



Reflect

Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2019 – March 2020



Uniting

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is all people standing together to create socially just and culturally safe relationships with, and opportunities for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Stepping stones on the pathways
to recovery, walking together.

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Front cover artwork and throughout 'Over Waters'
commissioned artwork by Cassie Leatham.

Illustrations throughout created by
Aboriginal designer Saretta Fielding.

Acknowledgement

Uniting in Victoria and Tasmania (Uniting) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples¹ as Australia's First Peoples. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of the lands and waters on which we all live and work. We recognise the continuing sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Victoria and Tasmania over those lands, and their inalienable right to self-determination. We pay our respects to all Elders; past, present, and future.



Illustration represents meeting, groups, and coming together as community.

¹ The term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is used in this Reconciliation Action Plan to refer to Australia's First Peoples. The term recognises the great number of Aboriginal nations, and the great diversity of cultures, histories, languages and values of these many nations. It also acknowledges that Torres Strait Islander peoples are a separate people and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in urban, regional or remote areas of Australia may have distinct cultural identities.

Recognition and healing

First Peoples

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we live and work.

We affirm the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people that enriches communities and society more broadly.

We are committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families, Elders, communities and organisations to improve life outcomes, service provision and recognition.

Consumers past and present

We acknowledge that failure in our duty of care led to the mistreatment and abuse of some people in the care of Uniting and its founding agencies.

We commit ourselves to the provision of safe and culturally-relevant child and consumer services now and in the future.

The Uniting Heritage Service will lead the way in working toward the resolution of past wrongs and provide support to women and men who as children lived in these homes and institutions and were impacted.

Illustration of message sticks represents gathering and celebration.



Message from Bronwyn Pike

Uniting is committed to reconciliation between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and all non-Indigenous Australians and to continuing the journey towards reconciliation started by our founding organisations.

Recognising the inalienable rights of the Traditional Owners to the land and waters on which we live and work is fundamental to our vision for reconciliation. We also recognise the fundamental importance of self-determination as the starting point for developing equitable and socially just relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous communities.

We also acknowledge the great suffering caused to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by colonisation and ongoing discrimination and we acknowledge those impacts are ongoing. Our founding churches cooperated with governments in implementing racist and paternalistic policies which forced people from their traditional lands, resettled them in other places without their agreement and removed generations of children from their families. These and other actions caused incalculable suffering, grief, loss and trauma

to parents, children and kin, and the loss of languages and cultural identity. I apologise on behalf of Uniting for those and other wrongs which caused the intergenerational trauma that continues to impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action facilitating respect, trust and positive relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is fundamental to our vision for reconciliation. Uniting will seek new opportunities to address past and current injustices of colonisation and to build lasting respect for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

We will strive for enduring positive change underpinned by respectful relationships and closer listening to enable us to better understand and respond to the different needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, men and younger community members. We will work to develop new partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations that will improve our service quality and cultural safety and health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

On behalf of Uniting, I would thank each Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group member for their many contributions and acknowledge particularly the guidance and support provided by the Aboriginal members of the Working Group. Your work will enable new partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Uniting and improve the cultural safety of our programs. We also acknowledge and greatly appreciate the support and guidance Reconciliation Australia's program staff provided during preparation of this RAP.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bronwyn Pike". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bronwyn" being more prominent than the last name "Pike".

Bronwyn Pike
Board Chair



**Working to
inspire people,
enliven
communities
and confront
injustice.**

Illustration represents
strength together and unity.



Our story

Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania. Uniting was formed in 2016 when the Uniting Church set a new strategic direction for 21 UnitingCare, Wesley Mission Victoria as well as two Uniting Church business units. Several of these founding organisations have been supporting Australians for over 100 years.

Many had strong partnerships with Aboriginal communities and some had developed Reconciliation Action Plans. Now, as one organisation, we operate from over 100 locations across Tasmania and Victoria. Our services are delivered in Tasmania, Melbourne and across Victoria, from Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, to the Wimmera in the west.

