

Reconciliation Action Plan

MARCH 2025 – MARCH 2027



**GOULBURN
BROKEN**
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY







RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE

Acknowledgement

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority acknowledges and respects all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We particularly acknowledge the First Nations of Yorta Yorta and Taungurung as the two Traditional Owner Nations of the land and waters in the Goulburn Broken catchment (and beyond). We recognise and respect each Nation's deep connection with their land, water and country and their individual cultural practices.

We acknowledge and recognise the primacy of Traditional Owner obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their lands and waters. We support these rights including the right to self-determination. We value our ongoing partnerships for the health of Country and its Traditional Owners.

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Connection

This painting is about the connection to land and water. The connection to each other from one town to another. The symbol of people sitting around the campfire represents major towns of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

Tammy-Lee Atkinson

Yorta-Yorta Artist

Tammy-Lee Atkinson is an accomplished Yorta-Yorta artist with strong connections to family and community in northern Victoria. She is a proud Aboriginal woman who loves to learn and share her cultural through painting, drawing and print-making. In her work, she attaches symbolic meaning to story and design elements that best represent her relationship to Country that is embedded in the land, people and history of First Nations people in northern Victoria.

Tammy-Lee has her art and designs on a netball dress, rugby jersey, anti-racism tees, jumpers and tote bags. Her art has gone all over the local community, Melbourne, Darwin, Canberra, Japan, Norway, UK and many other places. Tammy-Lee has created public murals in Shepparton, Mooroopna, Tatura, Murchison and beyond.

Tammy-Lee Atkinson is a freelance artist who works with organisations, companies, and the community. She has worked with Aboriginal women and youth at risk, and is particularly interested in creating opportunities for young Koorie people to connect with culture through art.

Tammy-Lee Atkinson

Tammy.l.atkinson@gmail.com

0499 091 543



Samantha Trist

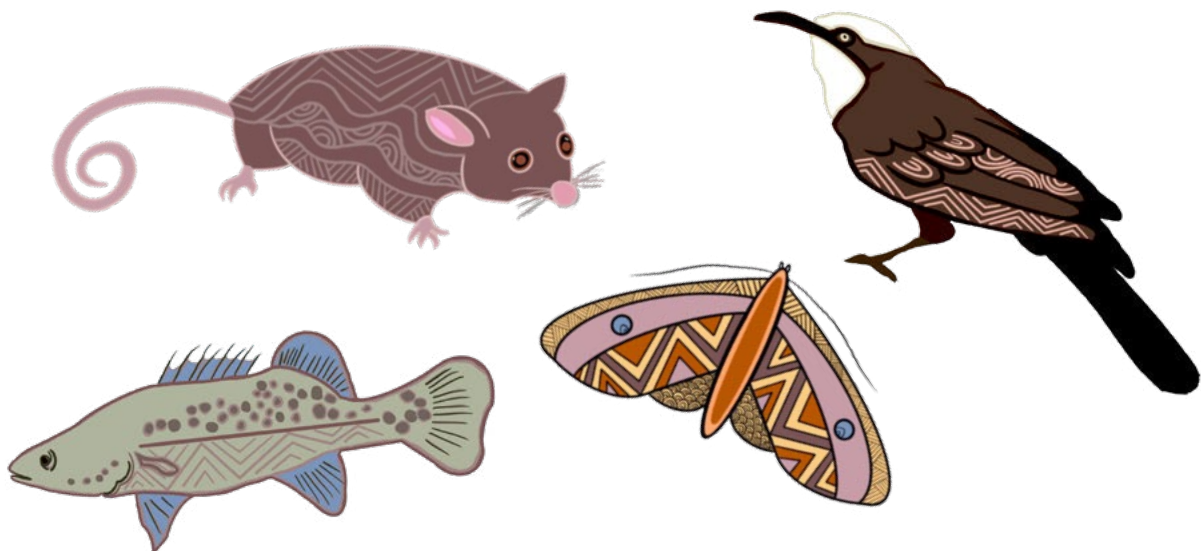
Taungurung Artist

Sammy Trist is a proud and passionate Taungurung woman of the Kulin Nation. Sammy is a multidisciplinary artist having exhibited in numerous galleries and has created public sculptures, murals and digital designs. Sammy has a contemporary eye for an ancient artist skill.

Samantha has created images of four iconic fauna species within the Goulburn Broken catchment: The Mountain Pygmy-possum, Grey-crowned babbler, Murray cod and Bogong moth

Samantha Trist

gunuwarra2@gmail.com



Our commitment

On behalf of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, we are delighted to present our third Reconciliation Action Plan – an exciting step on our continuing reconciliation journey.

At the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority we strive to protect and improve the Goulburn Broken catchment's land, water and biodiversity and recognise the importance of partnering with First Nations communities to connect with and care for Country.

We are a team of 50 people, serving 200,000 community members and thousands of businesses and organisations across 2.4 million hectares of public and private land. To be effective, we must work with and support different communities, utilising their knowledge, passion, energy and resources to protect and improve the catchment.

We are incredibly proud of the achievements we have made in partnership with the Traditional Owners of the catchment, the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung peoples. Our third Reconciliation Action Plan sets a framework for us to continue to strengthen our relationships and work with Traditional Owners.

This plan will guide our organisation and those who partner with us to lead strongly in advancing reconciliation outcomes across our community. We believe in the role strong allies can play through our actions to support improved economic prosperity and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our plan builds on the work we have done over the years and reinforces our continuing commitment to reconciliation as leaders who build respect, recognition, relationships and opportunity for Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

While we have made some great progress, we understand there is more work to be done with Traditional Owners and our broader community to return Country to health, to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage and to build relationships between First Nations communities and other Australians who live and work in the region. We are excited by this challenge and look forward to growing and expanding our reconciliation efforts and supporting the aspirations of Traditional Owners.



