



Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

August 2023 – August 2025



**Carter
Newell**
LAWYERS

Acknowledgement of Country

Carter Newell Lawyers acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present. We acknowledge the stories, cultural diversity, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.





About the artwork

About the artist: Ms Evanna Lyn Williams

“I am a young Pitjantjatjara, Yunkuntjara & Antikarinya woman from a small community called Coober Pedy located in South Australia. I have been painting alongside my mother, who is known to be one of the famous aboriginal artists of Coober Pedy, since the age of 8. My art has transitioned from canvases to designing football guernseys each year for my high school's football competitions from the ages of 12-17.

Coober Pedy is known to be a desert, so my art presents a desert style, describing how women (kunka) gather the different types of bush tuckers around my land such as Quandong (munkata), bush bananas and other fruit that I grew up eating!

My dreaming is the honey ant dreaming from the APY Lands also known as Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara which is a large Aboriginal community located in the remote north west of South Australia.

I grew up watching and listening to my Elders tell me the true stories and values of what Aboriginal art holds in our histories; they taught me the right way to paint because each stroke of a paint brush explains a story.”

About the artwork (from Ms Williams):

∴ **“The story of this painting is how the land
∴ meets the sea and combines together.**

On the desert side, it shows woman gathering Aboriginal bush tucker, the red fruit are quondongs (in Pitjantjatjara language this means munkata).

The yellow bush tucker is called wild bush wungi; it is known as bush tomato. The green bush tucker is wild bush gumbarata; it is known as a bush tomato.

The bowls are what the woman use to put the bush tucker and honey ants in and the tapping sticks are used by our Elders to sing songs and tell our dreaming stories.”

Ms Williams’ partner is from Queensland and his people’s totems are turtles and dugong and they gave permission for Ms Williams to put these on the canvas.



A message from the Reconciliation Australia CEO

Reconciliation Australia commends Carter Newell Lawyers on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Carter Newell Lawyers to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Carter Newell Lawyers will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

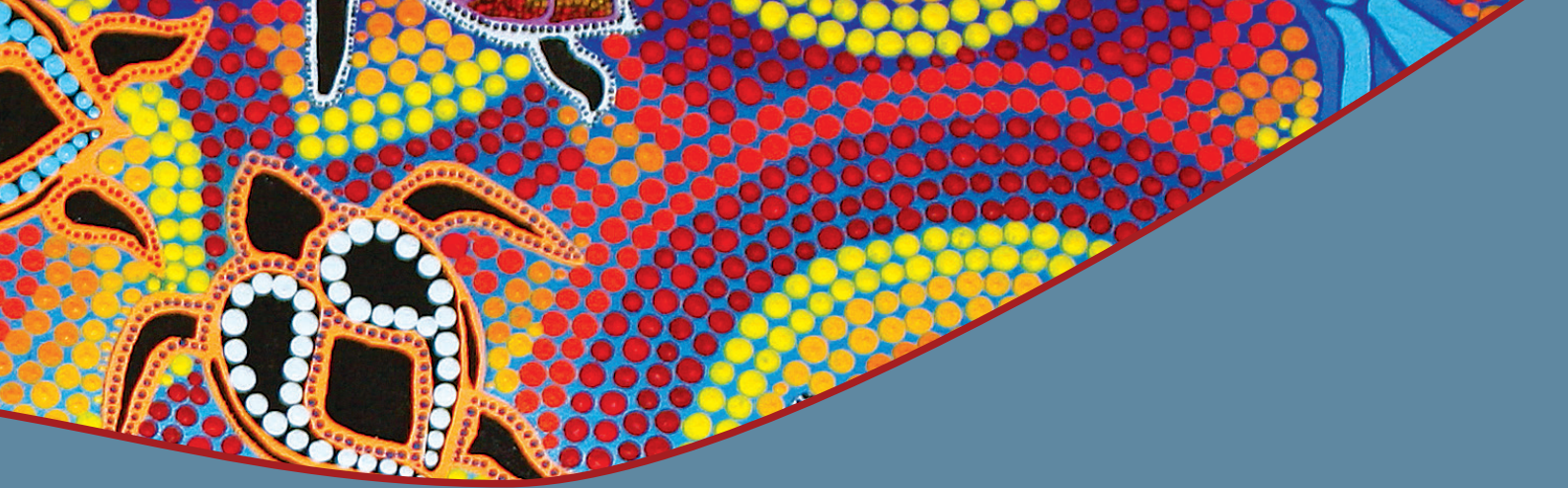
With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Carter Newell Lawyers is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Carter Newell Lawyers' readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

“Congratulations Carter Newell Lawyers on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.”

