



# talkforce's RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

April 2018 – April 2019

**talkforce**  
communication | leadership | coaching

# Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia congratulates Talkforce on the endorsement of its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will see it build on the key pillars of reconciliation – relationships, respect and opportunities.

As a boutique leadership and people development company, this Reflect RAP will assist Talkforce to develop its own unique vision for reconciliation, as well as commitments to applying cultural learning, respectful business practice, and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within its sphere of influence.

By building and maintaining respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities, Talkforce displays a deep commitment to through its actionable goal to encourage staff to attend at least one National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event.

Practicing respect and understanding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures is demonstrated in talkforce's Reflect RAP through its aim to develop inclusive leadership training, focusing on awareness of Indigenous Australian histories and cultures.

talkforce's dedication to providing opportunities and employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is communicated through its commitment to develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander businesses as part of its core practice.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Talkforce on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.



**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# Message from our Managing Director & General Manager

talkforce is an Australian owned and operated training and people development business based in Sydney & Melbourne. We appreciate that Australia is home to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been Custodians of this land dating back some 60,000 years. We are proud to live in a country with the oldest living cultural history on earth. At talkforce we want to play our role in recognising and respecting Australia's amazingly complex and diverse history.

talkforce is proud to have developed a Reconciliation Action Plan which we hope further strengthens our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our philosophy at talkforce is to help unlock people potential. We do this by sharing insights and skills to help individuals or groups get the best out of themselves and each other. The opportunity to build awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through our own reconciliation journey, will help in unlocking future opportunities for our team and also for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that we want to engage and employ.

We are grateful to a number of internal and external stakeholders who assisted with the development of the talkforce RAP. We consulted with respected historian Dr Val Attenbrow, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Charlee-Sue Frail (AFL NSW/ACT and formerly from Recognise) and Liam Ridgeway (Ngakkan Nyaagu). Furthermore, all levels of our business internally are supportive of the development of our RAP.

We hope that this public commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, business and communities will inspire conversations and actions within our team, clients and broader network which will enhance the relationships, respect and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Christopher Whitnall, Founder & Managing Director &  
Joseph La Posta, General Manager**

*Artwork in this RAP has been designed by Rhianna Lotter of Ngandabaa Art & Designs. Rheanna lotter is a young Aboriginal woman from the Yuin Nation located on the South Coast. Ngandabaa was started late 2014 and currently consists of artwork on canvas, wood and sport balls and equipment. Talkforce are proud to partner with Ngandabaa to support our RAP.*

# Our business, talkforce

talkforce is a boutique leadership and people development company. Our clients come from predominately business and not-for-profit backgrounds. We also do work with personal clients across individual business coaching. We provide training and development solutions in the areas of Communication, Leadership, Coaching, Presentation, Sales, Strategy, Environment and Facilitation.

We work with companies in either their training facility or host them at our onsite training venue in Woolwich. Our objective in training sessions is to help educate participants on current and progressive business practices to bring the best out of them.

We work with a wide range of clients from across the technology, banking, superannuation, sales, marketing, media, arts, theatre, sports, education and consulting sectors. Our clients are predominately based in Sydney or Melbourne, however we also work in Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Canberra and throughout regional Australia. Sessions are also delivered in Singapore, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

There are ten people employed at talkforce and ten associates who consult to us and deliver content our programs. Our trainers and facilitators have broad and diverse industry and technical experience from both the private and public sectors.

Whilst talkforce has a diverse team coming from a wide variety of backgrounds across Australia and the world, we don't yet have a team member who identifies as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

talkforce is very proud to have a number of current partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and businesses. These include our Managing Director volunteering both our facilities and his time for facilitation sessions and sitting on the board for Weave Youth & Community Services, a non-profit community organisation that has been working with disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, women, children and families in the City of Sydney and South Sydney areas for over 35 years. Furthermore, our Managing Director and General Manager both volunteer their time to be involved with The Reach Foundation Board and NSW Advisory Group. Reach is a charity committed to working with all Australian youth, however there is a strong representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples involved with the programs, crew, trainee positions and staff. Furthermore, talkforce has also partnered with Ngakkan Nyaagu (NGNY) to rebuild our website and communications.

# Our RAP

We see developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as an important public step in improving our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures. We are developing a RAP to improve education and awareness of our internal workforce across the areas of recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are also an organisation that wants to enjoy the social and economic benefits of engaging with new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and clients.