Sarah Parker
Chairperson

Goulburn Broken
Catchment
Management
Authority



Carl Walters
CEO

Goulburn Broken
Catchment
Management
Authority

Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA) on the formal endorsement of its third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

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

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. GB CMA continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

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

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that GB CMA will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to GB CMA using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for GBCMA to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, GB CMA will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of GB CMA's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations GB CMA on your third Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation
Australia

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritages as proud parts of a shared national identity. In the context of our organisation, this represents prioritising and fostering healthy partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to help heal community and Country (land, water and nature).



Our business

Our core business is working with the community to protect and improve the Goulburn Broken catchment's land, water and biodiversity.

The Goulburn Broken catchment (the catchment) covers 2.4 million hectares, extending north from near the outskirts of Melbourne to the Murray River on the border of NSW.

The catchment has a rich and diverse community. The estimated population is 205,000 people, which includes approximately 6,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, many whom identify as the Traditional Owners of this area. There are approximately 50 staff working at the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA).

We have had First Nations staff members work with us in the past, but currently we do not have anyone who identifies as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person working with us.

We currently have two Aboriginal Board members (including an Associate Delegate). We have a designated Traditional Owner Partnerships role within the organisation to facilitate strong relations with the key Traditional Owner organisations and drive internal capacity building in support of reconciliation and Traditional Owners aspirations for Country and Community.

Our Head Office is based in Shepparton, and we have two other offices at Yea and Benalla, Victoria.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA) is a statutory Authority established by the Victorian Parliament in 1997 under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

Our business is managed in adherence with several relevant legislative and policy directions including the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic), *Traditional Owner Settlement Agreement Act 2010* (Vic) (and associated agreements), *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (C'th), and *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (Vic).

Registered Aboriginal Parties in Victoria represent the interests and rights of Traditional Owners and the GB CMA works collaboratively with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) and Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) as the two Registered Aboriginal Parties in the catchment.

Our work with YYNAC and TLaWC has included close collaboration in the development and implementation of plans and strategies of all parties (e.g. Whole of Country Plans, Joint Management Plans, Regional Catchment Strategies, and a range of on-Country activities aimed at increasing the engagement of Traditional Owners in environmental and cultural resource management). See case study in Attachment 1.

The Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 sets out the framework for coordinating land, water, and biodiversity management in our catchment. Our integrated catchment management approach relies on many strong and enduring partnerships to encourage land managers and other stakeholders to work towards a shared tenure-blind vision of a healthy catchment. Our sphere of influence extends to the whole community. An important part of our coordination role is ensuring that Traditional Owners are closely involved in catchment management decisions and actions on Country, and their rights and obligations to care for and heal Country are respected.

Registered Aboriginal Parties within the Goulburn Broken catchment, Victoria



Note: both Nations' boundaries extend beyond the Goulburn Broken catchment

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation action planning is an obvious fit for our organisation. We have developed two RAPs (see below) and wish to progress our reconciliation efforts as outlined in this third RAP.

Our vision for a healthy and resilient catchment is strongly aligned to the aspirations of Traditional Owners to heal and care for Country. Traditional Owner partnerships are integral to the purpose of the GB CMA and we are very fortunate to have strong First Nations organisations and groups in the catchment. Their strength is our strength, and the strength of the catchment.

We are genuinely committed to reconciliation; we care about justice and economic prosperity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge that better outcomes on Country means better outcomes for First Nations peoples and vice versa - people, land, water, economy and prosperity are intimately linked.

We are committed to continuing to achieve more equitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in our catchment, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing, education and employment. We acknowledge that there have been inter-generational impacts from past government policies and practices on families and communities resulting in disconnection and disadvantage. We see and feel it in our day-to-day work and lives. At the same time, we are inspired by the resilience of First Nations peoples and wish to support their right to self-determination in our region and beyond.

Allyship is not an identity, it is an action...

Allyship is a series of steps a privileged person takes against oppressive systems to support marginalised people. An Ally actively promotes a culture of inclusion through positive, conscious and intentional efforts that benefit others.

We have valued the process of developing this RAP as much as the plan itself, as it allows us to reflect and develop a shared sense of how we want to contribute to reconciliation. It also provides a specific platform to better understand what reconciliation means to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, what would be meaningful to them, and how we can do better, as an organisation and as individuals. In this most recent RAP renewal process GB CMA has used the opportunity to reflect and identify how we can stretch ourselves; continuing to build on our strengths including our well-established partnership approach, while improving our internal mechanisms to support positive race relations, cultural understanding and cultural safety. Within our sphere of influence, power and privilege, this RAP will directly contribute to broader initiatives such as Closing the Gap (an agreement between the Commonwealth government, state and territory governments, the Coalition of Peaks, and the Australian Local Government Association), in particular the target to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

We operate in a catchment with Aboriginal permission to work on Country and we are grateful for the opportunities to work together towards our shared aspirations to heal and care for Country.

Our CEO officially champions our Reconciliation Action Plan, along with other executive and management. This is supported by an active RAP Working Group which includes managers from the key programs of River and Wetland Health, Sustainable Landscapes, and Strategy and Engagement. Other members of the working group include the Senior NRM Officer – Traditional Owner Partnerships (Chair), Project Coordinator - Landscape Restoration, NRM Officer Biodiversity and Land, Projects Coordinator - Sustainable Irrigation Program, River Health Officer, People Safety and Wellbeing Manager, First Nations GB CMA Board member and Independent Aboriginal Board Delegate.

We have regular consultation forums with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) and Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC). In these forums we share our respective organisations' directions, develop and implement joint initiatives and discuss matters relevant to our RAP and other relevant plans. At an operational level we are in constant contact with YYNAC and TLaWC, regarding our collective and respective projects and initiatives, many of which involve shared delivery and/or procurement of services from YYNAC and TLaWC. Where relevant and appropriate, this RAP encourages new partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and other groups wishing to advance reconciliation (e.g., Ganbina, Kaiela Institute and the Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group).

