



**WOMEN'S
COUNCIL**

FOR DOMESTIC & FAMILY
VIOLENCE SERVICES (WA)

Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2018-January 2019



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



Cover art: No Harm Will Come

Artist: Norma MacDonald

Norma MacDonald was born in Geraldton and grew up in Mullewa, knowing little of her heritage. Later in life, Norma endeavoured to learn more about her mother and grandmother who came from the Gascoyne Region (Language group Yamatji) and her Grandfather's Nyungar country the South West of WA.

In 1994, Norma paved the way for the Aboriginal artists who have since graduated by enrolling as the only Aboriginal art student at Midland College of TAFE. Her paintings now form part of state, national and international gallery collections, as well as many private collections.



The image '*No Harm Will Come*' was one painting from an exhibition titled '*I Can Fly*'. The exhibition was all based on living with family problems with her father. A song, written and sung by Norma's daughter, was dedicated to her about a bird that eventually flew from the dust and grime, feeling the freedom away from domestic violence.

This painting shows Norma with her three children, loving and caring, helping to make the next generation change with no violence.



Readers should be aware that this report may contain images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who may be deceased, or culturally sensitive areas of significance. Seeing images of deceased persons in photographs, film and books may cause sadness or distress and in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural prohibitions.

The Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Country throughout Western Australia and recognises their continuing connection to Land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their cultures, and to Elders past present and future.

A Message from the Executive Committee

The Women's Council is very pleased to have developed its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and whilst we are delighted to present this to you, we recognise the real work is only just starting with our endeavours to implement this plan, and in doing so build our capability and understanding as an organisation.

Our undertaking for the journey of reconciliation will be through culturally secure strategies to ensure that the delivery of social services is such that no one person is afforded a less favourable outcome simply because she or he holds a different cultural outlook.

Women's Council's commitment is to support domestic and family violence services in Western Australia and apply this principle to everyday work practice.

We hope to continue to build on this commitment and continuously improve our actions year on year, and in doing so seek your support for our endeavours.

Our Business

The Women's Council, formerly the Women's Refuge Group of WA Inc, was established in 1977 and now represents 64 Women's Refuges and Family Violence Services in Western Australia. The organisation has one office in Perth.

The Women's Council has a state-wide reach for service delivery and provides representation on many national Boards and Committees for domestic and family violence issues.

Our activities include advocacy, information, training and sector support. The Women's Council promotes policy, legislative and programmatic responses that improve society's response to women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence.

The Women's Council operates from a feminist perspective and proactively advocates for social justice in order to further empowerment, access, equity and safety for all women and children.

The organisation employs 2 full-time positions and 7 part-time positions.

The Women's Council has two Aboriginal women on its Executive Committee.

The Women's Council currently has no employed Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff, but have previously. We had one young Aboriginal woman doing work experience in 2017 who wishes to continue in 2018.



Our Vision for Reconciliation

The Women's Council hopes, through its RAP, to value and respect the place of Australia's First peoples and to continue to work towards a reconciled Australia for all Australians.

The Reflect RAP will allow the Women's Council to focus on building relationships both internally and externally and raise awareness with our stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of our RAP within our organisation.

Development of our future RAPs will involve consultation with staff across our organisation including Aboriginal staff and / or stakeholders to achieve our vision for reconciliation and for Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples, to be recognised within the Australian Constitution. The Women's Council also supports the efforts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for a treaty between the Australian Government and the Traditional Owners/ Custodians of the Land.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

The Women's Council's first step was to develop, in collaboration with staff members, a draft document. The draft was then circulated for comment to various stakeholders including our member organisations, Aboriginal staff, external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and our Executive Committee.

The development of the Women's Council's RAP has involved establishing an internal RAP Working Group, which comprised of three Executive Members from the Women's Council. The Chief Executive Officer champions the RAP internally. The RAP working group will consult with organisations across and beyond our membership including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peaks, staff and stakeholders.

