



RPS

# REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

September 2021–September 2022



## Acknowledgement of Country

RPS acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, water and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.

## Cover artwork

### **Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming) – Puyurru**

**Leavannia Nampijinpa Watson, 2019**

RPS has proudly worked with social enterprise artists' collective – Warlukurlangu Artists to give story and life to our workspaces. In 2019, RPS employees were invited to select an emerging Warlukurlangu artist whose work resonated with them. These artists were then commissioned to create original pieces for RPS offices.



Leavannia Nampijinpa Watson was one of several Warlukurlangu artists selected by our team, and Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming) now hangs proudly in our office in Newcastle, New South Wales.

### **About the Dreaming**

The site depicted in this painting is Puyurru, west of Yuendumu. In the usually dry creek beds are 'mulju' (soakages), or naturally occurring wells. The 'kirda' (owners) for this site are Nangala/Nampijinpa women and Jangala/Jampijinpa men.

Two Jangala men, rainmakers, sang the rain, unleashing a giant storm. The storm travelled across the country from the east to the west, initially travelling with a 'pamapardu Jukurrpa' (termite Dreaming) from Warntungurru to Warlura, a waterhole eight miles east of Yuendumu.

At Warlura, a gecko called Yumariyumari blew the storm on to Lapurrukurra and Wilpiri. Bolts of lightning shot out at Wirna (also called Mrdinyardinyapa) and at Kanaralji.

At this point the Dreaming track also includes the 'kurdukurdu mangkurdu Jukurrpa' (children of the clouds Dreaming). The water Dreaming built hills at Ngamangama using baby clouds and also stuck long pointy clouds into the ground at Jukajuka, where they can still be seen today as rock formations.

In contemporary Warlpiri paintings, traditional iconography is used to represent the 'Jukurrpa' (Dreaming). Short dashes are often used to represent 'mangkurdu' (cumulus and stratocumulus clouds), and longer, flowing lines represent 'ngawarra' (flood waters). Small circles are used to depict 'mulju' (soakages) and riverbed.

### **About the artist**

Leavannia Nampijinpa Watson was born in 1990 in the Alice Springs Hospital, the closest hospital to Yuendumu, a remote Aboriginal community 290 km north-west of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory of Australia. She grew up in Yuendumu and did her schooling at the local school. She is the daughter of Jill Nungarrayi and Lawrence Jangala Watson and the grand-daughter of Judy Napangardi Watson, a very successful artist who paints with Warlukurlangu Artists.

Although very young, Leavannia first started painting on little boards through the Warlukurlangu Artists Art Association school cultural maintenance program held during school holidays. She has been painting professionally since 2008. She paints her father's Jukurrpa stories, particularly Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming) which travelled from east to Mikanji west of Yuendumu. These stories have been passed down through the generations for millennia.

She uses an unrestricted palette to develop a modern interpretation of her traditional culture. Her favourite pastime is playing basketball and softball, and watching the local boys play football. She also likes going to the disco run by the Yuendumu youth program. She still occasionally goes hunting with her grandmother and loves trips into Alice Springs for shopping.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

We would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of all the lands on which we live, work and meet. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

At RPS, our purpose is to create shared value by solving problems that matter to a complex, urbanising and resource-scarce world.

The work we do touches the lives of many people. Our employees are a shaping force for places all over Australia and the Torres Strait—from capital cities, to regional towns and remote islands.

RPS has the privilege of working with, and for many communities. With this comes a responsibility to act with, and for First Nations People. We have a responsibility to continually think about how we can positively impact, value, and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, lands, histories and languages.

As an executive leadership team, we want to ensure that everyone who works for RPS understands that their actions and words can contribute to, or erode, reconciliation. We want our First Nations employees to grow great careers with us, and feel empowered to share their perspectives on what reconciliation means, and what changes are required to make it real for them.

We want RPS to be a place where reconciliation is a verb, not a noun.

RPS is at the beginning of its reconciliation journey. This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is the roadmap that will guide our first steps toward reconciliation awareness, growth and change.