We have a 20-year history of working relationships with Traditional Owner organisations. These relationships have grown and transformed over time as our respective organisations have matured and as we respond to drivers such as government policy and funding opportunities (See figure below).

This is our third (Innovate) Reconciliation Action Plan. Previous plans (Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan September 2021-September 2023 and Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan June 2019-June 2021) were developed to capture and communicate the range of activities already in place to support reconciliation with our partners and stakeholders, and to prioritise the most effective action for future engagement and partnerships. The Reconciliation Action Plan process has been particularly focused on strengthening the effectiveness and impact of our partnerships and engagement with Traditional Owners.

Over the years and under previous RAPs we have:

- developed key documents to guide our efforts, including an Indigenous Participation Plan and a Cultural Learning Guide;
- set up formal consultation forums with our key Traditional Owner Partners and are in regular contact at an operational level;
- partnered on key projects and regularly engage the services of Traditional Owner works crews (Yorta Yorta's Woka Walla and Taungurung's Biik Cultural Land Management) to deliver on-ground works;
- employed various Aboriginal staff over the years (some with further education support) and currently have an Aboriginal Board member and Independent/Associate Aboriginal Board Delegate; and
- developed a social procurement strategy that focusses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement.

We are also a Champion of the Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity Plan, which aims to restore and sustain a thriving First Nations economy.

Ongoing cultural awareness and competency training is in place and we continue to identify ongoing needs in this area as well as more specific training for relevant staff. For example, reading Country, cultural heritage compliance and requirements under the Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement. In the most recent training undertaken by all staff and board members, we reflected on our experiences of working with Traditional Owners, challenges and opportunities. The outcomes of this exercise have been integrated into this RAP. Some of the key reflections from staff/board members on what we are doing well and wish to continue in our partnership work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people include:

- co-capacity building (using our respective knowledge and strengths to support shared outcomes; walking in two worlds);
- greater procurement of services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses;
- changing the way we work together, e.g. meeting on-Country and earlier involvement of Traditional Owners;
- greater co-design of projects and strategic frameworks such as MOUs/Partnership Agreements with Traditional Owners;
- advocating to funders for greater recognition of the time it takes to work meaningfully with Traditional Owners in both planning and implementation, and challenging existing processes and expectations to accommodate non-Western ways of thinking and working; and
- a growing level of cultural understanding and appetite for ongoing cultural learning across the organisation.

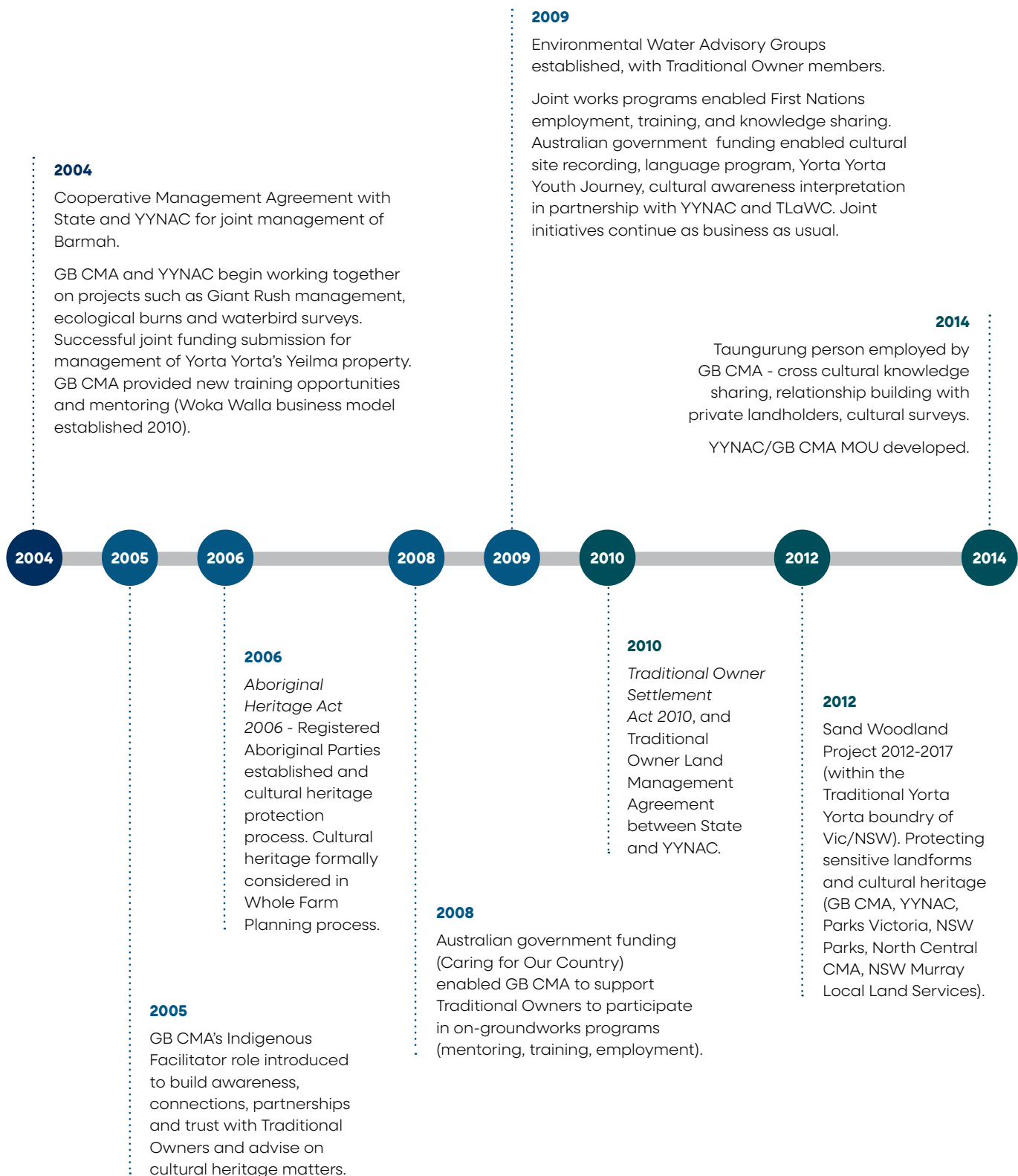
We are intent on accelerating action and outcomes for supporting economic prosperity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as we work together to heal and care for Country. Key learnings to date include the importance of imbedding our reconciliation aspirations across all aspects of the organisation, keeping ourselves accountable and regular review to ensure we not only keep on track but stretch ourselves to be strong allies and leaders in regional reconciliation efforts.