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia



Statement from our Managing Partner

It is my honour to introduce the firm’s Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Reflecting on the results from our “Reflect” RAP, we have made good progress, and our “Innovate” RAP will enable us to grow on the foundations we have created in our reconciliation journey.

- ✓ Acknowledgement of Country at all meetings, seminars, presentations and gatherings
- ✓ Partnership with Mabel Park State High School to provide career pathways for students
- ✓ Formal work opportunities for students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds
- ✓ Review and growth of policies to ensure best practice in areas of race relations
- ✓ Celebrations of National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week
- ✓ Connection with Queensland Law Society to broaden our reach of reconciliation efforts to regional members

Our people have embraced our RAP and have actively sought opportunities to be involved in our reconciliation initiatives. We will continue to raise awareness through education around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, protocols and events, whilst also providing opportunities for First Nations peoples within our organisation and the legal profession.

“Carter Newell is proud to be on this journey of strengthening First Nations inclusion in our firm, helping our employees become more connected to Country, and increase understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements. We wish to thank Reconciliation Australia as well as our local First Nations communities for their support and guidance on our journey so far. We are excited to continue on this journey with new goals, building on the progress we have achieved to date.”

Paul Hopkins
Managing Partner, Carter Newell Lawyers



Our business

Carter Newell Lawyers is an award-winning specialist law firm that provides legal advice to Australian and international corporate clients.

With offices in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, the firm primarily acts for listed and unlisted public companies, large private companies and government enterprises operating across a broad range of industries.

Carter Newell has 20 partners who lead a team of approximately 150 staff. While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is currently not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this.

Our key practice areas are:

- Insurance
- Construction & Engineering
- Energy & Resources
- Corporate
- Commercial Property
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Aviation & Transport
- Planning & Environment
- Workplace Advisory

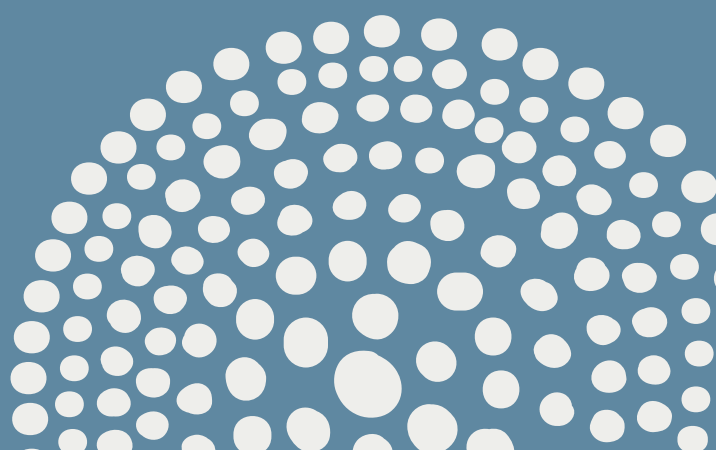
Our values

We recognise the importance of offering our staff not only the best work in our specialist areas, but also a culture which embraces flexibility, individuality, integrity and education.

• **At Carter Newell, we encourage the best use of all skills and experience of our staff, providing greater efficiency and overall job satisfaction. Our strong culture is the backbone of our success, supported by the firm's values.**

At Carter Newell we take pride in pursuing excellence in everything we do by having a genuine commitment to delivering superior legal services and advice. Our firm culture encourages and values:

- A diverse, respectful and genuine approach to clients and colleagues;
- A positive and collaborative contribution by all team members;
- A passion for life-long learning; and
- A healthy integration between work and family