Our 3,500 staff and 3,500 volunteers provide over 770 programs and services helping children, young people and families learn and thrive. We also support people experiencing homelessness, alcohol or other drug or mental health issues. We assist people with disability to live the life they choose and we assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment.

We are proud to welcome and support asylum seekers into our community. We seek to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

We celebrate diversity and welcome all people regardless of ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity or sexual orientation at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.²

² For more information please refer to the Uniting Annual Report or visit vt.uniting.org/about-uniting

The Covenant

Uniting's activities are strongly informed by the 1994 Covenant. In that year, the Uniting Church in Australia entered into a Covenant with its brothers and sisters in the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC), the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander body of the Uniting Church.

In the Covenant, the Uniting Church acknowledges the many past and ongoing adverse impacts of colonisation and pledges to encourage the development of shared relationships between First Nations and non-Indigenous peoples.

The Church also apologises and seeks forgiveness for the many past wrongs done knowingly and unknowingly to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; it asks the UAICC to help the Church discover ways to make amends to enable it to work in solidarity with UAICC and journey with it in reconciliation.

The Covenant also commits the Uniting Church in Australia to work towards national and state policy change, and to build understanding, respect and support for the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination. It pledges the Church to constantly challenge racism to help build an Australia which values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for First Nations Peoples.

The principles of the Covenant, underpin the work of both the Uniting Church and Uniting and guided development of this RAP. We hope that this first Uniting RAP enables us to keep faith with the Covenant by building on the history of positive activity and engagement embodied in our founding agencies' Reconciliation Action Plans. We hope it clearly demonstrates our commitment to contribute to a national reconciliation between Australia's non-Indigenous and First Nations peoples.³

3 <https://assembly.uca.org.au/images/resources/Covenanting/Covenant-with-UAICC-A2-poster.pdf>

The Covenanting Painting

This painting tells a sacred Creation story of the Wagalak sisters and speaks particularly of the alliance of four Clan Nations and their responsibilities for the land and waters of their yirralka (estates).

The painting also depicts the sacred ground where ceremonies take place and in particular the Wukindi ceremony, to restore relationship where blood is spilt and bring reconciliation.

The painting is in itself an initiation for UCA members to stand with members of the UAICC in their struggle for justice.



Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

Creating opportunities for our employees to learn about reconciliation will help develop the positive, mutually respectful relationships needed to support reconciliation. It will guide our contribution to reconciliation in Australia over the next twelve months.

Bringing reconciliation to life in Uniting is a core goal of the Board of Directors and Executive Leadership Team. This is our first RAP. Being a Reflect RAP it maps out the start of our journey of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It demonstrates our commitment to learn new ways to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

It will set us on a journey of discovery, listening and learning to understand how we can embed the five critical and interrelated dimensions needed for reconciliation across our organisation.