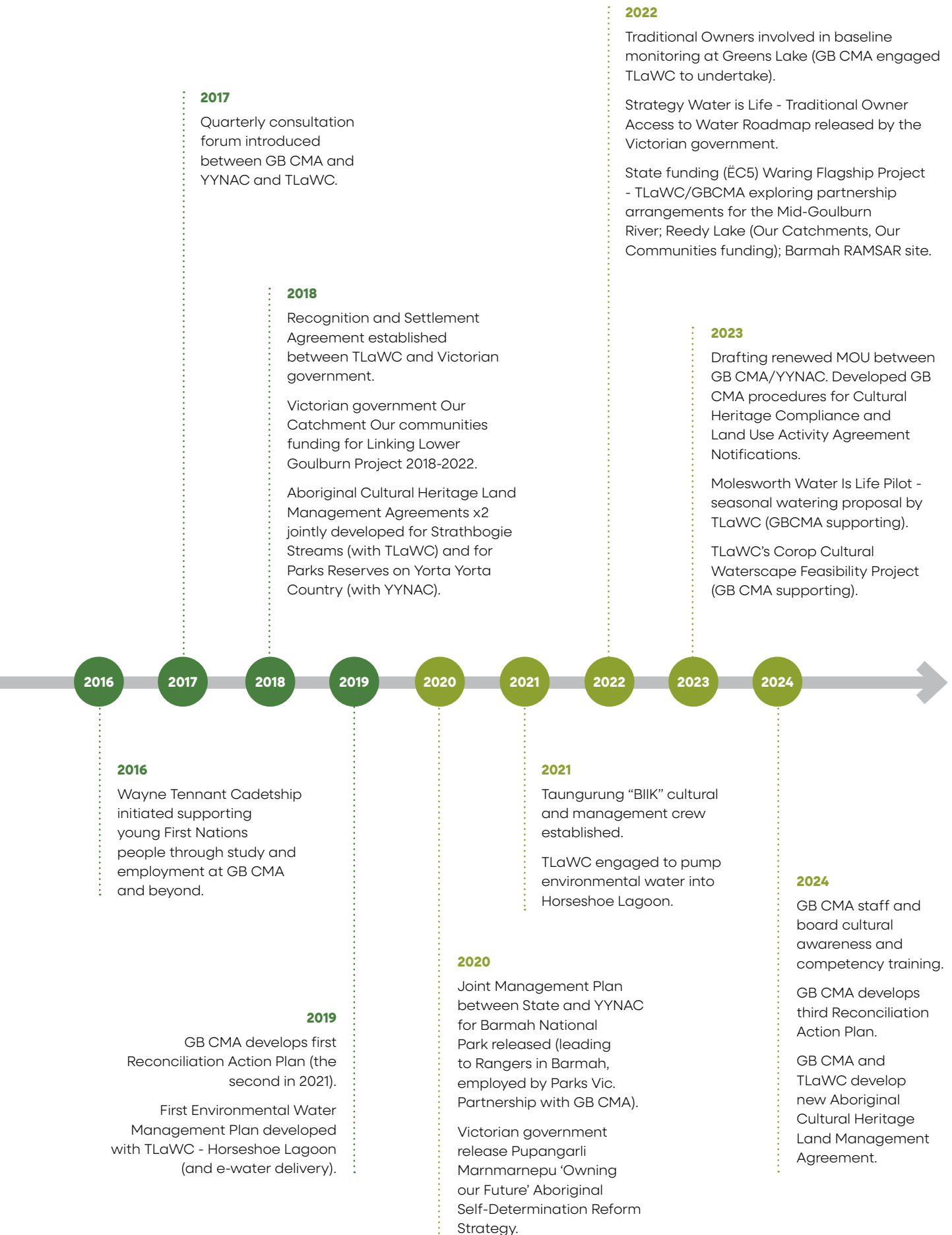
Building on a previous project 'Jobs for Aboriginal people in natural resource management in the Hume Region' that we supported under the previous RAPs, we have learnt that it is time to progress our own organisational Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy. This strategy will be based on a review of our organisation's approach to First Nations employment and retention, ideally with input from an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait advisor and Traditional Owners. The strategy will consider the context and influence of the partnership model that underpins the GB CMA's approach to integrated catchment management. Our desire is to see more First Nations people working in natural resource management (and beyond), but this model doesn't have to be an equal proportion of First Nations staff working across relevant organisations – in some cases it might be a better overall outcome to not compete with Traditional Owner organisations for staff, but instead work in partnership to support such appointments and procure services from these organisations.

The GB CMA is a project-based organisation and although we do not receive specific resources to undertake reconciliation work, we understand the benefits of doing so and are committed to leading in this area.

Key milestones shaping GB CMA's 20-year collaboration with Traditional Owners

An insight into GB CMA's partnership journey with YYNAC and TLaWC





Our Action Plan



OUR ACTION PLAN:

Relationships



We acknowledge the lands on which our business is conducted are home to a diverse population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians, and that these lands are Traditionally Owned by the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung peoples.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is focused on building respect, relationships and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation, but importantly across the catchment, via our sphere of influence. We are committed to using our platform as a peak natural resource management body to progress reconciliation and the priorities of First Nations people. This includes being open to listening and learning and supporting self-determination actions such as Treaty.

