



Advanced Personnel Management (APM)
APM Employment Services
APM Communities
APM Assessment Services

Reconciliation Action Plan
June 2025 – June 2028

Stretch

Chloe Watego Art,
My Story

Photo: Chloe Watego



Chloe Watego is an Iman and South Sea Islander woman residing on Gubbi Gubbi Country with a passion for sharing and celebrating her culture through art.

As a self-taught artist, Chloe uses painting for creative expression and to aid in healing as she continues to explore her family's roots.

Born and raised on Yugambeh land, Chloe is of South Sea Islander descent and through her grandmother has ties to Torres Strait Island and the Bundjalung nation. Her grandfather was forcibly removed from family due to the Stolen Generations, causing a hurtful disconnection to heritage and culture for him and the following generations of his family.

It was while on this journey to identify her grandfather's country, tribe, and language that Chloe first started painting.

Chloe's artworks are a means to shine a light on her family's enduring ties to the land while also illuminating the path forward for her children and future generations of her family.

"I'm delighted to share a glimpse into my professional journey and personal life. Throughout my career, I dedicated a significant portion of my time to working in the Disability and Mental Health sectors. Those 14 years were instrumental in shaping who I am today, and I owe a great deal to the incredible individuals I had the privilege of working with and alongside.

Working within these industries allowed me to put my passion for inclusion, acceptance, and understanding into practice. It was a deeply rewarding experience to witness the resilience and strength of the people I encountered. Their stories and triumphs became a wellspring of inspiration for me.

In my artistic endeavours, I find immense joy in listening to individual stories and recreating them through the medium of art. Each encounter with a diverse range of individuals enriches my perspective and fuels my creativity. By translating these personal narratives into art, I hope to capture and convey the essence of human experiences, fostering connection and understanding.

On a personal note, I am a proud mother to three amazing humans and four furry companions. My family is a constant source of support, love, and inspiration in my life. Together with my loving partner, we cherish the simple joys and embrace a life of togetherness."

Cover artwork by Chloe Watego

Chloe's artwork story:

This painting acknowledges APM's commitment to working toward reconciliation and contributing to equal opportunity employment options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

APM's five business units have been represented using the five outer circle symbols. These symbols and those surrounding it represent the teams of each business unit. The centre symbol brings together each team to represent unity with APM. The circle symbol at the top (middle) of the painting is a meeting place, and for this painting's purpose represents the importance of ensuring First Nations staff, and all staff, feel safe within their workplace.

The handprints represent the power of importance that each staff member can have on one another, their clients, and their community. The circle patterns between the two blue sections acknowledge the unique identity of each individual. In this piece, the footprints represent the individual journey each individual embarks on during their time with APM.

The red earth coloured section outside of the footprints represent the importance of learning from First Nations Peoples and their culture, while the circle patterns around that represent engaging all staff in the cultural land practices. The green and red earth circle symbols that connect to each other acknowledge the importance of all staff, from all walks of life, connecting to and learning from one another about beliefs, thoughts and culture.

Finally, the outer dots represent inclusivity and standing together as one – an important aspect of creating better future outcomes.



APM acknowledges that the lands and waters of all the communities we serve in Australia have been in the care of Traditional Custodians for thousands of years.

We recognise their continued connection to culture, Country, language, and community.

We honour the Elders, past and present in our communities, and extend respect to all First Nations people.

Advanced Personnel Management Stretch RAP Reconciliation Australia CEO Statement

Photo: Karen Mundine
by Joseph Mayers



On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Advanced Personnel Management (APM) on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its second Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Formed around the pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities, the RAP program helps organisations realise the critical role they can play in driving reconciliation across their work and area of expertise.

As a leading nationwide health and human services provider with a mandate to enable better lives, APM is well positioned to achieve meaningful reconciliation outcomes by building and nurturing a workforce and service delivery models that reflect the diverse health and cultural needs of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

From foundational cultural learning to bespoke partnerships with First Nations delivery partners, APM enters this new Stretch RAP with considerable learnings and experience from its previous RAPs.

Understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led and culturally appropriate services greatly improve uptake and wellbeing outcomes, APM has focused its energies on building mutually-beneficial relationships with First Nations service providers. These partnerships helped increase uptake of services

like Grassroots Project's First Nations Social Worker and build key engagement strategies like the Kinship Project which co-designed cultural supports around disability and the NDIS.

APM continues to build on the skills garnered through these relationships and initiatives with its new commitments. To improve and increase service delivery in First Nations communities, it will increase participation in local groups and events to build new relationships while continuing to strengthen existing connections. By grounding its commitments in community connection and self-determining practices APM ensures the continual development of staff recruitment and retention strategies through increased understanding of cultural protocols and how to best implement them in a respectful way.

Through the outcomes of its past successes and the potential of its new commitments, APM has and continues to drive considerable reconciliation outcomes across its sphere of influence. On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend APM on this Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

APM Stretch RAP message from Executive Chair and Group CEO

Photo: Megan Wynne and Mike Anghie

At its core, APM is a health and human services organisation seeking to make a positive, lasting social impact through the successful delivery of our government and corporate partners’ most important employment, disability, and other health and human services programs.



With our purpose of enabling better lives, APM’s reconciliation efforts have at their heart the Five Dimensions of Reconciliation (Race Relations, Equality & Equity, Institutional Integrity, Historical Acceptance and Unity).

We are honoured to introduce the next step in our efforts to advance reconciliation with our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2028. APM has developed our RAP to enable a structured approach that positively influences our stakeholders and creates a culturally respectful workplace that provides a place for First Nations staff members to feel that their team members respect and understand their cultures, without the burden of cultural load.