1 Positive two-way relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians built on trust and respect.

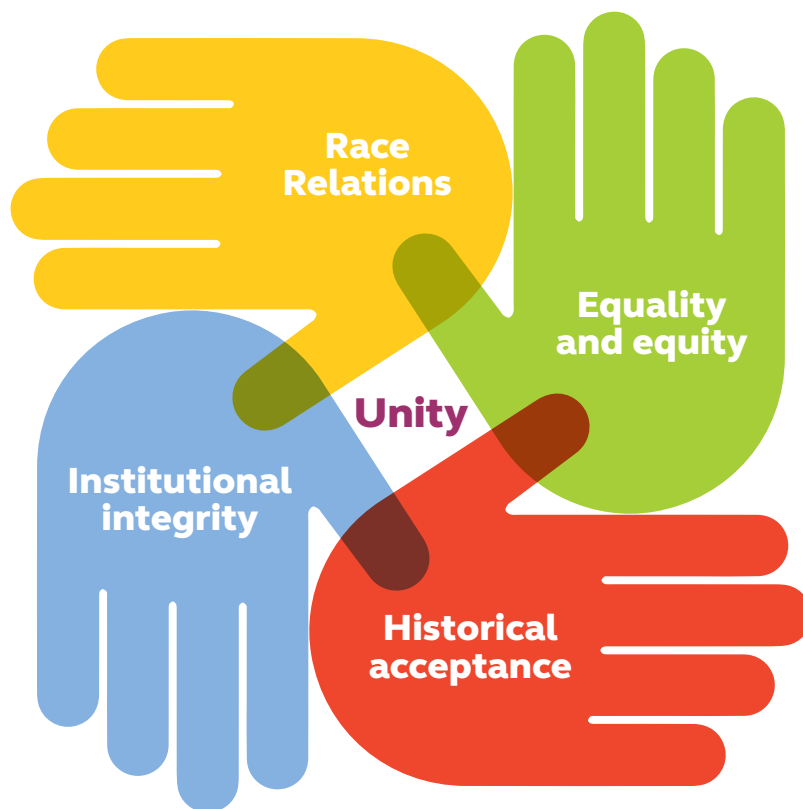
2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participating equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples being recognised and upheld.

3 Political, business and community institutions actively supporting reconciliation.

4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights are a valued and recognised part of a shared national identity leading to national unity.

5 Truth-telling, justice, healing and historical acceptance leading to understanding of the impact of these wrongs by all Australians and widespread agreement that these wrongs will never be repeated.⁴

⁴ The State of Reconciliation in Australia, Reconciliation Australia, 2016.



Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in culturally safe ways is a critical element of reconciliation. Cultural safety is defined by personal and community perceptions. A service environment is only culturally safe when the person using that service perceives it to be spiritually, socially and emotionally and physically safe; to not assault, challenge or deny their identity; and as providing the support they feel they need. Cultural safety can influence assessments of service quality so strongly

that it determines whether a person will even access or continue to use a service.

Across the human services sector, organisations are making significant efforts to improve their cultural safety in a bid to work more effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This Reflect RAP is our first step on its journey towards working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in culturally safe ways consistently across our organisation.

Current community partnerships and reconciliation activities

An internal survey revealed a range of relationships and activities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our organisation.

It also revealed that some excellent work begun by founding agencies had not been progressed pending the formation of Uniting. The survey also revealed the strong commitment of Uniting employees to reconciliation. Specific reconciliation activities identified through the survey included:

- five RAPS endorsed or under development at the time of Uniting formation
- nine regional areas where Uniting has active working partnerships with local Aboriginal Community organisations and communities
- five identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs with services developed for and delivered by Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal employment initiatives and cultural awareness training in some founding agencies.

The survey also revealed that while some Uniting founding agencies had made specific efforts to create identified Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander positions and employ people in roles across the organisation, the overall number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people working for Uniting was not known.

The survey also indicated reluctance on the part of some people to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and highlighted the need to improve data collection so we can determine how many of our 7,000 staff and volunteers are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and where they work in our organisation.

Other priorities for reconciliation identified by the survey included:

- ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and self-determination is at the heart of Uniting's reconciliation journey
- harnessing existing reconciliation work already underway within the clusters
- aligning our human services delivery more closely with reconciliation activities
- improving culturally safe recruitment, retention, career development and management practices
- creating consistent, culturally safe, consumer support practice leading to better client outcomes across Uniting
- providing a variety of pathways for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous employees, volunteers and other stakeholders to contribute to and participate in Uniting's Reconciliation Action Plan journey.

We will monitor our progress while implementing our RAP to identify areas where improvement is required to sustainably embed reconciliation action across all areas of the organisation.



Illustration represents knowledge and sharing of information.



Ron Briggs

RAP Senior Cultural Advisor.