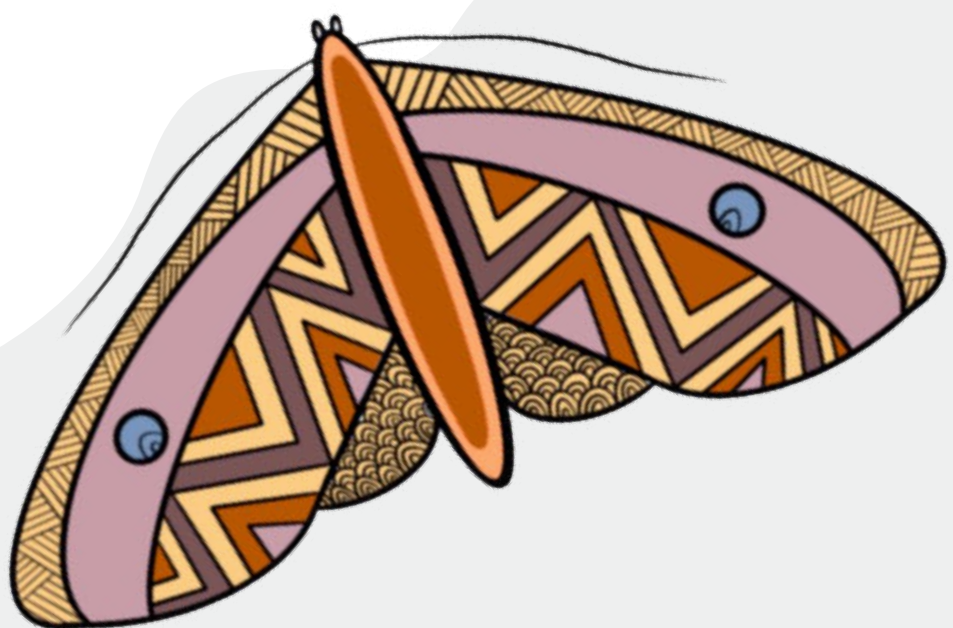
Treaty in Victoria is set to commence negotiation in November 2024 and will be highly relevant to our reconciliation efforts as it aims to bring Victorian communities together to build strong relationships and put in place practical frameworks that support improved social and economic opportunities for First Nations people.

Our overall vision states that 'Through its leadership and partnerships, the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority aims to improve the resilience of the catchment's people, land, biodiversity and water resources in a rapidly changing environment'. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are significant friends, collaborators, partners and business operators who we value and work with on a daily basis to care for Country.

FOCUS AREA: RELATIONSHIPS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	1.1 Seek local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder input into a review of our guiding principles for First Nations engagement and partnerships in key documents such as our Indigenous Participation Plan (last updated 2023/24)	Jun 2026	Program Managers; Senior Officer – Traditional Owner Partnerships
	1.2 Explore opportunities to seek additional First Nations voices and involvement to guide our reconciliation efforts (new partnerships).	Jun 2025	Senior Officer – Traditional Owner Partnerships
	1.3 Where possible, build time into project planning, development and delivery to allow for: meaningful First Nations engagement that strengthens relationships (and advocate to funders that this is important); two-way learning opportunities; and Traditional Owner priorities to be considered and, where possible, integrated into project design.	Feb (Annually)	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	1.4 Renew our MOU with YYNAC.	Jun 2025	CEO; Senior Officer – Traditional Owner Partnerships

FOCUS AREA: RELATIONSHIPS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	1.5 Where and when TLaWC see value, jointly develop a Partnership Agreement (GBCMA/TLaWC)	Jun 2026	CEO; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	1.6 Continue the Consultation Forums with YYNAC and TLaWC ensuring format and approach can be adapted to meet changing needs.	Biannually (Mar, Aug) 2025, 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	1.7 Review Terms of Reference for the two Consultation Forums with YYNAC and TLaWC.	Aug 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025, 2026	Communications and Marketing Coordinator; People, Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025, 2026	CEO; Senior Officer – Traditional Owner Partnerships
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025, 2026	CEO
	2.4 Organise at least one National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event each year.	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025 and 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2025, 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	3.1 Develop and implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation and raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce (including via organised events and annual staff workshop agendas).	Jun 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	3.2 Include our reconciliation activities in our induction materials e.g., links to the RAP, how to get involved etc.	Jun 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	3.3 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly (including but not limited to the GB CMA Annual Report).	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025, 2026	CEO; Communications and Marketing Coordinator
	3.4 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. e.g., hosting events with our key partners and publicly voicing our aspirations, efforts and learnings in relation to reconciliation.	Apr 2025, 2026	CEO; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	3.5 Collaborate with other like-minded organisations (e.g. those with Reconciliation Action Plans) to develop collective ways to advance reconciliation. • E.g., setting up a RAP organisation collective in the region.	Biannually (Jul) 2025, 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships

FOCUS AREA: RELATIONSHIPS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	4.1 Host a Treaty information and discussion session involving elected members of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, GB CMA and key stakeholders.	27 May - 3 Jun, 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships; GB CMA Board
	4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify improvements to existing anti-discrimination provisions based on future needs.	Jun 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	4.3 Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Board members/ delegates and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on this policy.	Nov 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	4.4 Educate all staff and Board members on the effects of racism, via annual training and discussion	27 May - 3 Jun 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	4.5 Equip our senior leaders on the most recent conversations and research surrounding the effects of racism	Sep 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	4.6 Reinforce to all staff what it means to be a good ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with communications to be developed in consultation with First Nations peoples.	Jun 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager



OUR ACTION PLAN:

Respect



The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have cared for this Country since time immemorial. The impacts of European colonisation on First Nations peoples, communities, cultures and Country have been significant. Only with respect, support and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision making and

action will we be able to meaningfully work towards a healthy and resilient catchment. We acknowledge that informed consent and protecting cultural and intellectual property are key rights and principles of self-determination. We want to be respectful of cultural protocols and show our admiration of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

