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	June 23	Account Director
	Share our published RAP to our network of partners and clients and explain to them our commitment to reconciliation.	March 23	Chief of Staff
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	April 23	Chief of Staff
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	March 23	Chief of Staff
	Run an all staff anti-racism training session, led by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultant.	June 23	Chief of Staff

## Respect

24

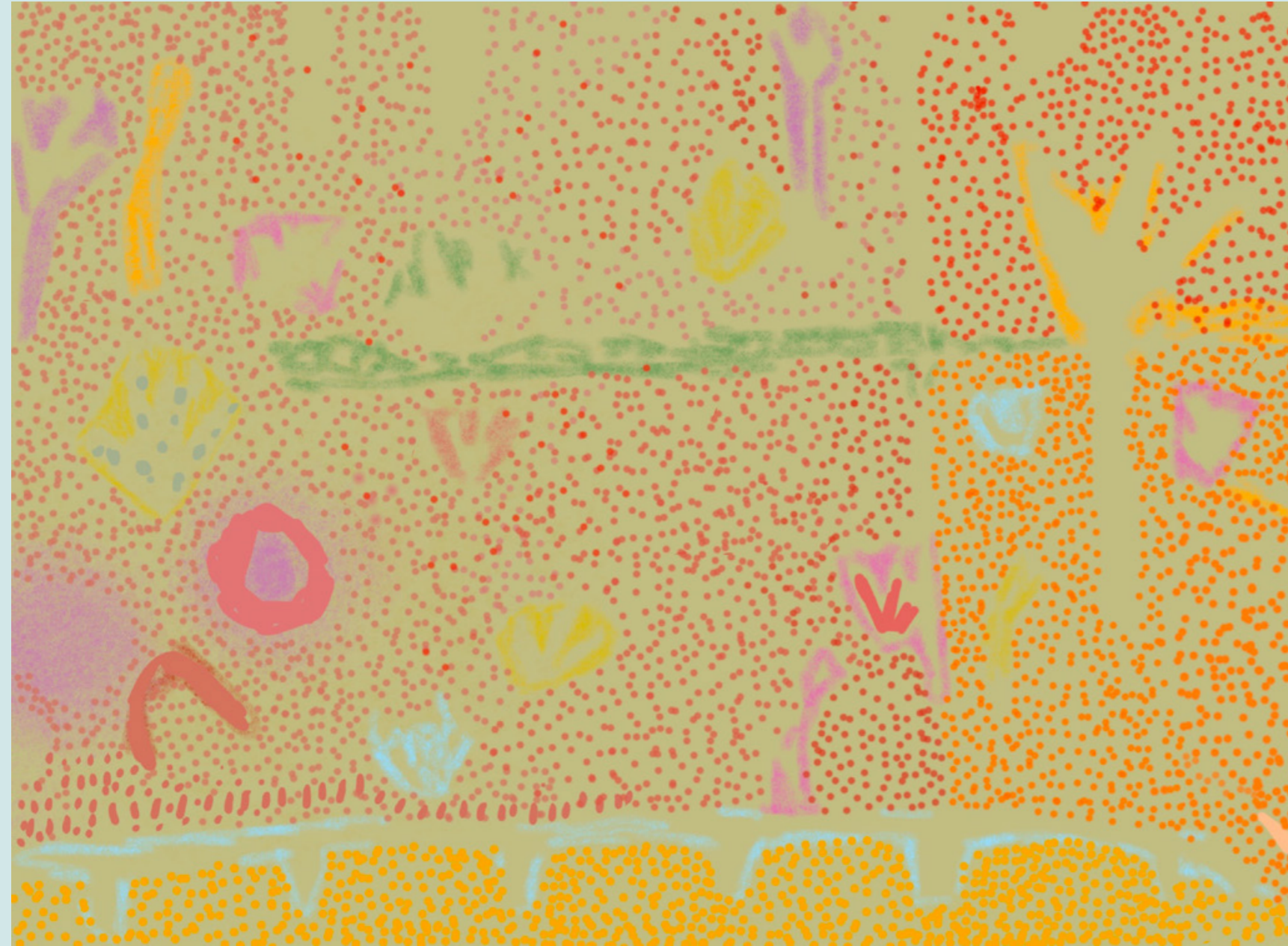
Action	Deliverable	Deliverable	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	April 23	Strategy Director
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	March 23	Chief of Staff
	Require each member of staff to complete a core cultural competency training supplied through Evolve Communities.	April 23	Chief of Staff
	Host a bi-annual, agency wide lunch and learn event, inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists/designers to share their craft/ideas.	June 23	Strategy Director
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	February 23	Account Director
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	February 23	Strategy Director
	Publicly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Land in writing on our company website	January 23	Chief of Staff
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 23	Account Manager
	All staff to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 23	Account Manager
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 23	Account Manager



