

ForestrySA Reconciliation Action Plan

August 2022 - August 2023



Acknowledgement of Country



Image: ForestrySA staff with Kurna Elder Uncle Tamaru, at Kuitpo Forest

ForestrySA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Country throughout South Australia on which we live and work.

This includes the land of the Kurna, Peramangk, Ngarrindjeri and Boandig people.

We pay respect to them, their cultures and contributions, and to Elders past, present and emerging and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation and across Australia.

We recognise their ongoing spiritual connection to the land, waters and community.

Always was, always will be.

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A message from our Chief Executive

It is with great pride that we present ForestrySA's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This is our first RAP and provides an opportunity to recognise the good work we are already doing, while formalising a structured approach to achieving our goals of improved relations with First Nations groups.

Reconciliation matters greatly to ForestrySA because of who we are and what we do.

Almost 150 years ago back in 1875, our organisation was established to plant trees for sustainable wood production to reduce land clearance practices which were occurring at the time.

These early efforts to better care for the land has contributed to a movement of balancing the protection of native vegetation and sustainable plantation forestry across the landscape of South Australia.

*Working with and on Country
is what we do.*



Our Reflect RAP focusses on recognising and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, building greater participation in our workforce and reflecting on, and improving our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

It demonstrates our clear commitment and determination for genuine equity and reconciliation. The actions within this RAP are based on the core areas of respect, relationships, opportunities and responsibilities, to make positive and meaningful change.

The Dreaming is still living. From the past, in the present, into the future, forever.

We look forward to working with our staff and community to progress this RAP and provide improved outcomes for relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julian Speed'.

Julian Speed
Chief Executive

A statement from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes South Australian Forestry Corporation to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

South Australian Forestry Corporation joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.



These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables South Australian Forestry Corporation to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations South Australian Forestry Corporation, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Our business

ForestrySA has been South Australia's state forest manager since 1875. We manage plantations for the sustainable production of wood which is converted into a range of timber products by the domestic timber industry. We also protect Native Forest Reserves for conservation, enhance community use and recreational opportunities, and provide community fire protection.

Forest reserves, especially plantations, are widely used by the community for a broad range of recreational activities, while Native Forest Reserves are managed and protected for conservation purposes. ForestrySA is committed to responsible environmental management of forest reserves and our Forest Management System is certified to the internationally recognised Australian Forestry Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AS 4708), administered by Responsible Wood®.

Maintaining ForestrySA's quality, environmental and safety management systems, and Responsible Wood® certification of plantations and Native Forest Reserves continue to be key priorities.

We currently employ approximately 30 staff year-round. Of these staff, there is one known employee who identifies as a First Nations person. During our fire season we bring on an additional 30 staff to join our fire season response crew. Since the seasonal staff are often changing each year, it is unknown exactly how many in the past have identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

ForestrySA manages 10,500ha of plantation pine in the Mount Lofty Ranges and 16,000ha of Native Forest Reserves in the Mount Lofty Ranges and Green Triangle regions of South Australia. Our business operates out of three locations in South Australia: our Headquarters in Kuitpo Forest, an office in Mount Crawford, and one in Mount Gambier. The land we manage therefore intersects with four First Nations groups: Peramangk, Kurna, Boandik, and Ngarrindjeri.

ForestrySA has no pre-existing official policy regarding reconciliation. However, due to the nature of our work, there have been significant and long-standing relationships built with First Nations stakeholders over almost 150 years of existence in South Australia.

Currently our organisation:

- Conducts regular outings and activities to significant sites in forests with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Has identified key culturally significant sites within forest reserves and is committed to their protection.
- Engages with Aboriginal peoples for use of language and cultural names for visitor signage and facilities.
- Hosts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events and activities such as wood collection for cultural carvings, social gatherings and youth programs.
- Incorporates Acknowledgements of Country on our website, within external correspondence, and during meetings and events.

Our vision for Reconciliation

ForestrySA's vision for reconciliation is to be an organisation which has deep and meaningful relationships with First Nations stakeholders and each of the different Traditional Custodians of the lands which we manage and care for.

We want to be an organisation which uplifts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our community, and which proudly plays our part in the journey of all of Australia to reconcile with the inequality and inequity of our past and present. We intend to work towards this goal with awareness and education, by fostering relationships, and by increasing meaningful employment opportunities.