In this RAP we have made a commitment to focus on providing a culturally safe place for First Nations peoples both as team members and clients, listening to our First Nations Community Yarn members and First Nations communities and ensuring that our national initiatives are tailored and delivered locally.

We believe as a purpose-driven business that operates sustainably and with social impact at the core of everything we do, this RAP provides an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to acknowledging historical injustices, while respecting cultural differences,



and working together to create a more equitable and cohesive society.

We are excited about the opportunities this RAP presents for our team, clients, and stakeholders in achieving our reconciliation goals and which reflects APM’s values and dedication to making a tangible difference to Australia’s reconciliation efforts.

Our thanks go to everyone involved in developing our new RAP, in particular the RAP Working Group and its Co-Chairs and to our Global Sustainability Committee who will play an integral role in ensuring this RAP achieves its ambitious goals.

The ability to influence the journey of awareness and reconciliation is one we wholeheartedly embrace, through educating our teams, employers and other service providers with whom we partner.

APM’s services enable better lives - not only for our clients and the communities we live and work in, but for our staff. Creating an inclusive culture within APM, one that respects and values the contributions of First Nations staff will ensure APM continues to grow and achieve even greater social impact.

Megan Wynne - APM Executive Chair
Mike Anghie - APM Group CEO

Our vision for reconciliation

APM's vision for reconciliation is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be respected and have equal opportunity and employment at APM.

APM will lead as an inclusive and culturally respectful organisation, working towards being a culturally safe workplace across all our sites and providing culturally safe services.

Our business - APM Group

Founded in 1994 in Perth, Western Australia, APM is an international health and human services provider with the purpose of "Enabling Better Lives."

Each year, APM's services support more than 2 million people with disability, injury or health condition, children through to older adults, unemployed people, and those facing hardship or harm, to positively impact both their lives and the communities they live in.

APM's service offerings include assessments; allied health and psychological intervention; medical, psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation; vocational training and employment assistance; and community-based support services.

APM's focus is on enhancing a person's health and wellbeing, independence, employability, and social and economic participation in their community. In Australia, APM has a workforce of 6,192* employees from a diverse range of backgrounds, who are trained to work collaboratively with clients and their families

in addressing a broad spectrum of social, health, psychological, geographic, cultural and personal barriers, and assist more than 656,932* clients annually to achieve their employment or independent living goals.

APM's team strives to continually support our clients to realise meaningful, positive outcomes which in turn helps to contain the social and economic costs of injury, disability and health to the community. Our service reach extends from all capital cities to some of the most remote locations in Australia, including Torres Strait Islands and remote communities.

APM team members are advised of our strategies for diversity, equity and inclusion during the recruitment and onboarding process and invited to record their own diversity in our human resources system. APM currently employs 62 First Nations peoples. This has remained consistent since the last RAP and includes team members in entry level positions, manager roles and one board member. Our target for this RAP is to increase our representation of First Nations team members to match the community.

*correct at time of publication



Glossary of Terms and Service descriptions

Throughout the RAP we refer to our business units; APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services, supported by Corporate Services

APM Employment Services (ES)	APM Employment Services help our clients (often with disability, health condition, injury or other barriers to employment) to become job ready and once employed, remain in employment. We assist employers to find the right employees at no cost to their business and support job seekers in their search for work. This service is delivered through Disability Employment Services (DES, from November 2025 Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA)), Workforce Australia (WfA), and Complementary Programs, and supported by our Client Services Centre (CSC) for bookings and enquiries.
APM Communities	We deliver a range of communities services across Australia, with centralised bookings in our CSC. As part of the NDIS Partners in the Community program, APM delivers Local Area Coordination Services, helping people with disability, NDIS participants, families, and carers to identify and access community and mainstream support services.
APM Assessment Services	We deliver a range of assessment services across Australia, also with centralised bookings in our CSC. These include the National Panel of Assessors (NPA) which determines applicants’ support eligibility and helps people with disability overcome barriers that may affect their ability to stay in employment. We also offer the Home Assessments service, as a provider of the Australian Government’s My Aged Care program.
Corporate Services	Support services including our CEO Office, Corporate Admin, Corporate Support, Finance, IT & Tech Projects, Legal, New Business, People & Culture (P&C), Property, Quality, Marketing, and Markets and Innovation.
RAP Working Group (RWG)	Representatives from each of the above APM business units working together to create ideas, share success stories and implement initiatives consistently across APM.
APM First Nations Community Yarn	The purpose of the Community Yarn is to strengthen the participation of First Nations APM team members. This is a group of APM team members, across Australia, who identify as First Nations people, and meet regularly to review and advise on cultural perspectives, support and assist driving messaging, share initiatives with community, and feedback to the First Nations Strategy Steering Group. They are an internal cultural advisory group for the RWG, supported by their managers to allow time to complete the meetings. The team members are not required to complete the project work, this is undertaken by the First Nations Strategy Steering Group who have project time included in their roles.
APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group	Group members all have a First Nations Strategy role with time allocated for projects and include First Nations and non-First Nations team members. The group supports the achievement of APM’s First Nations strategic objectives by: consulting with the First Nations Community and the RWG, identifying initiatives to support First Nations employees, job seekers, participants, communities (Best Practice Guides/ Resources), consulting to APM business units regarding business level initiatives, activities, policies and procedures, creating resources to support local community connection and culturally significant days, having capacity to pursue APM First Nations Community ideas and passions.

Our RAP

APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services has been developing our cultural safety under the framework of RAPs since 2011 for the benefit of our team members, clients and community.