Our RAP Working Group

Our first Uniting RAP Working Group needed to respect prior and current work done by our founding agencies. It also needed to reflect the new operational footprint, which extends across two Australian states. It was also important to reflect the effort being made to standardise program delivery and consolidate back-office systems.

The Working Group included two independent Aboriginal community members and six Aboriginal people working in Uniting. The RAP Working Group will be invited to review its own Terms of Reference and offer advice on future RAP implementation governance.

The Uniting Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

A special thank-you to Aunty Georgina Lovett-Williams and Ron Briggs for their guidance and direction in the development of this RAP.

Aunty Georgina Lovett-Williams RAP Working Group Elder

Belinda Bruce Former Co-Chair and Stronger Families Caseworker, Gippsland

Quinn Pawson Former Co-Chair and GM Strategy and Engagement and Uniting Reconciliation Project Sponsor

Ron Briggs Reconciliation Action Plan Senior Cultural Advisor

Allan Green Community Member, Gippsland

Eva Orr Stronger Families Caseworker, Narre Warren

Jodie Hampson Team Leader Aged Care, Coburg

Marie Kellam Children and School Program Links Officer, Gippsland

Ben Atkinson Tenancy support worker, Ballarat

Donna Ribton-Turner Senior Manager Clinical Services, Coburg

Angela Forbes GM Uniting Eastern Victoria and Uniting Reconciliation Champion

Donna Lashmar Former Executive Officer, Tasmania

Ivan Thorne Manager Wellbeing Services, Ballarat

Phillip Yew Manager Out of Home Care, Wimmera

Meryl O'Neill Communities For Children Program Manager, Broadmeadows

Ethan Gankanda Team Leader Aged Care, Chadstone

Benaifer Sabavala Senior Manager Organisational Development, Performance and Integration

Margo Brain Manager Risk and Compliance , Quality and Performance
(alt. Cassie Roylance, former Manager Accreditation)

Gemma Halloran Senior Manager, Brand and Marketing, Marketing and Communications
(alt. David Cook, former Copy Writer)

Melissa Blagojevic Former Senior Manager, Finance and Procurement

Don Stewart Project Manager Reconciliation

“You don’t know what you don’t know, the RAP is a little bit like that, it’s trying to understand what we are doing well and **what we could be doing better for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.”**



Jodie Hampson is a proud Guringai woman from the Hawkesbury River on the northern arm of Broken Bay, NSW. Jodie works as a Team Leader for the Northwest Region of Aged Care Community Services and is also an Aboriginal member of our RAP working group. Her wisdom and contribution to Uniting and the RAP committee shows us how Aboriginal women are doing so much to help build their communities.

Starting the conversation with each other has been really special. I know as front line workers we often forget how important it is to invest in relationships with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Part of the RAP discussions has been about how we guide staff to work with key Elders, Leaders, Aboriginal groups and organisations – even just getting it on the agenda for the organisation has been a great step forward.

Our work is equally also about working out how to engage the people we’re not yet working with or supporting. We need to be culturally safe for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to feel comfortable engaging with our services. Thinking of ways of how we could attract a diversity of clients throughout the community.

I guess it’s kind of like working on a patchwork quilt. There’s squares for the need, there’s the history, there’s the sadness, but there’s also an immense shining light that we need to acknowledge – our rich art, culture and our many leaders. As a society, we need to be proud of our Aboriginal heritage. It’s the oldest continuing culture in the world, and there’s so much to learn from this culture.

And things like the RAP are important steps for us. Highlighting how we move forward, together. We just need to keep going, one step at a time.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Over the next 12 months, we commit to the following actions and deliverables:



Relationships

Positive, mutually respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and mainstream organisations are essential for Reconciliation. Uniting is committed to forging partnerships and working collaboratively on mutually beneficial projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations to improve access to our services, input into our planning and service delivery, and improve service quality and health outcomes.



Passing of message sticks represents communication and collaboration.