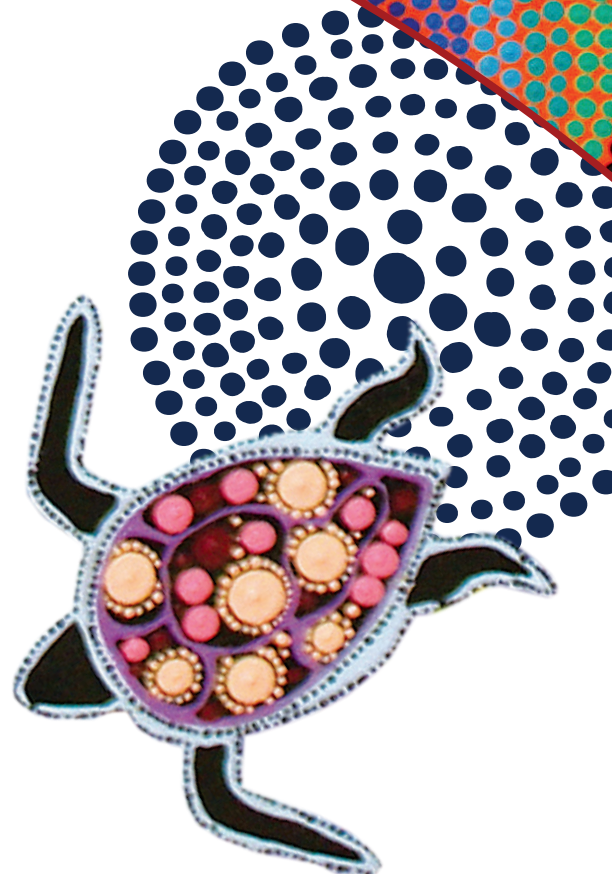
Our vision for reconciliation

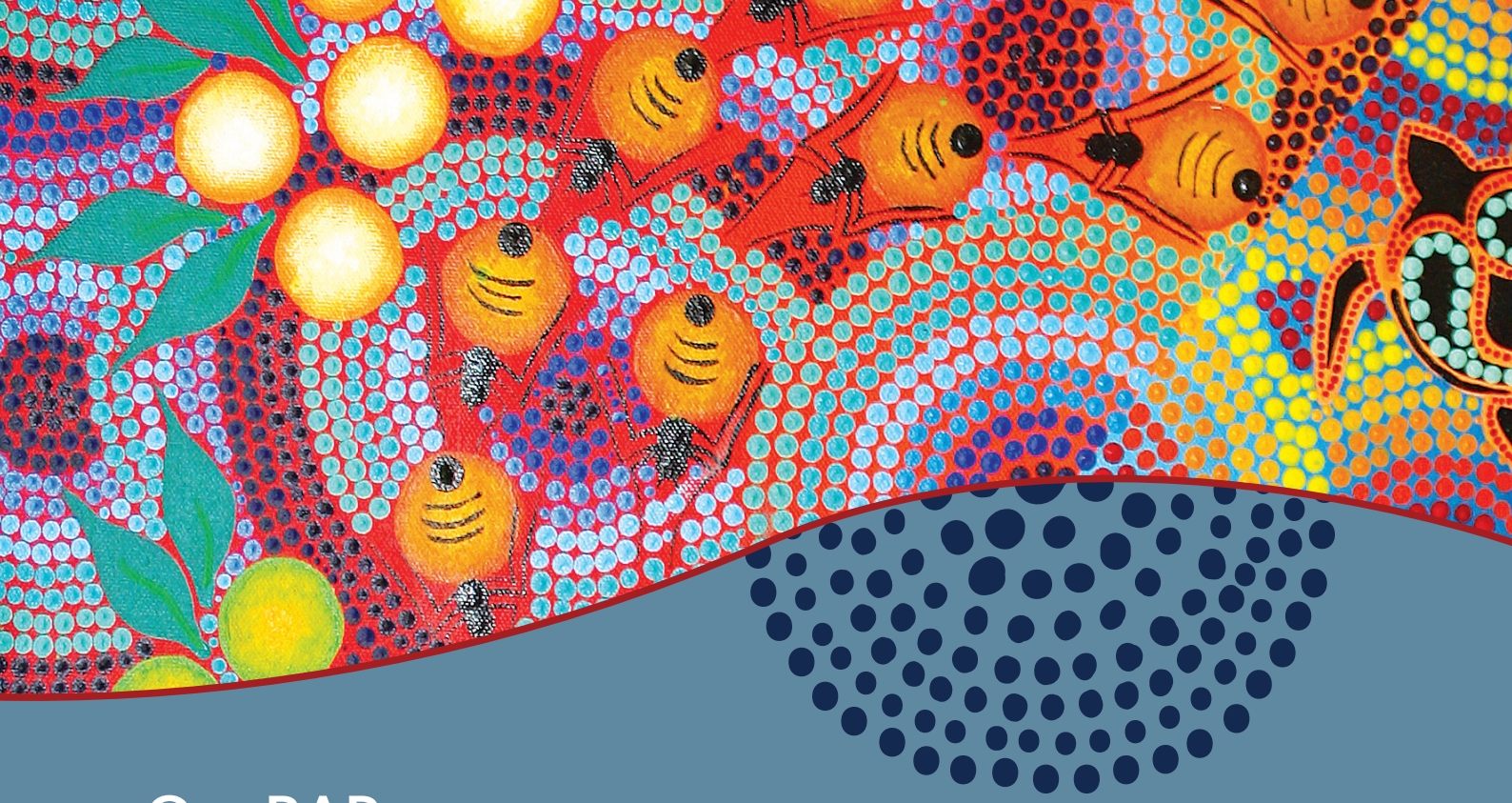
Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that acknowledges and embraces the histories and cultures of First Nations people. An Australia that embraces unity between First Nations peoples and other Australians, and a national culture that represents equality and equity.