**Ross Thompson**  
Chief Executive Officer  
RPS Australia Asia Pacific



**Diane Christensen**  
Executive Director – People  
and RAP Executive Sponsor



**Meegan Sullivan**  
Executive Director –  
Advisory



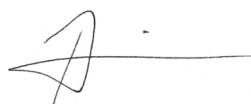
**Susan Farr**  
Executive Director –  
Place and Environment



**Michael Owens**  
Executive Director –  
Project Management



**Scherelle Johnson**  
Chief Financial Officer



**Ben Nadenic**  
General Counsel and  
Company Secretary



**Murray Burling**  
Managing Director –  
Energy Australia Asia Pacific





Shikera Pitjara Petrick  
Yarla Jukurrpa (Bush Potato Dreaming) –  
Cockatoo Creek

## OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP (RWG)

### RAP CHAMPION

**Diane Christensen**  
People Director –  
Sydney

### CO-CHAIRS

**Des Cloake**  
Senior Landscape  
Architect – Brisbane

**Jackie Reilly**  
Business Support  
Officer – Brisbane

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Scott Langtry**  
Business Development  
Manager (Energy) – Perth

**Katrina Knaggs**  
Senior Project  
Manager – Darwin

**Rebecca McGrath**  
Principal Environmental  
Engineer – Perth

**Rachel Cogger**  
Associate Director –  
Newcastle

**Susan Conkie**  
Senior Consultant –  
Melbourne

**Ian Richardson**  
General Manager –  
Newcastle

**Nick Anders**  
Planner –  
Sunshine Coast

**Chris Nikitas**  
Project Manager –  
Canberra

**Hal Hissey**  
Associate Director –  
Sydney

**Kate Morris**  
Graduate Heritage  
Consultant – Newcastle

**Tony Clarey**  
Survey Manager –  
Gold Coast

## ABOUT RPS IN AUSTRALIA ASIA PACIFIC

RPS defines, designs and manages Australia Asia Pacific's most successful infrastructure, development and resources projects. A diverse, yet highly integrated network of consultants, we help our partners to identify and capitalise on opportunities, while formulating effective strategies to achieve their goals.

In the Australia and Asia Pacific region, RPS employs a team of around 1,000 consultants and service providers. We're located in five countries—Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and have people on the ground in 23 metropolitan and regional locations.

RPS has always welcomed employees who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to our team. We regularly engage with First Nations organisations—both through our work, as part of our social partner programs, and employment initiatives. However, before 2021 we had never explored the diversity that exists within our organisation in any formalised way.

This year, we launched our first ever diversity and inclusion employee survey in partnership with Diversity Australia. Completely confidential, secure and anonymous, the survey centred around the concept of inclusion, and asked demographic questions that will help us better understand the nature of our diversity, and the different perspectives and experiences of people who work here.

While at the time of writing (May 2021) we don't yet have the aggregated results of this survey, engaging with employees about diversity and inclusion is an important step in our reconciliation journey.

We will use this information to shape our ongoing efforts, and to better engage with and meet the needs of First Nations' employees, clients and communities.

**We work  
across six  
sectors**



TRANSPORT



WATER



PROPERTY



DEFENCE AND  
GOVERNMENT SERVICES



ENERGY



RESOURCES

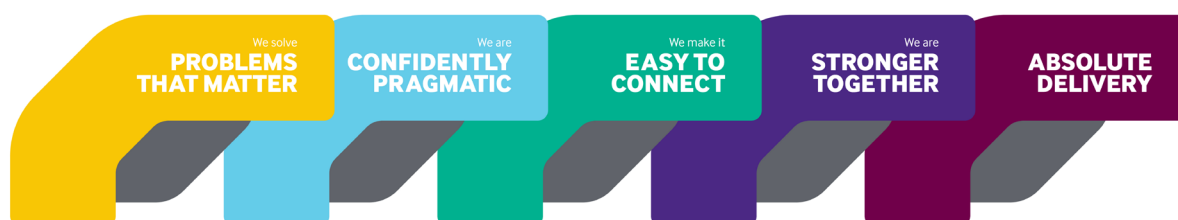


# OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

RPS is committed to extending the process of reconciliation in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the broader community. Our vision is to become an organisation whose strength lies in its diversity.

At RPS our purpose is to create shared value by solving problems that matter to a complex, urbanising and resource-scarce world. This purpose supports our commitment to broader social responsibility. We recognise and are mindful of the impact we have on the environment and communities in which we operate. We use our deep expertise to find solutions which turn our ideas into something beneficial for everyone.

Our RPS behaviours support our purpose, reflecting and informing how we understand and tackle our environmental and social impact and responsibilities. Developed by our people, our behaviours underpin everything that we do. In line with our behaviour of 'stronger together', we have a desire and obligation to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians, for the benefit of all.



Through our work, we regularly engage with First Nations people, communities and land, so it is vital we have a mutually agreed approach to conducting ourselves and our work, and a common commitment to contribute to reconciliation in the communities we serve.

At its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians. Strong relationships rely on communication, understanding, and mutual respect.