Action 1

The Uniting RAP Working Group (RWG) actively tracks and reports on RAP implementation over twelve months and considers options for future RAP editions.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and if necessary refine the Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	June 2019	RWG Executive Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coordinate development and launch of the Uniting RAP.	March 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RAP Working Group.	June 2019	RWG Executive Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none">RAP Working Group meets quarterly and monitors and reports on RAP implementation.	March, May, August, December 2019	RWG Executive Chair

Action 2

Strengthen internal and external relationships.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working and volunteering in Uniting in implementation of the RAP.	March 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Victorian, Tasmanian and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities Uniting is currently linked toother RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations Uniting can connect with to inform its reconciliation journey.	June 2019	Operational General Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Include an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Protocol in the Uniting Citizen and Community Engagement Framework to support Uniting staff and volunteer engagement with local communities.	June 2019	Director of Mission

Action 3

Recognise National Sorry Day (26 May) and actively participate and celebrate 2019 National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June).

National Sorry Day

On 26 May 1997, the **Bringing Them Home** report of the Stolen Generations Inquiry into Aboriginal child removal was tabled in Parliament. **National Sorry Day** has been held annually in Australia on 26 May since 1998.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform Uniting employees and volunteers about Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources and other reconciliation materials through the Uniting intranet and team meetings. 	May/June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage employees and volunteers to find and attend a National Reconciliation Week event in their area. 	May/June 2019	Operational General Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 	May/June 2019	RWG Executive Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the Uniting Board and Executive Leadership Team with opportunities to participate in National Reconciliation Week via a communication plan which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledges National Reconciliation Week on the front page of Uniting's website conveys the significance of National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week to employees and volunteers encourages Uniting locations to develop a list of local community events encourages each office to hold an internal National Reconciliation Week event highlights National Reconciliation Week resources and other reconciliation materials produced by Reconciliation Australia. 	April 2019	Chief Executive Officer

Action 4**Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP.**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a Uniting RAP communication strategy to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– engage the Uniting Board and the Executive Leadership Team in the delivery of RAP outcomes– engage and inform key internal Uniting stakeholders of their RAP responsibilities– raise awareness among Uniting employees and volunteers about our RAP commitments– raise awareness about the Uniting RAP among our external partners.	April 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement

Action 5**Improve understanding of our current reconciliation capability.**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Map current reconciliation capability and identify capability improvement actions, targets and outcomes for Uniting business areas.	June 2019	Operational General Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Document the scope and performance of current Uniting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific programs.	June 2019	Operational General Managers



Respect

Respect is one of our core values. A respectful approach embraces individual and collective differences and collaborates across cultures to improve health outcomes for all people. Uniting will work to ensure that all interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities reflect this core value.

Action 6

Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a business case supporting action to increase awareness in the organisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">With Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal Community organisations, identify local cultural awareness-raising opportunities for Uniting staff and volunteers.	June 2019	Operational General Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Through internal surveys, identify any unmet cultural awareness training needs.	October 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage Uniting employees and volunteers to use Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride cultural awareness-raising online tool.	April 2019	Operational General Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Install other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development resources accessible to all staff on the Uniting intranet, including information about:<ul style="list-style-type: none">the pre-colonisation story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and the shared history in Victoria and Tasmania since colonisationinformation about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Victoria and Tasmania, including for example demographic and other data on housing, health and justice system outcomes.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration



Action 7

Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope and develop a list of the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where Uniting operates.	April 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a protocol for use of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country that can be applied at local offices and other sites.	April 2019	RWG Executive Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate the importance of the of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols and of respectful and appropriate communication with Elders and other community members on the Uniting intranet and in cultural awareness training resources.	April 2019	Chief Executive Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make available the Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocol for Uniting employees and volunteers on the Uniting intranet.	May 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement

Action 8

Investigate opportunities to improve culturally safe support in Uniting workplaces.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and volunteers, investigate cultural support and supervision needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and identify options to provide that support.	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers, develop an Enhancing Cultural Safety in Your Workplace fact sheet and audit tool for operational managers.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration

Circles with U shapes around represent community and people coming together.