Mururr- Mururr/Same time, 2022  
Tiarna Herczeg, Kuku Yalanji

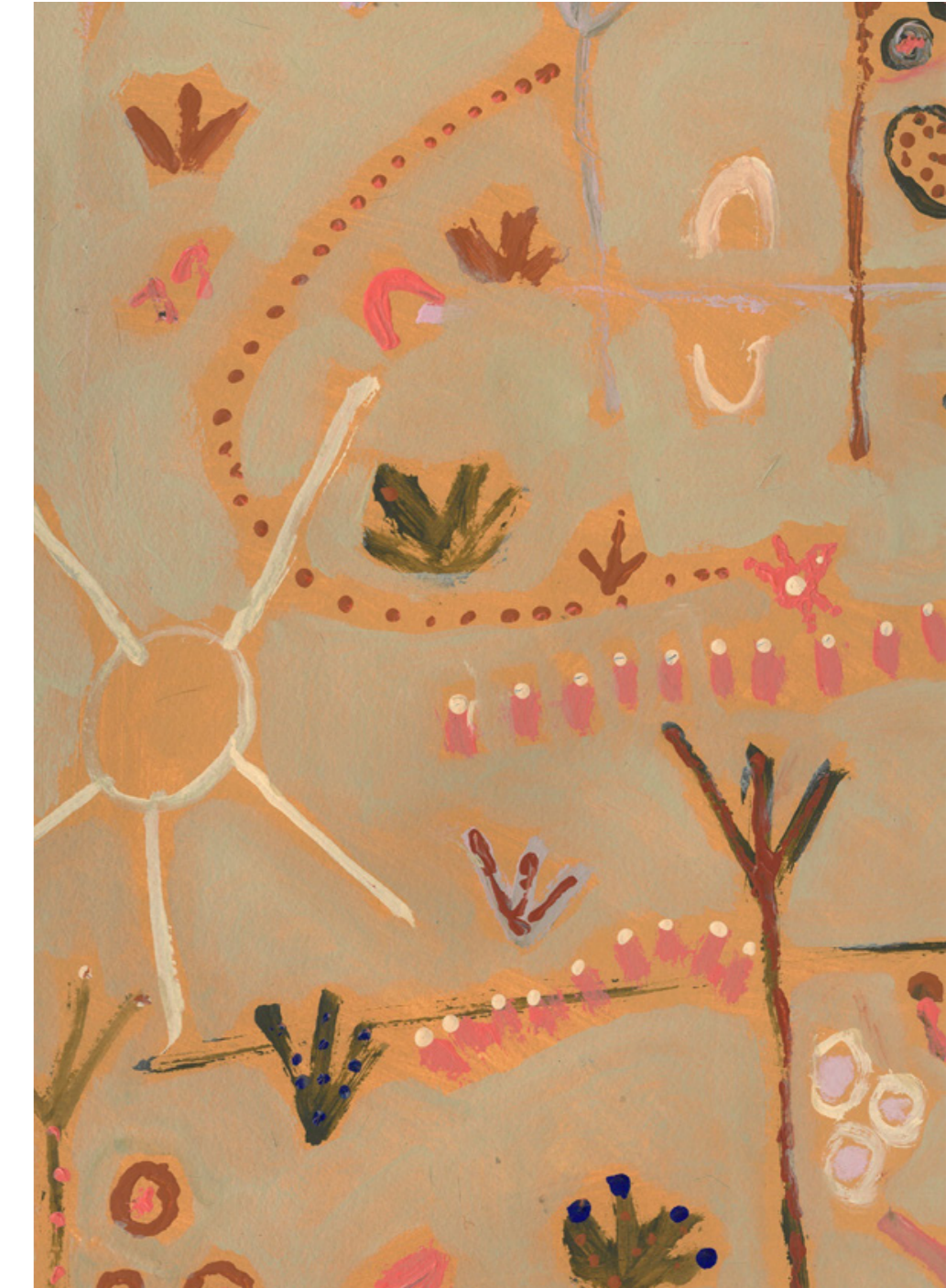
## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Deliverable	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a strategy to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	September 23	Chief of Staff
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	April 23	Chief of Staff
	Research and develop a strategy for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholarship or sponsor program.	August 23	Chief of Staff
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	June 23	Chief of Staff
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	February 23	Chief of Staff
	Develop a database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partner organisations across design, illustration and photography.	September 23	Design Director
10. Improve representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Creative work	Research existing industry guidelines and best practice examples for working with and using imagery featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent.	May 23	Design Director
	Seek out existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated talent and stock photography organisations.	May 23	Design Director



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Deliverable	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	February 23	Strategy Director
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 23	Strategy Director
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	August 23	Chief of Staff
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 23	Account Director
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	February 23	Account Director
	Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	February 23	Chief of Staff
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 23	Chief of Staff
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Chief of Staff
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August annually	Strategy Director
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September annually	Strategy Director
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.	November 23	Chief of Staff



Mururr- Mururr/Same time, 2022  
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# Houston

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