Our Reconciliation Statement

ForestrySA is implementing a range of reconciliation objectives and through our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. We are working towards improving diversity in the workplace through provision of employment opportunities and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contractors, increasing collaboration with other agencies, providing additional training and awareness opportunities to staff and contractors, and enhancing understanding and respect for culture across our workforce.

Image by Jason Tyndall.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

ForestrySA's Reflect RAP has been developed for several important reasons.

We have a responsibility to be a part of the movement for reconciling with the First Nations peoples of South Australia. This responsibility is made even more significant as a land management organisation. These people have strong connections to land managed and cared for by ForestrySA, therefore we wish to further nurture and grow respectful relations with Aboriginal peoples who are the Traditional Custodians of this land.

Developing a RAP is intended to provide a structured and measurable approach to the work we are already doing, while further improving relations with local First Nations groups.

There are four types of Reconciliation Action Plans; Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, and Elevate. A 'Reflect' RAP provides the first 12-months of our Reconciliation Action Plan journey by setting out steps to prepare our organisation for reconciliation initiatives in future RAPs. By committing to a Reflect RAP, ForestrySA will be further developing meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and deciding on our vision for reconciliation going forward.

Our central approach to implementing our Reflect RAP is the formation of a RAP Working Group. The group was formed in late 2021 and consists of members of ForestrySA's corporate and community services teams.

The Working Group are our leading team developing and implementing our Reflect RAP under the guidance of Reconciliation Australia. This is to delegate duties, maintain accountability, and encourage engagement in the reconciliation process throughout our organisation.

The RAP Working Group will also seek to identify where actions of the Reflect RAP are already being implemented within ForestrySA policy and other reconciliation opportunities. A plan to incorporate the RAP actions into these existing policies will solidify the reconciliation ambitions and intentions of our organisation.

Our Reflect 'RAP Champions' are Team Leader Ranger Rachel Godoy and Project Officer Maeve McNeilage.

Rachel oversees management of recreational activities and community programs within the Mount Lofty Ranges region of ForestrySA. She leads a ranger team responsible for visitor services, event management, community engagement, and general care of forest reserves.

Maeve joined the ForestrySA team as a student intern assigned to support and assist the establishment of this RAP. She has worked on the RAP since its inception as a Project Officer for ForestrySA, and has been instrumental in development of key Actions and deliverables.

Both Rachel and Maeve are passionate about reconciliation and bringing about meaningful and positive change to ForestrySA.

Our partnerships

ForestrySA has already begun its reconciliation journey through the development of respectful and meaningful relationships with Traditional Owners of land managed by ForestrySA.

The process of identifying and conserving various cultural sites located within forest reserves has occurred over many years. The official recognition and registration of culturally significant sites on forest reserves and collaborating with First Nations Language Groups to name tracks and campgrounds are two ways our organisation is currently engaging with First Nations stakeholders.

In the Mount Lofty Ranges region this includes consultation with Kurna members on the naming of Wilampa Trail in Second Valley Forest, and consultation with the Kurna and Peramangk community to name the Karrawirra-tya-illa Campground in Old Kersbrook Forest.

Kuitpo Forest Ranger staff work closely with local men's and women's groups to facilitate regular opportunities for connecting to Country, Culture and Community through forest outings and gatherings.

ForestrySA staff in the Green Triangle region (Limestone Coast) have been working closely with members of the Boandik and Ngarrindjeri communities through the Southeast Aboriginal Focus Group. This includes working with children at Millicent High School to connect students to Country by planting trees, visiting local significant sites, and organising Elders to host smoking ceremonies and Welcome to Country events.

Acknowledgement of Country is now embedded within the structure of the ForestrySA website, internal and external correspondence, meetings and events.

These are some of the most significant actions in our reconciliation journey so far and we look forward to nurturing and growing these actions further through our Reflect RAP.