Focusing on APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services within this RAP allows APM to best meet the needs of our team members and clients in this part of the businesses, and provide the scope for our Health Portfolio, including newly acquired businesses, to establish our shared cultural policies and plans and tailor their plan to their stakeholders and stage of development.

As a large health and human services organisation, APM has significant opportunity to positively influence people in their journey of awareness and reconciliation, through educating team members, clients (job seekers, NDIS participants, people receiving aged care services), employers (of our job seeker participants) and other service providers. APM has developed this RAP to enable our continued structured approach to effectively influence these stakeholders and to create a culturally respectful workplace, providing a safe place for First Nations people to work, and feel respect for, and understanding of, their culture without the burden of cultural load.

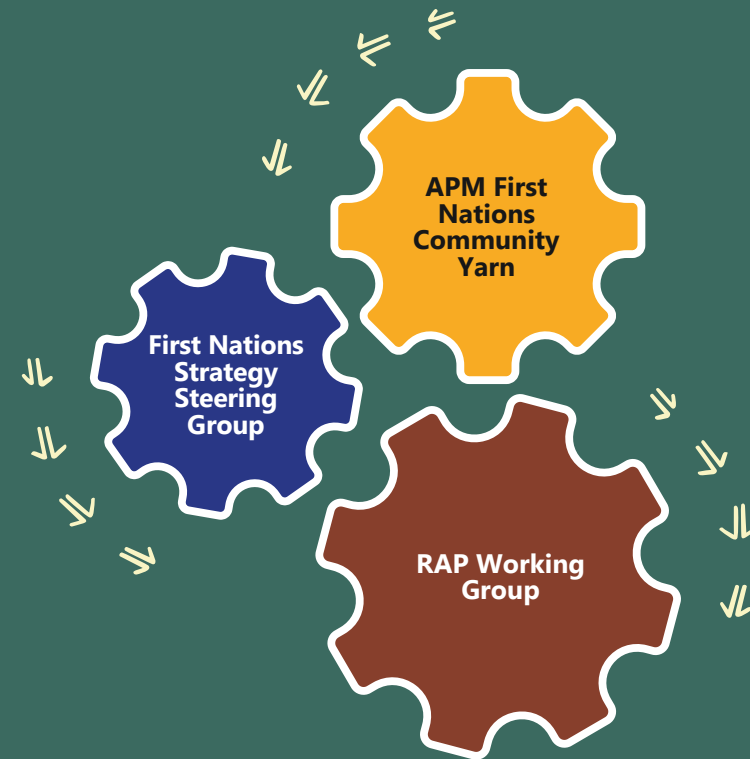
The RAP was developed through a process of workshops, with representatives across APM's services. We reflected on previous RAPs, reviewed our goals, strategies, progress, and challenges and prioritised the voices of our First Nations people through their leadership and participation in our RWG and consultation with our APM First Nations Community Yarn. Other consultation occurred with representatives from each APM business and consultation and input from APM Group Executives, considering opportunity for leading positive change in the context of our current Australian cultural climate. Some of the key themes from the consultation and drafting included;

- importance of all team members participating in cultural learning and additional workshops for managers with First Nations team members or in areas with higher levels of First Nations peoples in community,
- continuous improvement approach needed for recruitment and retention of First Nations team members; and
- increased communication and resources for managers to support them in organising cultural events.

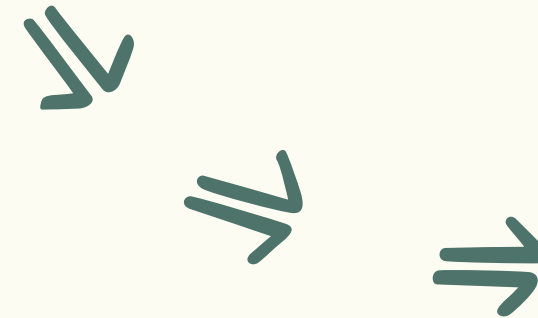
Michael Anghie, Group Chief Executive Officer, and our APM Group Executives champion our RAP. The RAP Working Group (RWG) was formed in 2023 and refined in 2024. The RAP will be led by our Co-Chairs:

- Rochelle Haynes (People & Culture Administrator) and Louise McGrath (Corporate Project Officer), and representatives from each Business Unit including;
 - Corporate: Peter Fear (CSC Operations Manager), Dee Tidy (First Nations Engagement Lead), and Meg Parsons (Manager Group Quality and Compliance)
 - APM Employment Services: Samantha Dale (DES - Business Manager), and Judi McConville (Workforce Australia - National Diversity and Inclusion Manager), Dushka Graham (Youth Support Worker - Transition to Work)
 - APM Communities and APM Assessment Services: Karina Lodge (Service Area Manager) and Krista Van Es (Service Area Manager)

Four of our RWG are First Nations people and we also work closely with our First Nations employee community to ensure a strong voice and guidance while minimising the cultural burden.



APM's Reconciliation Journey



APM has completed four RAPs since 2011. The key achievements from the first three RAPs, Reflect (1) and Innovate (2) were:

- Provided and encouraged all team members to complete foundation level cultural learning.
- Educated team members in Acknowledgement of Country and promoted engaging local Elders to provide Welcome to Country at significant events.
- Collated resources and cultural guides in a central intranet page for all team members to access.
- Acknowledged / celebrated culturally significant days.
- Established RAP Working Group representing mix of geography, business units and role levels to collaborate on initiatives and facilitate implementation of strategies across APM.
- Started identifying opportunities to modify our service delivery to ensure culturally appropriate services for our First Nations clients, e.g.
 - Consulting with National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners (NAATSIHWP) and local Torres Strait Islander Elders for guidance in culturally appropriate approaches for our Regional Assessment Services (RAS) in Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait. Coordinated with Department of Health and other service providers to deliver the service as advised.
 - Collaborated with Matera Foundation to provide a holistic culturally appropriate program for "Pathway to Employment."
- Community Yarn established as a forum for First Nations team members to network and provide mutual support.
- Focused strategy for increased procurement from First Nations owned organisations, resulting in Kulbardi becoming APM's national stationery supplier.