FOCUS AREA: RESPECT			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation and create a plan to address gaps and opportunities	Jul 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	5.2 Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy and program.	Sep 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	5.3 Review, update, communicate and implement a cultural learning strategy (Guide) for our staff.	Oct 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	5.4 Provide opportunities for all staff, in particular RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning, building on previous cultural competency and awareness training. • Achieve 100 per cent participation rate of all employees in mandatory cultural awareness training.	Jun 2025	CEO; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	5.5 Help to enable cultural competency training for any GB CMA Steering/Working Groups (and imbed this expectation in relevant Terms of Reference).	Oct 2026	Program Managers
	5.6 Integrate cultural learning requirements of staff into the performance planning process (including a base level of cultural competency).	Oct 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	5.7 Facilitate opportunities for community and private landholder education, involvement and productive partnerships, involving cultural awareness and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage (e.g. through project design and delivery).	Sep 2025	Program Managers

FOCUS AREA: RESPECT			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	6.1 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (and identify ways to measure this increase, e.g. pre and post training).	Jun 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	6.2 Develop, implement, communicate and review, a cultural protocols document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Jun 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	6.3 Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Dec 2025, 2026	Program Managers
	6.4 Include an Acknowledgement of Country and other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Review: Dec 2025	CEO; Program Managers
	6.5 Seek informed consent to include Aboriginal language, knowledge and perspectives in communications material generated by the GB CMA, with guidance from Elders and Traditional Owners.	Review: Feb 2026	Program Managers
	6.6 Develop and display appropriate Acknowledgement of Country plaques in or on GB CMA office buildings.	Aug 2025	Communications and Marketing Coordinator; CEO
	6.7 Educate staff about 'free, prior and informed consent' and cultural intellectual property as part of a broader cultural learning program.	Dec 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships; Program Managers
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	7.1 RAP Working Group (and other staff) to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in Jul 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager; RAP Chair; RAP Champion (CEO)
	7.2 Review HR policies and procedures to remove any barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week (noting there may be other reasons why staff find it difficult to participate, e.g., finance staff at the end of financial year).	Mar 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	7.3 Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in Jul 2025, 2026	CEO
	7.4 In consultation with First Nations partners and stakeholders, host or support at least one NAIDOC week event each year (e.g., online documentary screening, Smoking Ceremony, morning tea, cultural walk/tour).	Annually, First week in Jul 2025, 2026	CEO; People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	7.5 Reinforce to all staff what it means to be a good ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	3 Jun, 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager

OUR ACTION PLAN:

Opportunities



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities are important to the GB CMA because improved outcomes for First Nations communities are integral to the broader resilience and prosperity of the catchment. This requires our organisation to actively contribute where possible to improving education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and promoting the benefits of allyship to our wider stakeholders and catchment community. There is much to be gained by embracing our shared history, building positive race relations and cultural

safety, and acknowledging the inseparable connection between community, culture, and country. Traditional Owners have obligations and rights to care for Country and the GB CMA acknowledges that this must be supported to achieve meaningful management of the catchment. The GB CMA celebrates the vast growth in capacity of Traditional Owner organisations and enabling policy change (such as Recognition and Settlement Agreements, Self-determination Reform Framework and Water is Life Roadmap) since our last RAP.

FOCUS AREA: OPPORTUNITIES			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	8.1 Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Nov 2025, 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	8.2 Guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advice and input (including external First Nations advisors where needed), develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Mar 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	8.3 Consider employment and procurement targets in the above Strategy, identifying contributions to the Closing the Gap target of “halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade”.	Dec 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager; Program Managers
	8.4 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	May (Annually)	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	8.5 Develop a suite of offerings to increase recruitment and retention of First Nations staff including mentoring, cadetships/traineeships/secondments, work experience, and partnerships with other organisations in the sector. For example, with Ganbina, a local organisation empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to unlock their full potential.	Dec 2025	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	8.6 Ensure that any managers and workplaces that will be involved in the above programs are trained in cultural safety.	Review: Mar 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager

FOCUS AREA: OPPORTUNITIES			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	8.7 Develop approaches in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (and Board members) regarding ways in which to manage cultural load.	Review: Mar 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	8.8 Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace, seeking First Nations advice in this area.	Mar 2026	People Safety and Wellbeing Manager
	8.9 Investigate a mutually beneficial working relationship with the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence in Shepparton to support improved education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the region.	Dec 2025	CEO; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	9.1 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. This is currently under the GB CMA's Social Procurement Strategy and will be reviewed to identify potential improvements (using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise in this area, where possible).	Dec 2025	Corporate Program Manager; Governance and Procurement Coordinator
	9.2 Review suitability of Supply Nation membership and/or identify room for growth with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers including as part of the Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity Plan's social procurement group of which we are a founding member.	Feb 2026	Corporate Program Manager
	9.3 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff, including a directory of Aboriginal businesses for staff use.	Jun 2025	Corporate Program Manager; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	9.4 Review and update procurement practices to remove any barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, ensuring advice/ input from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/s, where possible.	Dec 2025	Corporate Program Manager
	9.5 Nurture commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses, including the engagement of YYNAC's Woka Walla Work Crew and TLaWC's Biik Cultural Land Management to deliver on-ground works on Country.	Dec 2026	Program Managers
	9.6 Capture within social procurement metrics, the number of First Nations businesses engaged.	Nov 2025	Corporate Program Manager
Support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business development to enable improved economic and social outcomes in the community	9.7 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (including organisations such as Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative and YYNAC) to develop environmental and agricultural enterprises, e.g. through our involvement in the Outback Academy's <i>Follow the Flowers</i> Project.	May 2026	Sustainable Irrigation Program (Sustainable Landscapes Program)
	9.8 Support a First Nations business networking event and/or communicate how First Nations businesses can tender for work/contracts with the GB CMA.	Apr 2026	CEO; Corporate Program Manager