The draft was first reviewed by members of the Council's Executive Committee. We then consulted with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services who support victims of Domestic and Family Violence services, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts in the Domestic and Family Violence sector for additional advice and input.

The Women's Council was one of the sponsors at the launch of the Ochre Ribbon Campaign held at the Crown.

The Women's Council is currently meeting with Aboriginal Family Law Service's Chief Executive Officer to formalise the partnership and continued support for the Ochre Ribbon Campaign and our state wide members.

The Women's Council is currently applying for funding from Lotterywest to organise a consultation meeting with all the refugees in the Kimberley region in 2018.



Relationships

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|---|---------------------|
| Establish a RAP Working Group | Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the development of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date March 2018 | CEO |
| 1.2 Build Internal and external relationships | Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date March 2018 | Working group Chair |
| | Nominate Aboriginal men who have a commitment to preventing and reducing violence against women and children to become White Ribbon Ambassadors and to speak out on the issue. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date December 2018 | CEO |
| | Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Leadership on Domestic and Family Violence related issues; in particular the Ochre Ribbon Campaign. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date December 2018 | CEO |
| | Provide members and stakeholders with information and resources to support their reconciliation journey. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date December 2018 | CEO |
| | Partner with Aboriginal organisations to co-lead discussions of Family Violence and other intersecting issues. | Begin date January 2018 Completed date December 2018 | Working group Chair |
| | <i>Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.</i> | Begin date January 2018 Completed date December 2018 | Working group Chair |
| Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) | Encourage our staff to attend a NRW events. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | CEO |
| | Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | |
| | Ensure our Working Group participates in an external event to celebrate NRW. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | |
| Raise internal awareness of our RAP | Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | CEO |
| | Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | CEO |
| | Provide link to RAP and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people specific Strategic Priorities on Women's Council's website. | Begin date April 2018 Completed date June 2018 | IT person CEO |
| | Include RAP as a standing agenda item on bi-monthly the Executive and Refugee Managers meetings. | January 2018 | Board Chair |



Respect

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|--|----------------|
| 1. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation. Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation. | Begin April 2018 Complete July 2018 | Policy officer |
| 2. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. | First week in July | CEO |
| 1. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area. Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisation's sphere of influence. Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols). | Begin April 2018 Complete July 2018 | Policy officer |
| 2. Publically recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and histories | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in and promote, through our membership, events and activities that recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and histories. <i>Develop Expression of Interest process to canvass Aboriginal people to provide artwork in relation to the RAP and core business of the Women's Council.</i> | Begin January 2018 Complete December 2018 | Policy officer |



Opportunities

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|---|------------------------|
| Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment | Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within member services (Refuge, Safe House and DFV Services) to inform future employment and development opportunities. | Begin June 2018 Complete December 2018 | Working group Chair |
| | Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships). | Begin June 2018 Complete December 2018 | CEO |
| | Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. | Begin June 2018 Complete December 2018 | CEO |
| Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity | Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses <u>and target 5% of the organisation's funding.</u> | Begin June 2018 Complete December 2018 | Working group Chair |
| Improve services delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients | Investigate barriers and practices that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women being able to secure emergency accommodation following Domestic and Family Violence in partnership with Department of Communities. | Begin June 2018 Complete December 2018 | Policy officer |



Governance and tracking progress

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---------------------------|--|--|---------------------|
| Build support for the RAP | Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation. | Begin January 2018 Complete April 2018 | Working group Chair |
| | Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. | Begin January 2018 Complete April 2018 | |
| | Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. | September 2018 | |
| | Executive Committee to formally endorse and launch RAP, including aims and directions. | Begin January 2018 Complete April 2018 | |
| | Include RAP for annual review at strategic planning. | Begin October 2018 Complete November 2018 | |
| | RAP to be incorporated by WCFDVS as core business within Strategic Plan by 2019. | Begin January 2018 Complete April 2018 | |
| Review and Refresh Rap | Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. | Begin October 2018 Complete December 2018 | CEO |
| | Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement. | December 2018 | |



Contact details

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