Our vision for a reconciled legal industry is one that is inclusive, diverse and that is culturally safe and accessible for First Nations people.

We continue to foster an inclusive and diverse working environment where reconciliation is achieved through raising awareness, and education while also providing opportunities for First Nations peoples within our organisation and the legal profession.

We are committed to the ongoing education and empowerment of our people and our community, encouraging progression towards a reconciled Australia beyond the confines of our office.





Our RAP

At Carter Newell, we know that success is driven through strength in diversity. We originally developed a RAP because we believe that as an organisation, we have a responsibility to contribute our reconciliation efforts and to create a more equitable society, thus embracing the strength in diversity across our nation.

Internally, we recognise that our people are what makes us successful, and by having a culture that cultivates and supports diversity and inclusion, we create an environment where our people feel safe, respected and comfortable being themselves.

Our RAP continues to be championed by Paul Hopkins, Managing Partner. Paul leads the firm's Diversity & Inclusion and RAP Committees and is an appointed Committee Member of the Queensland Law Society's Equity and Diversity Committee. Paul and the D&I and RAP Committees are committed to ensuring that Carter Newell takes an active role in reconciliation and contributes to building a better future for all Australians.

Through the process of developing and implementing our Reflect RAP, we have learnt several key lessons and developed a deeper understanding of shared history which we will continue to develop into our Innovate RAP.

It is crucial to engage with First Nations communities throughout the development of a RAP. By doing so, we have gained valuable insights into the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultural practices, and their priorities for reconciliation. We have also learned that reconciliation is a long-term and ongoing process that requires patience, dedication, and a willingness to listen and learn. The firm has undertaken cultural walks to enhance staff knowledge and increase engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.

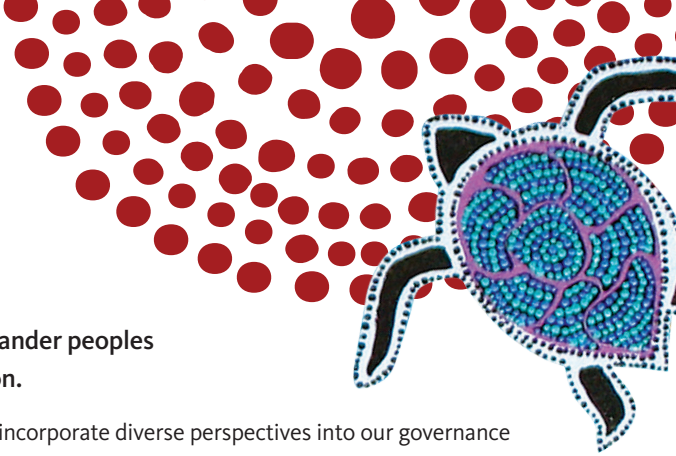
We have learned that it is important to ensure that our RAP is not just a document but a living and breathing plan that is embedded into our everyday work practices. To achieve this, we have identified tangible actions that we will take to advance reconciliation, including initiatives that will create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, pathways for students, training and capacity building, cultural awareness and education, and community engagement. To bridge the cultural divide between First Nations law students and the legal profession, representatives from Carter Newell and the LawLink program from the Queensland Law Society took part in a yarning circle with students from years 10,11 & 12 from Mabel Park State High School. On the back of this, the firm launched an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work experience program, welcoming multiple students from Mabel Park State High School each year. These students are subsequently offered full-time employment with the firm post-high school graduation, and the firm will financially support those looking to undertake a law degree in the future.