Action 9

Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week.

NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.

Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the treatment of Australia's First Nations peoples.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a NAIDOC Week communications plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide the Uniting Board and Executive Leadership Team with opportunities to participate in NAIDOC Week raise awareness among Uniting employees and volunteers of the meaning of NAIDOC Week provide information about local community events. 	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge NAIDOC Week on the front page of Uniting's website for the week. 	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute NAIDOC Week posters and other resources to Uniting Cluster Head offices and other regional Uniting services. 	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Uniting employees and volunteers to participate in NAIDOC Week events. 	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure RAP Working Group members participate in at least one external NAIDOC Week event. 	July 2019	RWG Executive Chair

Action 10

Celebrate and acknowledge other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight significant dates and events to employees and volunteers (e.g. Anniversary of National Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day) on the Uniting intranet. 	April 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement



Working together to keep families connected during recovery and rehabilitation - Alcohol and Other Drug Services.

Opportunities

For reconciliation to be achieved, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be able to access services that are designed specifically to meet their needs, are culturally safe, and provide meaningful benefit. For this to happen, we must become an employer of choice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action 11

Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities in Uniting.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a baseline audit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment to establish reporting criteria on employment and inform new employment initiatives. 	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote employment opportunities in Uniting for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by including the phrase “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply” in job advertisements. 	April 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in Uniting to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support development of new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships and internships) improve employee training and career development support retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples currently working in Uniting. 	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration

Water creatures represent survival.



Action 12**Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteering opportunities in Uniting.**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Undertake a baseline audit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteering levels in Uniting to inform new volunteering opportunities.	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration

Action 13**Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated businesses.**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated businesses.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated businesses.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify current levels of procurement of products and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated businesses.	September 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop protocols for procurement of products and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated businesses, for example in relation to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">catering at conferences, meetings and other events.designers for conferences and other branding and office fit-out.property maintenance businesses.Commissioning artwork from local Aboriginal artists for local offices.	September 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop one ongoing commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander operated business.	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration



Tracking progress and reporting

We will monitor the progress of implementing our RAP and identify areas for improvement.

Action 14

Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include RAP implementation progress as a standing reporting item on Uniting Team, Cluster, Quality Committee, Executive Leadership Team and Board meeting agendas.	May 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide regular updates of RAP implementation activities to Uniting employees.	May 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include a Status of Reconciliation in Uniting report in the Uniting Annual report.	June 2019	Chief Executive Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.	June 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate participating in the Reconciliation Australia RAP Barometer.*	May 2020	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement

* For more details, visit www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WRB-report-2016.pdf

Action 15

Promote continuous improvement by embedding reconciliation principles in Uniting quality assurance and project reporting systems.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review Uniting quality assurance and project reporting systems and processes to ensure Reconciliation Action Plan principles and outcomes are reflected in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">program design and evaluationhuman resources systemsquality accreditation and statutory compliance reviewsProject Management Office planning and reporting systemsUniting branding and internal/external communications.	December 2019	Executive General Manager Performance and Integration