People	Purpose
An invitation extends to all APM's First Nations staff. We currently have 29 active members in our First Nations Community Yarn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies areas of focus for improvement • Provides feedback on plans from the RAP and Steering Group • Reflects on actions completed • Peer support network

People	Purpose
Nine members across all business units and their service programs and varying roles within APM. The group includes four First Nations members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a framework for a consistent approach to our RAP and sets KPIs • Design and deliver; RAP implementation plans for each business unit • Shares ideas and actions completed • Report on progress at service program and business unit level

People	Purpose
Eight managers and project officers in People & Culture and in Equity Diversity & Inclusion roles, including two First Nations people , with allocated project time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes focused project work, across all the service programs • Coordinates cultural communications • Creates resources for all business units

Key strategies from APM's previous RAP

APM's last Stretch RAP was the fourth RAP in our continuing commitment to reconciliation

Building local relationships through engaging with First Nations organisations providing services for our mutual clients

Since 2021 the APM WfA Diversity and Inclusion team has developed over 20 relationships with First Nations delivery partners and service providers to access support for First Nations participants. For example, on the Sunshine Coast, our relationship with Grassroots Projects has been mutually beneficial, with participants accessing the Grassroots First Nations Social Worker and a range of custom designed programs.

APM and Grassroots collaborated on co-design of the three-day cultural connection program "Connecting the Dots", ultimately bringing this program to other regions with the permission of local cultural authorities. 150 participants have benefitted from 20 iterations of this program to date, in regional and city locations throughout Queensland, Northern Territory, New South Wales and South Australia. Our collaboration has enabled Grassroots to expand, increasing their recruitment of First Nations facilitators and Allied Health professionals, and extend their service offer to other providers.

In Central Coast NSW, APM WfA met local protocol by approaching the Empowered Communities representative body, Barang Regional Alliance to present our credential for delivering employment services in the district. Subsequently, we have gone on to form relationships and work alongside two of their member organisations.

Bara Barang and APM has formed a strong relationship, bringing Bara Barang's Dream Builders Youth program into our site, customised for our WfA participants, collaborating on Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) co-design and also engaging Bara Barang to provide Cultural Learning for our team members with a full day, face-to-face, on country (at Raspberry Fields) workshop, aiming to build the capability of employment consultants and front line managers to effectively mentor their First Nations participants.

The workshop formed part of a program of 17 cultural learning workshops across Queensland, New South Wales, Northern Territory and South Australia, delivered by selected First Nations Delivery Partners relevant to each place.

Case Study

APM Employment Services - Workforce Australia

Photo: Martin Giese



Bringing the mob together to make them stronger

When Martin Giese, the APM Indigenous Specialist Consultant on the Gold Coast, saw a RAILS car on the highway, he saw a chance to do something more for his people. He got back to his office and he called them straight away. He said, "I think we might be able to do something together to benefit mob and our participants."

RAILS stands for Real Australian Indigenous Learning Support, a First Nations owned and operated NDIS service provider operating from the northern Gold Coast down to the northern regions in New South Wales. RAILS provide a range of different services to NDIS clients, including personal care, disability and social support, support coordination, domestic support and more.

Balan Jagun is a program provided through RAILS and APM collaborating to help participants enter the workplace and find meaningful employment. Chantal Togo, General Manager at RAILS, explains, "Balan Jagun is the Yugambeh word for strong country. We're in the Yugambeh language region here in Bundjalung Nation. It is a job readiness program which we've facilitated for First Nations participants in the workplace.

The program encompasses a lot of different cultural activities to be able to strengthen the participants to have the courage and the skills to be able to go out to secure the jobs that they see for the future."

For Gary, originally from the Walcha Region in NSW, it's about connecting him with people. "The Balan Jagun program has helped me with learning the culture, getting to know the people that are my people, my land, and helping me with music."

For Glen, a Wakka Wakka man, it's a new start, "With APM, I finally made a connection with Martin. He really listened to me. The first person who really listened to my story and what I needed."

Chantal feels it's been a hugely successful collaboration, "The partnership that we have with APM is one that we value very much. It's an organisation that's just as proactive and as passionate as us."

The Director of RAILS, Dane Husband, adds, "It's been a privilege, and I'm so proud to see two organisations come together to provide the best sort of interest for our people, to put them in jobs and to network into different sort of pathways. I hope to see this continue, to give more people opportunity."



Photo: Auntie Cheryl Taylor

Kinship Project (2022/2023)

Local Area Coordinators (LAC) engaged First Nations peoples in APM Communities service areas to refine a Kinship Model to facilitate engagement with the NDIS from a cultural perspective. Community groups were encouraged to work with APM to co-design a cultural lens to understand disability and the NDIS, and to develop appropriate resources and form community support networks.

Outcomes of this project were that First Nations Kinship groups demonstrated an understanding of the NDIS and the confidence, tools and practices to share and support their kin with disability. Sector services and supports (mental health services and other mainstream health) working with First Nations peoples with disability have increased knowledge, skills, tools and practices to create positive outcomes for people with disability. Also, First Nations peoples with disability and their Kinship groups have built capacity to understand the NDIS and successfully self-determine their lives and use their plans.