Accountability and transparency are essential for the success of our RAP. We have developed a monitoring and evaluation framework to track our progress and report on our outcomes. This enables us to celebrate our successes, identify areas for improvement, and continually evaluate and adjust our approach to reconciliation. We have continuing membership with the Diversity Council Australia and we recognise and celebrate key events and dates important to First Nations Peoples, including National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week.

We have a national RAP Committee that includes members from all of our offices. See back page for a list of committee members.



RAP Relationships



Building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is essential to Carter Newell’s mission and vision.

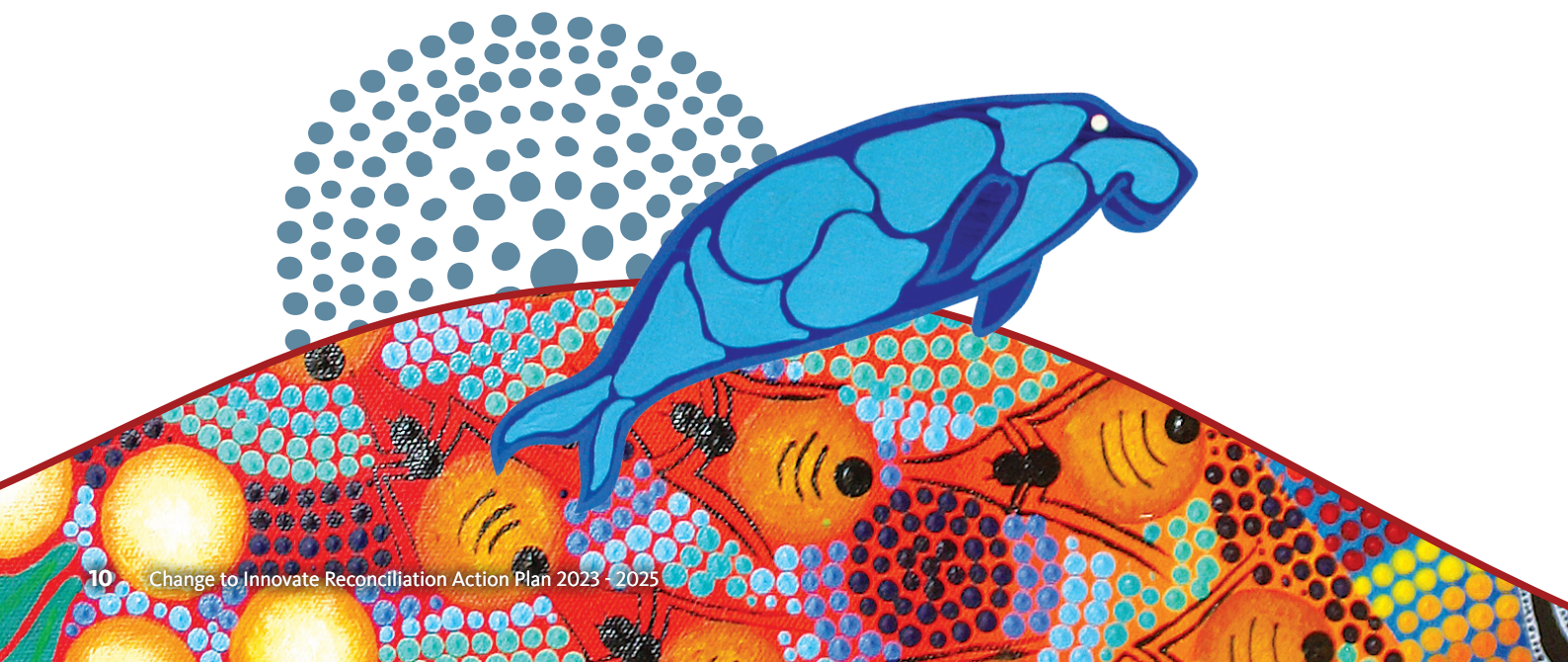
It promotes understanding, mutual respect, and reconciliation. It enables us to incorporate diverse perspectives into our governance processes, develop effective communication, engagement, and partnerships, and create a more inclusive workplace culture.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	November 2023	Managing Partner
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	July 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Explore potential new relationships through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks, activities, and partnerships.	August 2024	Partner – Insurance
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May – 3 June 2024, 2025	Communications & Marketing Coordinator
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website .	May 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	September 2023	People & Culture Manager
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	August 2023	Managing Partner
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	January 2024	Managing Partner
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	February 2024	Partner – Insurance
	Share and promote Reconciliation events with external networks (including clients, industry groups, supply chain providers and community partners).	January 2024	People & Culture Advisor