The purpose of our Reflect RAP is to guide the conversation between RPS and the environments and communities in which we operate, from the perspective of reconciliation.

Our RAP includes practical actions that will drive our organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which we operate. We recognise the five dimensions of reconciliation by supporting organisations to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## We will:

- Raise awareness about the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within RPS to overcome racism
- Provide traineeships, employment opportunities, and/or services to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
- Provide education and opportunities to engage in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences for RPS employees
- Engage RPS staff to further develop our vision for reconciliation
- Continue to promote a fair, equitable and inclusive working environment, with a zero-tolerance stance toward racism.

## OUR PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES

RPS has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, engagement and participation. This commitment is underpinned by our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), that details the practical actions and initiatives that RPS implements to increase First Nations peoples' involvement on projects.

In our RAP, we focus on having appropriate structures and support in place to ensure employment and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, both within RPS, by our suppliers and partners, and in the communities in which we work. This helps create opportunities, ensure a more inclusive and diverse workforce, while helping us to further meet the needs of our clients.

### Yalari

Yalari is a not-for-profit organisation that offers quality secondary education scholarships at leading Australian boarding schools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from regional, rural and remote communities. Since 2005, Yalari has been providing young people with the opportunity to receive a full boarding school scholarship for their entire secondary education.

Yalari has selected a Queensland student that RPS has supported to live and attend school in Brisbane since 2018. In addition to this we are working with Yalari to identify additional opportunities for our people to share their expertise to support Yalari and its mission, such as work experience opportunities and mentoring. In 2020, we welcomed our first Yalari intern to our Darwin office and we look forward to partnering with Yalari to increase internships in future.

Each year, RPS employees from Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane volunteer their time to support Yalari's annual fundraising dinners.

### Career Trackers

During 2020 RPS began a conversation with Career Trackers, a national not-for-profit organisation, with the goal to create pathways to employment and support systems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students. We will start by bringing two interns into RPS in 2021, and build on this each year. Our vision is to support the students' development through recurring multi-year internships and learning opportunities, culminating in permanent employment with RPS.

### Why reconciliation matters to me

I'm a Proud Bidjara woman from South Western Queensland. Being an Aboriginal woman reconciliation is important to me and something I have been campaigning for most of my life. When RPS started taking interest in implementing a RAP I jumped at the chance to help, being co-chair for the RAP Working group I have had the opportunity to establish relationships internally and externally and learn a lot about myself while also helping educate others. After working at RPS for nearly 2 years it's great to see how much the company is learning and developing when it comes to reconciliation. I'm looking forward to helping the company and staff continue to grow and learn about not only reconciliation but all issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

**JACKIE REILLY**





## Work with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Land Organisations

Examples of our work with Supply Nation-certified enterprises include:

- RPS has worked with Meta Maya Group Pty Ltd to complete the removal of hazardous materials (friable asbestos) as part of a \$300k programmed upgrade of the Perth Observatory.
- RPS worked with the Mamabulanjin Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) – a First Nations' business based in Western Australia – on a revegetation project near Broome. MAC contributed a significant amount of the personnel resources for the seed collection, propagation, plant rearing and planting. We donated all the field gear and tree planting and seeding equipment to MAC at the end of the program for use in its own community-based revegetation programs.
- RPS was commissioned by Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) to provide environmental consultancy services for a tourism development at Conzinc Bay. As part of this we have received Cultural Awareness training from MAC.
- RPS undertook a fauna and flora survey and engaged the assistance of the Yolngu Business Enterprise (YBE) based in Nhulunbuy in north-east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, for the proposed Pond 5 capping project for Rio Tinto's Aluminium Gove Operations. YBE trains, employs and provides career opportunities for the Yolngu people of north-east Arnhem Land and provides services in civil engineering, mine site rehabilitation, environmental management, building and other businesses.
- RPS has previously been very successful in engaging Traditional Owners in field survey work for Woodside Petroleum in the Pilbara. While delivering the Browse megafauna studies, we worked alongside Traditional Owners engaged by Woodside and established a training program for them. The on-the-job and classroom training of select assistants led to a Traditional Owner being engaged directly by RPS for the remainder of the survey project. A similar approach has been followed in other revegetation surveys and suitable opportunities for training and employment are continuously explored.