Noongar Elder and Community Capacity Builder (CCB) First Nations Project officer, Auntie Cheryl Taylor, has progressed elements of a kinship model approach by working at the South Metro First Nations Champion Centre with 5-10 Noongar Elders, co-locating services and disability yarning groups. This included the centre's team members who work in local schools, other mainstream health and mental health services, Centrelink, and Foodbank services.

The project supported up to six kinship groups for the duration of the project. The related issues or topics discussed during the co-locations and meetings with the kinship groups also involved understanding the supports available, improving experience with services, mental health supports and more.

APM Assessment Services

The continued partnership between APM Assessment Services and Torres Strait Islander communities, the Department of Health, and other Aged Care Assessment Services in Far North Queensland delivers a tailored, culturally appropriate assessment service which enables greater numbers of Torres Strait Islander peoples to access services.

Case Study APM Communities



Diverse Communities Roundtable, Darwin

APM Communities – Darwin team wanted to improve their connection with community, their relationships with First Nations Peoples and the services available for their needs.

In November 2023, they started by organising and facilitating a Diverse Communities Roundtable in Darwin. The group brainstorming centred on:

- Reducing the stigma of disability within diverse communities.
- Assisting understanding of the NDIS and accessing services.
- How to improve service providers connecting with diverse communities.

The Roundtable attendees included representation from the City of Darwin, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Multicultural Council of NT, Migrant services, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations such as Danila Dilba, Darrandirra, Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services (CAAPS) Aboriginal Corporation, Namarluk School, Interpreting services, Integrated disAbility Action, Justice and Child protection.

The Roundtable was a success, with multiple stakeholder relationship building occurring, including our co-location at Darrandirra - First Nation Family Centre in Darwin, starting in July

2024 and continuing monthly. The co-location engagement days enable manageable solutions for people with disability with complex needs. Darrandirra provide a bus service to bring participants to the events, where they can access a variety of services including an LAC, Justice Liaison Officer, Territory Families (Child Safety), Education (transition officer), Danila Dilba, Family Supports with Anglicare, and Health with Darrandirra.

A debrief after each session, with an identified working group, is an important component of this co-location strategy. The debrief further develops our LAC's awareness of local culture and provides a better understanding of how to build our First Nations leaders and relevant stakeholder's capacity, to confidently support their community on the NDIS.

Below is some feedback from stakeholder, CAAPS Aboriginal Corporation:

"Mark is so good and very knowledgeable. Over here, building relationships is very crucial to the communities we are supporting. During one of the sessions, Mark made it relatable and easy to approach and to ask questions. Some members were hesitant at first but warmed up after. When I followed up with one of the community members, she mentioned that after talking to Mark, she felt that seeking supports were achievable and it was very motivating. We hope to impact more people at Darrandirra."

Photo: Aunty Lyn Warren -
Yorta Yorta Wemba Wemba Elder



Customising cultural protocols for each Aboriginal Nation

Our National Diversity and Inclusion Manager has provided training to local managers to engage with community Elders to share our project to create customised Acknowledgement of Country plaques for all our full time offices. Elders are consulted on the correct name spelling and appropriate wording of the plaque for that area. 100 customised plaques have been created. This project continues in this next RAP.

Increasing local cultural learning opportunities and participation in community groups and events

Senior management recognise the importance and value of participating in local events and encourage and support local team leaders to actively participate in their community. For example, in Nowra the DES team annually participate in the Sorry Day Bridge Walk, NAIDOC Family Fun Day and other events throughout the year which are of significance to the local community. Managers support these events by providing flexibility in work hours, management of duties to prioritise attending the events and empowering team members to identify and respond to the needs of each event, e.g. funding bottled water to give out to visitors at the event.

Interactive, activity-based learning arranged by local managers e.g. Kevin Bynder, with a Whadjuk-Yuet Nyungar Mother and Badimia-Amangu Yamatji Father, Kevin visited the Canning Vale Customer Service Centre to talk about his cultural background and experience, held a question/answer session and followed this with an artwork session. Kevin facilitated a group artwork activity, explaining the meaning of symbols as they worked and he continued

to answer questions in a relaxed environment. The two artworks are now proudly displayed in APM's office and they are a great reminder of our connection to community and the Traditional Owners, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation.

Whole of organisation cultural learning review

This was conducted by Aboriginal organisation, Footprints and incorporated First Nations team members' perspectives into the assessment on cultural learning needs for our teams.

Continuous improvement focused on culturally appropriate recruitment and retention strategies

The First Nations Strategy Steering Group and RWG progressively worked through recommendations from the review by Footprints e.g. creation of First Nations Engagement Lead role, and defining a support structure for this role to make regular contact with First Nations team members who are new to APM to provide support and link them with other supports.

Reviewing all services for opportunities to engage with community and tailor delivery of services within the structure of each contract

The CCB team, part of the APM Communities business unit, actively promote inter-agency collaboration for community building, evolving with the requirements of contract changes and in response to COVID-19 restrictions. This team worked closely with the Champions Centre in Armadale and coordinated Yarning Circles with Participants to reach and respond to community needs during this period.

Key Challenges

How to support team members to engage with community virtually during a time of change.

Our strategy in our last RAP included linking cultural learning with community engagement. We provided manager education on best practice approach for community engagement, with the dual purpose of sharing information on our services with a complementary community organisation, who provide culturally appropriate health services to the same clients who we assist with job search and employment support, for example South West Aboriginal Medical.

Engaging with them in community activities give our team members cultural learning opportunities and helps build a strong relationship for better servicing of our shared clients. COVID-19 restrictions were introduced the month after our new strategy was launched, with vulnerable clients needing assistance utilising new servicing models of virtual contact. All resources were focused on individual servicing and community engagement was put on hold.