Our actions

Our actions: Relationships



ACTION 1: Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence and add to Stakeholder Register.	September 2022	Conservation Planner
1.2 Research and develop a best practice and principles document to guide and support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2022	Team Leader Ranger

ACTION 2: Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023	Team Leader Ranger
2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May, June 2023	Team Leader Ranger
2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2023	Team Leader Ranger
2.4 Promote ForestrySA engagement in NRW via online and media.	May, June 2023	Team Leader Ranger

Our actions: Respect



ACTION 3: Promote Reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3.1 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	September 2022	Conservation Planner
3.2 Identify RAP organisations in the RAP network and/or other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	December 2022	Team Leader Ranger
3.3 Communicate ForestrySA's commitment to reconciliation to all staff within a scheduled Team Meeting, on noticeboards and an All Staff email.	September 2022	Team Leader Ranger
3.4 Identify other organisations that we could approach and build relationships with to explore ongoing opportunities for collaboration and add to our stakeholder register.	December 2022	Conservation Planner
3.5 Engage with First Nations artists to develop ForestrySA story artwork for future RAP documents and event equipment and merchandise (i.e., marquees, banners, etc.).	April 2023	Ranger (Kuitpo)

ACTION 4: Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination and update ForestrySA policy.	September 2022	Business Support Manager
4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	December 2022	Business Support Manager

Our actions: Respect continued



ACTION 5: Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5.1 Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	January 2023	Business Support Manager
5.2 Research suitable cultural awareness training and organise a training session for staff during a quarterly team meeting.	December 2022	Business Support Manager
5.3 Send bi-monthly emails to all FSA staff sharing cultural information to increase understanding and respect.	Review January 2023	Conservation Planner

Our actions: Respect continued



ACTION 6: Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6.1 Develop a brief report outlining our general understanding of local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	May 2023	Ranger (Green Triangle)
6.2 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, and as a result, all staff email signatures include an Acknowledgment of Country; all staff confidently making Acknowledgments of Country during meetings and gatherings; and Welcomes to Country included in all appropriate events and activities.	December 2022	Conservation Planner
6.3 Include Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners or Custodians on any new or updated ForestrySA signage or promotional material and amend the ForestrySA sign standards manual to include this requirement.	May 2023	Team Leader Ranger
6.4 Engage with local Traditional Owners to organise a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony to celebrate the launch of our Reflect RAP.	August 2022	Ranger (Kuitpo)

ACTION 7: Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
7.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC week using two communication mechanisms.	July 2023	Conservation Planner
7.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting at least one local external event in each district through email correspondence and staff notice boards.	July 2023	Team Leader Ranger
7.3 Ensure RAP Working Group members participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023	Team Leader Ranger

Our actions: Opportunities



ACTION 8: Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8.1 Include a Diversity and Inclusion Statement in all future vacancies which includes ForestrySA support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants.	Review January 2023	Business Support Manager
8.2 Conduct a staff survey to determine current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing within our organisation to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	May 2023	Business Support Manager
8.3 Employ one additional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person or engage with one additional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.	May 2023	Business Support Manager

ACTION 9: Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9.1 Ensure procurement processes and documentation promotes and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. Update of ForestrySA Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander PQSL.	August 2022	Conservation Planner
9.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership and collect information for further discussion.	August 2022	Team Leader Ranger
9.3 Determine suitability of Supply Nation membership for ForestrySA.	September 2022	Team Leader Ranger

Our actions: Governance



ACTION 10: Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10.1 Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	Review January 2023	Team Leader Ranger
10.2 Establish two Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representatives on the RWG.	May 2023	Ranger (Kuitpo)
10.4 Establish ForestrySA Commercial Operations representation on the RWG.	May 2023	Team Leader Ranger

ACTION 11: Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11.1 Engage the management team in the delivery of RAP commitments by making the RAP a standing item on the team meeting agenda.	August 2022	Business Support Manager
11.2 Define resource needs, and appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2022	Team Leader Ranger
11.3 Appoint a champion with support from the management team to drive our RAP and engage with staff internally.	August 2022	Team Leader Ranger

Our actions: Governance continued



ACTION 12: Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12.1 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Team Leader Ranger
12.2 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August annually	Team Leader Ranger
12.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September annually	Team Leader Ranger

ACTION 13: Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP for 2023-2024.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2023	Team Leader Ranger

RAP governance and accountability

The governance and accountability of ForestrySA's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) falls to the members of the RAP Working Group (RWG). Members of the RAP Working Group have committed to taking responsibility for different actions in the plan. Through this sharing of responsibilities, the RAP will be implemented across the organisation throughout its duration.

ForestrySA RAP contacts

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ForestrySA

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