RAP Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	August 2023	People & Culture Manager
	Review and update our anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	October 2023	People & Culture Advisor
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	November 2023	People & Culture Advisor
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	January 2024	Managing Partner
5. Raise internal awareness of our RAP.	Publish our Innovate RAP on CN intranet and website.	August 2023	Communications & Marketing Coordinator
	Update our induction materials to showcase our commitment to reconciliation and the RAP, and ensure this is communicated to new starters.	August 2023	People & Culture Advisor
	Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform internal key stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	September 2023	People & Culture Advisor





RAP Respect

Carter Newell is committed to developing and promoting diversity, equality, respect, and inclusion to ensure a safe, positive and nurturing environment for all employees.

Our focus has always been on education to foster understanding and appreciation of the diverse range of staff, clients and communities we interact with every day. We continue to look for innovative ways to promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as all cultures that make up our firm.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	February 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Investigate local cultural immersion experiences for our people	February 2024	People & Culture Coordinator
	Investigate opportunities to increase visibility of First Nations cultures in CN offices.	June 2024	Communications & Marketing Coordinator
	Provide information of the histories of local First Nations peoples and lands on the CN intranet.	August 2023	Communications & Marketing Coordinator
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	April 2024	People & Culture Advisor
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	June 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	August 2023	People & Culture Advisor
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2023	Managing Partner
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	January 2023-4	Solicitor, Insurance
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	August 2023, 2024	Managing Partner
	Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	August 2023	Managing Partner



RAP Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	May 2024, 2025	People & Culture Advisor
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2024, 2025	Managing Partner



RAP Opportunities

Creating opportunities for First Nations people is also essential to achieving our mission and vision. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have unique knowledge and perspectives that are essential for informed decision-making.

By creating opportunities for First Nations Australians, we can promote cultural maintenance and preservation, learn from First Nations peoples, and build stronger relationships based on mutual respect and understanding. Ultimately, creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities is not only the right thing to do, but it is also essential for creating a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	August 2023, 2024	People & Culture Advisor
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	September 2023, 2024	People & Culture Advisor
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	September 2023	People & Culture Manager
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	October 2023	People & Culture Advisor
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	August 2023	People & Culture Advisor
	Investigate other potential work experience opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through our client and school network.	February 2024	Partner, Insurance





RAP Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	February 2024	Knowledge Manager
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2023	Knowledge Manager
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	February 2024	Knowledge Manager
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November 2023	Knowledge Manager
11. Investigate opportunities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to pursue a career in the law.	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	February 2024	Knowledge Manager
	Continue to provide work experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students through our school connections	August 2023	People & Culture Manager
	Investigate potential opportunities to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students early in their tertiary studies such as at networking events and First Nations student organisations.	February 2024	People & Culture Advisor
	Investigate opportunities to provide internships and/or work experience placements to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students in non-legal roles	March 2024	People & Culture Manager





RAP Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	May, July, September, November, January, March 2023 & 2024 & 2025	Managing Partner
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	August 2023	Solicitor – Insurance
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	May, July, September, November, January, March 2023 & 2024 & 2025	Managing Partner
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	August 2023, 2024	Partner – Insurance
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	August 2023, 2024	Managing Partner
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2023, 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	August 2023	Managing Partner





RAP Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. 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.	July 2023, 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2023, 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023, 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	May, August, November, February 2023, 2024	People & Culture Advisor
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	June 2023, 2024	Practice Development Manager
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	People & Culture Manager
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2024	People & Culture Advisor
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2024	People & Culture Manager



RAP Working Group - Key contact

Paul Hopkins
Managing Partner
P: +61 (0) 7 3000 8300
E: phopkins@carternewell.com

National RAP committee

We have a national RAP Committee that includes members from all of our offices:

Paul Hopkins
Managing Partner

Michael Gapes
Partner, Insurance

Cate Clarke
People & Culture Manager

Caitlin White
People & Culture Advisor

Alyssa Di Michele
People & Culture Coordinator

Sam Selave
Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Jasmine Wood
Senior Associate, Energy & Resources

Elle Mariconte
Senior Associate, Insurance

Molly Shelton
Solicitor, Energy & Resources



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