Theo (Faye) Nangala Hudson  
Pikilyi Jukurrpa  
(Vaughan Springs Dreaming)



## OUR ACTIONS: RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	December 2021	Senior Landscape Architect (Brisbane)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>	October 2021	Associate Director, Social Advisory and Research (Newcastle)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a process to enable financial payments to facilitate traditional landowner discussions.</li> </ul>	September 2021	AP Team Leader, Finance
<b>Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.</li> </ul>	May 2022	Co-chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG members to participate in an external NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May – 3 June 2022	RWG Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May – 3 June 2022	People Director
<b>Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.</li> </ul>	May 2022	People Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify two external stakeholders per RPS Division that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	December 2021	Survey Manager (Gold Coast)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify RAP and other like-minded industry partners (two per RPS division) that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	November 2021	Divisional Executive Directors
<b>Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.</li> </ul>	December 2021	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	June 2022	Senior HR Manager



## OUR ACTIONS: RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.</b>	• Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	February 2022	Senior Consultant, ICC (Melbourne)
	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	November 2021	People Director
<b>Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	• Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	September 2021	Co-chair
	• Increase employee understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2021	Co-chair, People Director
<b>Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	• Raise awareness and share information with our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2022	RWG Member in each office
	• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	July 2022	People Director; Exec Assistant to CEO
	• RWG to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2022	Co-chair RWG Members in each office

### Why reconciliation matters to me

I am an archaeologist based in NSW and have worked closely with First Nations Peoples in both QLD and NSW. My passion for history and cultures is reflected in my work at RPS and when the opportunity to contribute to a Reconciliation Action Plan was provided I saw it as a chance to share my passion in a meaningful and tangible way. The opportunity to contribute to real action and change is very valuable and I am very grateful to have been involved.

**KATE MORRIS**



## OUR ACTIONS: OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.</li> </ul>	September 2021	People Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	September 2021	People Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin establishing pathways to employment by hiring two interns through Career Trackers and Yalari respectively.</li> </ul>	Dec 2021	People Director
<b>Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> </ul>	October 2021	Project Manager (Canberra)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commence Supply Nation membership.</li> </ul>	September 2021	People Director

### Why reconciliation matters to me

My family have connections to communities in Yirrkala and Wadeye and I have long thought that if we are going to advance as a nation we have to do it together. With respect and honesty toward each other. This is an opportunity for my employer, for me, to contribute. To build respectful relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples through creating an awareness of our shared history, through providing educational opportunities and meaningful employment, through providing space for discussion and understanding.

**TONY CLAREY**





## OUR ACTIONS: GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	September 2021	RAP Champion
	Draft Terms of Reference for the RWG.	September 2021	Associate Director, Social Advisory and Research (Newcastle)
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2021	RAP Champion
<b>Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2021	RAP Champion
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	September 2021	RAP Champion
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September 2021	Co-chair
<b>Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2022	RAP Champion and Co-chair
<b>Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2022	RAP Champion

### Why reconciliation matters to me

I am honoured to be the RAP Champion and executive sponsor for RPS' First Nations People and communities pillar. On a personal level, I look forward to learning about the history and culture of First Nations People and I'm excited to be part of the team that will help to shape what we can do to foster greater knowledge, understanding, respect and inclusion.

**DIANE CHRISTENSEN**



## Why reconciliation matters to me

Why did I decide to play an active role in the RPS Reconciliation Action Group?

Well, because it felt right and it provides an opportunity to contribute to mutual understanding, respect and to support Reconciliation within Australian Society. I believe that Reconciliation is required to better support Country so that She continues to support us.

As context, my father's grandfather was born 'in a tent under a tree' at Boggo less than a year after his Irish parents and older siblings arrived in Brisbane in 1873. At this time Boggo, an Aboriginal settlement not far from southside Brisbane Town, was heavily populated by the Brisbane people who were driven out of town with stockwhips at sundown.

My father's grandfather's full story is still hidden, but with much effort it is slowly being revealed. This type of narrative is not unique to me or my family. Perhaps because of my background and upbringing, to me Australian society can be viewed as 'us' and 'us', in the way that you can wear two hats, but not properly at the same time. The challenge as I see it is for us, together, to learn to respect and appreciate the value of our different perspectives, knowledge and understanding.

I hope that our RAP outcomes will help to educate our organisation and enable our people to understand the contemporary issues so we can participate in meaningful conversations. It is my hope that we as a nation are able to move past 'us and us,' so that we can together become a robust, eclectic and wise us, and (to continue the hat analogy) like any good hat should do, fit properly and work well in a variety of conditions and Countries.

It is my hope that by supporting the objectives of Reconciliation Australia and contributing to the RPS RAP I can contribute to an end goal which allows our children to prosper and to have the knowledge and understanding to look after Country in today's world.

**DES CLOAKE**



## More information

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