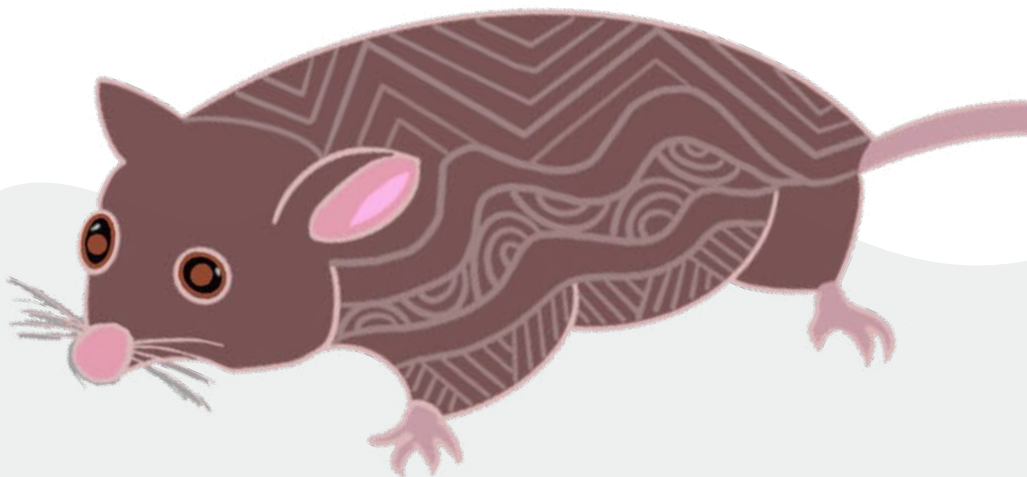
OUR ACTION PLAN:

Governance



FOCUS AREA: GOVERNANCE			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	10.1 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input or representation on the RAP Working Group.	Nov 2025 and 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	10.2 Review Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	Dec 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	10.3 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Mar, Jul, Oct, Dec 2025, 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	10.4 Invite Elders to an annual morning tea to discuss progress against the RAP and seek input and advice.	Oct 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	11.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation, including a potential annual cultural budget in each year's Corporate Plan.	May 2025, 2026	Executive Team; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	11.2 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery and progress of RAP commitments (e.g. Executive and Management team meetings, and an all-staff knowledge session).	Nov 2025, 2026	CEO, Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	11.3 Develop and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments, (including an annual traffic light report to the Management Team and Board, and a designated section in the Annual Report).	Jul 2025	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	11.4 Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Review: Jun, 2025	CEO

FOCUS AREA: GOVERNANCE			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	12.1 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.	Jun (Annually)	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 Aug (Annually)	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep 2025, 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.4 Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders biannually (via reports to the Management Team and verbally at whole-of-staff meetings (“Couch Catchup”).	May, Nov Annually	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.5 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. Include updates and promote awarenesses and opportunities at Partnership Team meetings and in the CEO Report to the Board.	Nov 2025, 2026	CEO; Strategy and Engagement Manager
	12.6 Make more visible in the Annual Report and/or create a stand-alone report on RAP progress.	Nov 2025	Strategy and Engagement Manager; Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.7 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia’s biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	Feb 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
	12.8 Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	Dec 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.	Dec 2026	Senior Officer, Traditional Owner Partnerships



Glossary of key terms

Throughout our Reconciliation Plan we refer to First Nations Peoples in a number of ways. This reflects an evolution of what is considered to be the most appropriate terminology and our desire to be respectful of the preferences of our First Nations population.

Here is an outline of the different and sometimes interchangeable terminology used throughout the plan, including definitions and why we've used these terms in the plan.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' refer to different groups of peoples. Aboriginal refers to the original peoples of mainland Australia. Torres Strait Islander refers to the original peoples of the 274 islands located north of Australia, in the Torres Strait. This full term is used throughout the document as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reside within the Goulburn Broken catchment and aligns to the terminology used at a national scale especially in employment and training sectors.

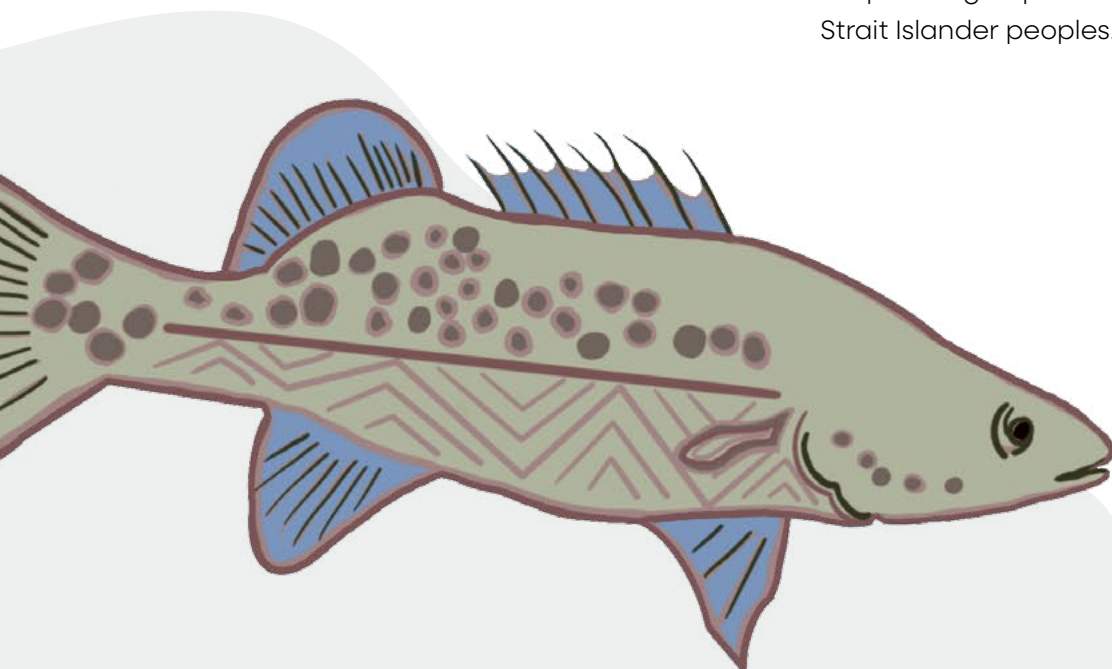
Elder

Elders are chosen and accepted by their own communities and are highly respected. The term Elder does not necessarily equate with age. An 'Elder' is defined as a significant person within Aboriginal communities who is respected and consulted due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background and insight. Often described as the "custodians of knowledge" of a community.