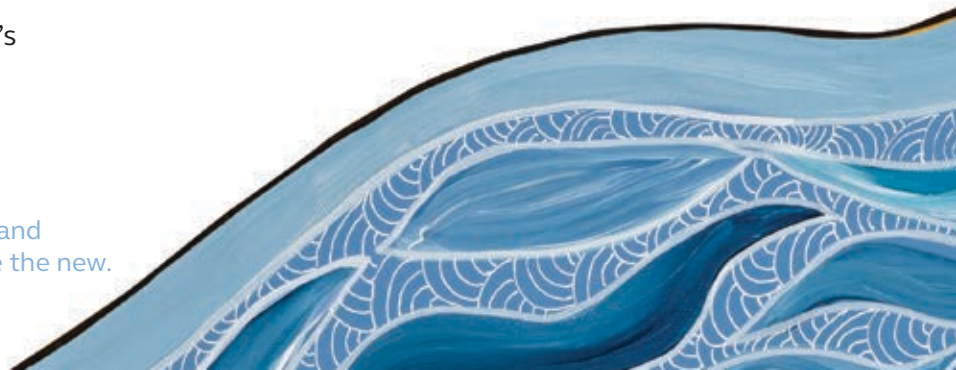
Action 16

Continue our RAP commitment with a new RAP.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	December 2019	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review.	January 2020	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	March 2020	Executive General Manager Strategy and Engagement

For more information about Uniting's Reconciliation Action Plan, contact:
Uniting Reconciliation Manager
(03) 9192 8100
hello@vt.uniting.org.au

Rushing water represents our personal and shared journey, to cleanse and welcome the new.





Working alongside families
to keep them connected.

Reconciliation journey

Uniting acknowledges the historical and continuing injustice and abuse experienced by Australia's First Peoples due to colonisation.

It is my deepest hope Uniting can act for reconciliation and that over time we develop respectful, strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, volunteers, communities and community controlled organisations across Tasmania and Victoria.

The time has come for Uniting to embark on its reconciliation journey as a single entity. Acting to reconcile with and empower the First Peoples of this land has to be deeply embedded in our understanding of ourselves as a respectful, compassionate, imaginative and bold organisation.

Much good work is already in place within the clusters through existing Reconciliation Action Plans and community or service partnerships. As we begin work on our Uniting Reconciliation Action Plan, it is important we bring the wisdom and experiences of our people and partners with us.

I encourage everyone to find a way to participate in this journey so that we can work together to realise justice for First People. There will be many opportunities for staff and volunteers to make an active contribution.

In particular, I am encouraging participation and leadership from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers to help drive the process and ensure our journey is authentic and achieves measurable results over time.

I look forward to working with you as we work together toward a more equal and just Australia.



Paul Linossier
Chief Executive Officer



Aunty Georgina Lovett-Williams and Paul Linossier

About Cassie

An Indigenous artist, master weaver, traditional dancer, bushtukka woman and educator, Cassie is extremely passionate about teaching her skills to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of all ages. Her aim is to give participants the opportunity to learn and understand Aboriginal culture and develop knowledge of both historical and contemporary Aboriginal history.

In July 2018, Cassie appeared on ABC's Gardening Australia program, talking to presenter Millie Ross about how she uses indigenous plants in her culturally rich creations.



Photo: Cassie in traditional Aboriginal ceremonial dance

‘Over Waters’

A healing journey of recovery and reconciliation
by Cassie Leatham of the Taungurung/
Wurundjeri people from the Kulin Nation.

The pointed mountains represent those one climbs numerous times to overcome obstacles in life, guided by the stars above, being the ancestors. Whether it's daylight or darkness they are always there. Tasmania and Victoria are represented by the waters and the hands holding message sticks are the way of the 'old people' many years ago, communicate to other tribes, a way of getting a message across. The waters are cleansing and currents take one on a journey of self-cleansing, washing away any past hurt.

The pebbles and stones lead to stepping stones that are shared by many non-Indigenous and Indigenous people, walking step by step to reconciliation, side by side. The curved mountains have roads, these roads symbolise the roads to recovery and moving forward. Tasmania is represented by the woman collecting shells, the ancestor symbol represents all of Uniting's work to accomplish a better outcome for all including the workers that unite together to help families and individuals.

Curved lines are woman, straight lines are men, fine details represent country, the plants representing new growth, the child's hand representing the future and how we need to nurture them, and the animals and flora and fauna to survive the future.

‘Over Waters’ represents the path that all should be taking, the path of reconciliation to make our future a better one.



'Over Waters' commissioned artwork by Cassie Leatham

Uniting

Uniting is the community services organisation
of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.