We have started dialogue internally on deepening our understanding of Australian History pre-1788. We are starting our journey to learn about Aboriginal customs, practices and histories. Our organisation is based at the Dock in Woolwich, Sydney. We recently became aware that the Dock in Woolwich is a significant Aboriginal site on the Parramatta River. The Wallumattagal (Wallum-matt-a-gal) clan of the Eora Nation are the Traditional Owners of the land on which our office sits. In speaking with Dr Val Attenbrow, author of *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: Investigating the Archaeological and Historical Records* we are led to believe that remnants of Aboriginal settlement and bones of the Aboriginal peoples who inhabited the area have been found on site.

Our business is aware of some of the more current and public challenges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face. Furthermore, for the first time this year, our business has acknowledged NAIDOC Week on Social Media. We are also proud to have engaged Ngakkan Nyaagu (NGNY), a one hundred percent Aboriginal owned company co-founded by Liam Ridgeway and John Saulo who specialise in digital projects to re-build our talkforce website.

Furthermore, our business recently appointed a new General Manager, Joseph La Posta. Joseph is a passionate advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. In his previous role he led several key portfolios at the AFL, including the AFL's NSW and ACT Indigenous Team and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community engagement strategies. Joseph will lead the development of our RAP and also champion the cause internally.

All levels within our business will play a role in the development and ongoing engagement of our RAP.

Input from a number of external stakeholders has assisted with the development of the talkforce RAP. We consulted with respected historian Dr Val Attenbrow, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Charlee-Sue Frail (AFL NSW/ACT and formerly from Recognise) and Liam Ridgeway (Ngakkan Nyaagu). Furthermore, all levels of our business internally are supportive of the development of our RAP.

Our General Manager, Joseph La Posta who oversees our company strategy and operations will be our RAP champion.

*Hunters Hills & Woolwich, where the two rivers,  
Parramatta and Lane Cover rivers meet*





## Relationships

Contributing to ongoing improvement in relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is important to talkforce because positive and respectful relationships based on understanding and reciprocity are essential for reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Establish a RAP Working Group</b>	Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation	April 2018	General Manager
<b>2. Build internal and external relationships</b>	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	July 2018	General Manager
	Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey	August 2018	Client & Marketing Manager
<b>3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</b>	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	May 2018	Managing Director
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	May 2018	General Manager
	Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event.	May 2018	Managing Director
<b>4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP</b>	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments.	May 2018	General Manager
	Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	July 2018	General Manager



# Respect

At talkforce we value and respect the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work. We understand that respect underpins long-lasting relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to ensuring that our engagement process is respectful of and appropriately acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures and achievements.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development</b>	Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation.	August 2018	General Manager
	Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	April 2018	General Manager
	Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation.	April 2018	General Manager
<b>2. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week</b>	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.	July 2018	Managing Director
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.	July 2018	Managing Director
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2018	General Manager
<b>3. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols</b>	Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area.	April 2018	General Manager
	Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence.	May 2018	General Manager
	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).	May 2018	General Manager
<b>4. Develop a framework to include cultural competency training as part of our talkforce offering</b>	Develop content so that talkforce can add Inclusive Leadership training as part of its company offering	July 2018	Business Partners & Associates
	Develop Inclusive Leadership training focusing on awareness of histories, cultures and also around bias (unconscious & conscious)	October 2018	General Manager & Associate
	Provide an Acknowledge of Country prior to running any training session in Australia	October 2018	Business Partners & Associates
	Encourage all our associates, trainers and facilitators to learn about the country on which they are running sessions	May 2018	Business Partners



# Opportunities

At talkforce we believe it is important to enhance and increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to help improve the quality of life and wellbeing of their communities.

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</b>	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	December 2018	Managing Director
	Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities.	December 2018	Managing Director
<b>2. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity</b>	Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	September 2018	Client & Marketing Manager
	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	September 2018	General Manager
<b>3. Create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeship / internship opportunity at talkforce</b>	Work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, employment and / or community organisations to create an internal placement for a young Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander person to work and learn at talkforce	October 2018	General Manager



# Governance & Tracking Progress

## Governance and Tracking Progress

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Build support for the RAP</b>	Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	November 2018	General Manager
	Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.	May 2018	General Manager
	Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	October 2018	General Manager
<b>2. Review and Refresh RAP</b>	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	<b>December 2018</b>	General Manager
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review	<b>February 2018</b>	General Manager
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	<b>March 2018</b>	General Manager



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