This challenge was addressed in two phases;

- cultural learning strategy review by Footprints, and
- community engagement was re-launched following COVID-19 restrictions with the focus on connecting with local community and Elders to confirm language details and create customised Acknowledgement of Country plaques.

Creating customised learning opportunities across the large volume of team members.

This challenge will be addressed in this RAP by empowering the business units to take responsibility for the RAP by customising a RAP Implementation Plan for each business unit. Each plan will outline how the actions will be delivered and KPIs achieved within their business unit. Resources created centrally by the First Nations Steering Group will be available for adaptation to each business unit. The Business Unit RAP Implementation Plans will be reported against at a business unit level and collated for a combined report for the APM Executive Team and Board.

Implementing RAP strategies across the business when some areas are new to APM and have not had the same depth of reconciliation journey as other parts of the business.

This has been addressed by APM Group developing two RAPs, one for each of the two main areas of the APM Group's business. The Health Portfolio, including new acquisitions has developed an Innovate RAP, and the APM Employment Services, APM Communities and APM Assessment Services business units continue to develop this Stretch RAP.

Key Learnings

Review of APM's recruitment and retention processes and strategies by Footprints.

Using a First Nations lens, Footprints helped us to develop a new structure of creating new, identified roles within our Talent Acquisition team to support all candidates for APM jobs who identify on application as First Nations peoples and continue to be a support as required during employment.

APM First Nations Community Yarn re-established.

This was led by our Talent Acquisition First Nations Engagement Leads, with time allocated as part of their usual duties. The Community Yarn provides an ongoing culturally specific peer support for our First Nations team members and an internal cultural advisory role as well.

Footprints included a review of our cultural learning materials and strategy as part of their initial review of APM providing a culturally safe work environment.

The existing learning e-module was assessed as out of date with insufficient material relevant to our team members and client groups. A customised and staged approach was created to address the large volume and spread of our team members and varied learning needs due to size of office or working remotely. APM's Cultural Learning Program commenced in 2022 with Part 1: Introduction to Cultural Learning (e-module), Part 2: state based virtual training with local presenters delivered via Teams for interactive accessible learning, Part 3 (ongoing): true local engagement.

Case Study Dee Tidy

Talent Acquisition team member - First Nations Engagement Lead

Dee, our First Nations Engagement Lead in Cairns is a proud Torres Strait Islander, Mamu Tjapakai woman who was born and raised in Western Australia. After 40 years of being disconnected from mob and with the support of her husband, daughter and APM, she relocated to Far North Queensland. Dee and her family embraced the sea change and all the challenges that came along with it.

"Uprooting your life, moving away from close family/friends and everything you know is a bold move especially when you don't know what to expect or what challenges you will encounter along the way. Trying to find myself in a place I had only ever holidayed at twice before and with family that I had only ever been in contact with via social media and phone, was one of the scariest but most courageous things I think I have ever done".

This journey of self-discovery and connection to land and mob gave Dee the opportunity to reconnect with herself, her family, her new community and allowed her to gain some new perspectives on life, culture and identity.

In the process of the move and while transitioning into Cairns life, Dee learnt a lot of new things especially about her Indigenous identity and community. Being in a hustling and bustling community full of life, with a diverse range of people of all backgrounds and cultures, is a gentle reminder about what she cherishes most, and why she loves working at APM.

"My favourite thing about working at APM is that I get to work with a diverse range of people – people from all backgrounds, people from all cultures."

Dee strongly believes that shared human connection, no matter where people come from, is the basis of understanding and support.

Being aware of the different cultures within community, and finding genuine ways for people to connect, is at the heart of what Dee does in her role, every day.

And it all comes back to that sense of human connection, which Dee believes is essential.

"My Indigenous identity helps me to connect with community in multiple ways. I feel as though it's easier to understand the needs of the community once you get to know on a deeper level what a particular community's barriers, needs and goals are. Once you understand this, it becomes easier to connect, reflect and have more meaningful conversations. These conversations allow APM to provide more holistic solutions and services that tailor to the true needs of the community, helping community to reach more positive long lasting solutions.

Engaging with the community with an open mind and a less assuming mindset helps to dive into discussions and encourages people to open up on current issues. Once we understand these issues on a ground level we are able to connect community to the right APM support and services. Our services are



"Working together, being united, and that sense of community, is something that everyone is looking for. Sometimes they don't know how to find it, but they can sure find it at APM."

most effective when we engrain ourselves in community and embody all that community is!"

This experience of relocation and reconnecting with family and community, has contributed to Dee's capacity for connecting with communities. Dee shares APM's job vacancies, supporting First Nations candidates to apply, through to helping them start their new role. Dee also provides cultural support to APM's new starters, connecting them to our wider APM First Nations community.

Apart from working with the wider community, Dee works closely with APM's First Nations staff holding a monthly Community Yarn group. A collaborative meeting place for staff to meet and support each other nationally to discuss all topics relevant to the First Nations spaces at APM, the yarn group provides support and encouragement to each other, sharing ideas for improvement, actively engaging and consulting

in the RAP and Steering Group to help to shape the future at APM for all First Nations staff helping to make it a more culturally inclusive and safe workplace for all.

"Finding connection and a sense of community through diversity is a beautiful thing".

And of course, so is having good understanding of what's happening on a local level.

"Local knowledge is important to my role because you need to be in touch and have your finger on the pulse in the community."

Dee is also passionate about understanding the cultural differences that impact the community, to offer more relevant and personal support.

"Working together, being united, and that sense of community, is something that everyone is looking for. Sometimes they don't know how to find it, but they can sure find it at APM."