First Nations People

In recent times, 'First Nations People/s' has emerged as a name that recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia, prior to colonisation. Using the term 'First Nations People/s' recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the sovereign people of this land and beyond that, it also recognises various language groups as separate and unique sovereign nations.

First Nations people/s or First Peoples terms have some general acceptance but may not always be the term preferred by individuals or specific groups of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Free, Prior and Informed Consent

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a distinct right afforded to First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), consistent with their fundamental and inherent right to self-determination. FPIC empowers First Nations peoples to offer or withhold consent, at any stage, as part of their participation in decision-making that concerns projects, laws and policies affecting their lives and lands, skies, waters and resources. antar.org.au

Indigenous

The use of the term Indigenous is retained in the names of forums and publication titles and unless otherwise noted, is inclusive of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Self-determination

Self-determination is an ongoing process of ensuring that peoples are able to make decisions about matters that affect their lives (Australian Human Rights Commission). Articles 3 and 4 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) confirms that Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination under international law.

Traditional Owners

A 'Traditional Owner' is an Aboriginal person directly descended from the original Aboriginal inhabitants of a culturally defined area of land or country and has a cultural association with this country that derives from the traditions, observances, customs, beliefs or history of the original Aboriginal inhabitants of the area. The Victorian Government's Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy distinguishes a Traditional Owner as an Aboriginal person who has traditional connection to an identified geographic area of Country.

Our plan uses the term Traditional Owner when referring to direct descendants of the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung people, who have received formal recognition status by the Victorian Government as the Traditional Owners and Registered Aboriginal Parties over much of our catchment area.

A Traditional Owner Organisation/Corporation is an incorporated group that represents the interests of Traditional Owners in a particular area and may have rights under legislation.

Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Waters Council.

Treaty

Within Victoria two major areas of commitment from the State Government to First Nations peoples involve the development of a Treaty and commitment to support self-determination.

A Treaty is a negotiated agreement between a party/parties and government that sets out ground-rules for a relationship between the groups. First Nations Victorians have endorsed a formula for a statewide Treaty and local Treaties which may include: the acknowledgement of rights, the initiation of a process of reconciliation between Aboriginal groups and government and reparation of historical grievances.

References and relevant documents

GB CMA Strategies, plans, policies and procedures

- Algabonyah Employment Agreement between GB CMA and Kaiela Institute c 2016
- Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan 2022-28
- Cultural Learning Guide 2021
- Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2017-2022
- HRM 001 Human Resource Management Policy 2021
- Indigenous Participation Plan 2023-2028 (updated 2024)
- Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan September 2021 – September 2023
- HRM 031 Recruitment and Selection Procedure 2021
- Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27
- HRM 039 Working Together Procedure (equal opportunity, respect and diversity) 2020
- Social Procurement Strategy 2024
- GOV 015 Procurement Policy 2022
- GOV 016 Procurement Procedure 2024
- GOV 026 – Cultural Heritage Compliance Procedure 2023
- GOV 036 – Land Use Activity Agreement Procedure 2023

Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct and Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Victorian Government's Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector AEU Brochure July 2017: Barring Djinang (vpssc.vic.gov.au) and the Barring Djinang First Peoples WorkForce Development Framework for the Victorian Public Sector 2024-2028

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019) Pupangarli-Marnmarnepu-Aboriginal-Self-Determination-Reform-Strategy-2020-2025. pdf (deeca.vic.gov.au)

Watnanda Consulting (Nov 2018 and Feb 2019) Project reports: Jobs for Aboriginal People in Natural Resource Management Project, Hume Region.



CASE STUDY:

Taking Care of Country

The Goulburn Broken CMA's Taking Care of Country was a 2021 to 2024 collaborative project with Traditional Owners, Parks Victoria, Euroa Arboretum, Goulburn Broken Seedbank, Landcare and landholders. The project delivered integrated catchment management on public and private land and was funded through the Victorian Government's Our Catchments Our Communities program.

The long-term objective of Taking Care of Country was to increase native vegetation extent, quality, and connectivity to improve habitat for wildlife and ecological function on private and public land. The project involved increasing private landholder stewardship, Traditional Owner involvement in on-ground works, monitoring and research for adaptive management.

The Goulburn Broken CMA engaged Traditional Owner businesses Biik Cultural Land Management (Taungurung Country) and Woka Walla (Yorta Yorta Country) to co-design projects. This enabled prioritisation according to Traditional Owner Country Plans, resulting in on-ground works at Nagambie's Reedy Lake Wildlife Reserve (Taungurung Country) and Mooroopna Sandhills and Yielima Sandhills (Yorta Yorta Country).

Biik and Woka Walla crews achieved 1,004 hectares of woody weed control, more than 2,040 hectares of pest animal control and three kilometres of fencing.

Biik completed six fauna assessments using camera traps to understand the presence of native and pest animal species and seasonal birds. Initial weed presence and the effect of weed control works were also assessed via three flora assessments and four reports were published using data collected from the bird assessments and camera trap assessments.

A critical part of the success of this project was working alongside Taungurung Land and Waters Council and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation to deliver key aspirations and objectives identified for healing and reading Country. The project also helped to achieve long-term outcomes including increased area of land stewardship (across tenures), increased Aboriginal self-determination, and more regional stakeholders who are connected, capable, empowered and self-directed to act to help heal Country.



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