Relationships

Building strong relationships between First Nations Peoples and other Australians is vital to our organisation and business activities. It enables us to connect people, share experience, improve communication, foster engagement and create partnerships. These outcomes contribute to a more inclusive and respectful organisation and society.

Focus area:
Build lasting community connections.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	• Each of APM’s service programs meets with local First Nations stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Jun 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• APM First Nations Community Yarn review and provide feedback on APM’s First Nations Engagement Plan.	Jun 2025	First Nations Engagement Lead
	• APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group review the First Nations stakeholder meeting outcomes and APM First Nations Community feedback.	Aug 2025	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Collate feedback and update and implement APM’s Engagement Plan for APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services to work with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.		
	• Establish and maintain four formal, two-way partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations.	Sep 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all team members.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• RAP Working Group members to participate in five external NRW events.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Encourage managers to pursue involvement in external stakeholder activities including collaborating with the Hervey Bay Community Centre to support local events.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Encourage and support team members and senior leaders to participate in three external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Organise 30 internal NRW events, including at least one organisation-wide NRW event, each year.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Register all APM’s NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Invite DES/IEA stakeholders to APM-hosted NRW events including NDIS providers, drug and alcohol services providers, medial centres, and housing support services to take part in APM’s events.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	DES/IEA RWG Representative

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	• Develop and implement a team members’ engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Communicate APM’s commitment to reconciliation publicly on APM’s corporate website by sharing videos and articles about APM team members’ and participants’ stories.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	GM Marketing
	• Implement strategies to positively influence APM’s external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Aug 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Collaborate with three RAP and other like-minded organisations to implement innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	Jul: 2026, 2027, 2028	RWG Co-chair
	• Create guidelines and resources for APM employment consultants to ensure First Nations clients/participants (job seekers) are placed in a culturally supportive workplace with new employers.	Oct: 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	• Attend at least two RAP Leadership Gatherings per year.	Jun, Oct 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members and/or First Nations advisors to continuously improve APM’s anti-discrimination policy.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Continuously improve People & Culture policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination.	May: 2026, 2027, 2028	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Implement and communicate updated APM anti-discrimination policy.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Provide ongoing education to APM senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism, including raising awareness of APM’s expectations on what constitutes appropriate behaviour in the workplace, plus the negative impact of discriminatory and racist behaviours.	Sep: 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• APM senior leaders to publicly support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives, and stances against racism, including through LinkedIn Posts.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027	People & Culture Director



Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights are important for building strong, positive, and respectful relationships with these communities. It helps us to learn, understand, appreciate, and celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, which in turn can lead to greater success in business activities.

Focus area:

APM's cultural competency places them as the chosen employer and service provider for local First Nations people.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase place-based understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within each APM business unit.	Jul 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Consult local Traditional Owners and/or First Nations advisors on the implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	Sep 2025	First Nations Engagement Lead
	• Review, update, implement, and communicate APM's First Nations Cultural Learning Strategy for all APM team members across APM, APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services.	Nov 2025	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Commit all RAP Working Group members, People & Culture managers, senior executive group and all new team members to undertake formal and structured cultural learning.	Dec 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• All APM staff undertake formal and structured cultural e-learning module.	Jun 2025	People & Culture Director
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	• 35% of APM team members participate in virtual or face-to-face workshops tailored for APM over the RAP period.	Aug: 2025, 2026, 2027	People & Culture Director
	• Increase APM team members' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. Revise APM team members' induction process to include education on use of cultural protocols. APM Communities and APM Assessment Services teams watch TED talks and other learning for knowledge of their local area.	Jul 2025	GM Compliance, Assurance & Development
	• Implement and communicate a cultural protocol document (tailored for all local communities APM operates in), including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Feb 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• Create a guide, linked to APM's Cultural Practices and Protocols guide, on use of Acknowledgement of Country at commencement of external meetings/presentations e.g. training providers delivering courses at APM, job clubs and other on-site group activities.	May 2026	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at five significant events each year, including new APM office openings and contract commencements.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Co-Chair
	• APM team members and senior leaders provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	Jun: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Display 380 Acknowledgement of Country plaques in APM offices.	Nov 2026	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	• RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• Review People & Culture policies and procedures to remove barriers to APM team members participating in NAIDOC Week.	June 2025	TA First Nations Engagement Lead
	• Support all APM team members to participate in 20 NAIDOC Week events in their local area.	First week in July 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, support two external NAIDOC Week events each year.	July: 2025, 2026, 2027	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
8. Create a welcoming environment for First Nations team members, clients and community in our offices.	• Local managers connect with local Elders to identify/confirm the name of the Traditional Custodians and appropriate way to greet people e.g. in language.	Nov 2026	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Local managers contact RAP co-ordinator to order customised Acknowledgement of Country plaque.	Nov 2025	RWG Co-Chair
	• Create an APM office guide to support local managers when required to purchase First Nations artwork, flags and other options to create a cultural safe space.	Oct 2026	First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair



Opportunities

Providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, organisations, and communities is important for building a more inclusive and culturally responsive organisation. This can lead to improved employment outcomes, sustainable business relationships, better decision-making, and more engaged and committed team members. By reviewing systems and processes with a First Nations lens, we can reduce barriers to participation and build a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Focus area:

Enabling better lives for our First Nations team members and clients/participants.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve APM employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development.	• Develop and implement initiatives to give First Nations team members increased confidence to trust APM with identifying in MyHR internal system.	Sept 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Engage with APM's First Nations Community Yarn to consult on the effectiveness of APM's recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Sept: 2025, 2026, 2027	First Nations Engagement Lead
	• Review and update APM's First Nations Employment Strategy including recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Aug: 2025, 2026, 2027	APM First Nations Strategy Steering Group Chair
	• Tailor advertising strategies and job vacancies to effectively reach First Nations stakeholders.	Nov: 2025, 2026, 2027	TA First Nations Engagement Lead
	• Review APM People & Culture and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to First Nations peoples' participation in APM's workplaces.	Nov: 2025, 2026, 2027	TA First Nations Engagement Lead
	• First Nations APM employees to be supported to take on management and senior level positions.	Nov: 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• Support managers to promote career progression in all APM locations, e.g. with succession planning and recruitment support.		
10. Increase APM's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Include options promoting career progression in annual reviews.		
	• Promote availability of the APM Talent Acquisition (TA) team to discuss APM career progression through the First Nations Community Yarn.		
	• Increase employment of First Nations Peoples to 3% across APM, APM Employment Services, APM Communities, and APM Assessment Services.	Oct 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• Review, update and implement APM's First Nations Procurement Strategy.	Aug: 2025, 2026	RWG Co-chair
	• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Aug: 2025	RWG Co-chair
	• Review APM's database of First Nations-owned organisations and promote opportunities for procurement of goods and services to all APM team members.	Aug: 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• Review and update APM's procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from First Nations-owned businesses.	Aug: 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• Maintain commercial relationships with five First Nations-owned businesses.	Aug: 2025, 2026, 2027	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Achieve 1% annual procurement at APM from First Nations-owned businesses.	July: 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• Train all relevant APM team members in contracting First Nations-owned businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation.	July: 2025, 2026, 2027	RWG Co-chair
	• Aim for inclusion of First Nations suppliers as a priority when designing APM programs.	June 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Create co-design projects in partnership with local First Nations Elders and community leaders.	• APM's Workforce Australia (WfA) Diversity and Inclusion team will implement a process for co-design of local engagement and cultural connection programs for First Nations participants.	Oct: 2025, 2026	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Using the base program, Jarang, support local APM teams to work with local delivery partners to plan and deliver place-based programs.		
	• Engage local Elders, community leaders and representatives from First Nations service organisations to participate as local delivery partners.		
	• Ensure the process respects local culture and follows cultural protocols.		
	• Appropriately remunerate community members who contribute their knowledge and expertise to the program design and delivery.		
	• APM Employment Services WfA will continue the established approach, of co-design and development of programs by other stakeholders according to local needs. Within this approach APM will support four delivery partners to design Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) stage 1 and stage 2 proposals. APM WfA will encourage First Nations participants to join these ISEP activities, further strengthening the partnerships for the benefit of APM's participants.	Oct 2025	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Identify and access employment options for participants, providing support to employers who employ First Nations people.	Sept: 2025, 2026	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
12. Ensuring wraparound servicing is prioritising Culturally aware or First Nations services for APM's First Nations participants.	• Create a regional-based register of culturally appropriate services for DES/IEA, WfA, and APM Communities.	Jul: 2025, 2026, 2027	CCB Manager
	• Build relationships between APM and culturally aware services.	Sep 2025	CCB Manager
13. Review each program for options to tailor servicing to meet the needs of First Nations participants.	• APM to continue partnering with Torres Strait Islander communities, the Department of Health, and other Aged Care Assessment Services to deliver a tailored culturally appropriate assessment service which enables greater numbers of Torres Strait Islander peoples to access services.	Jul: 2025, 2026, 2027	GM APM Assessment Services
	• Review APM client and participant handbooks and information sheets for culturally inclusive language.	Jul: 2025, 2026, 2027	GM Compliance, Assurance & Development



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Establish and maintain an effective APM RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain First Nations Peoples representation on the RWG.	Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Co-Chair
	• Review and update the Terms of Reference for APM's RWG.	June 2025	RAP Co-Chair
	• Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Co-Chair
15. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Embed resource needs for APM RAP implementation through approval of a three-year RAP budget.	Jun 2025	People & Culture Director
	• Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of APM senior management and team members.	Jul 2025	People & Culture Director
	• Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments, including each service program reporting quarterly against RAP KPIs.	Jul 2025	RAP Co-Chair
	• Create an annual RAP Implementation Plan for each APM business unit to target specific KPIs and strategies tailored to the business unit, its team members and service delivery/participants.		
	• RAP working group members, representing each business unit, report against the implementation plan quarterly. The reports will be collated and shared with APM CEOs and reviewed potential for continuous improvement in strategy.		
	• Maintain an internal RAP Champion from APM senior management.	Oct: 2025, 2026, 2027	People & Culture Director
	• Include APM's RAP as a standing agenda item at APM senior management meetings.	Oct: 2025, 2026, 2027	People & Culture Director

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. Build accountability and transparency through reporting APM RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that APM's primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensuring we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	RAP Co-Chair
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request APM's unique link to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	RAP Co-Chair
	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	RAP Co-Chair
	• Report RAP progress to all APM team members and senior leaders quarterly.	Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028	National Diversity and Inclusion Manager
	• Publicly report against APM's RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings.	July: 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Co-Chair
	• Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2026	RAP Co-Chair
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	Nov 2027	RAP Co-Chair
17. Continue APM's reconciliation journey by developing APM's next RAP.	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing APM's next RAP.	Nov 2027	RAP Co-Chair

Advanced Personnel Management (APM)
APM Employment Services
APM Communities
APM Assessment Services

Reconciliation Action Plan
June 2025 – June 2028

Stretch



Contact details

Name: Louise McGrath & Rochelle Haynes

Position: RWG Co-Chairs

Phone: 1800 276 276

Email: firstnationsstrategy@apm.net.au

