

# Reconciliation Action Plan 2011 - 2015



Committed to promoting diversity  
and reconciliation in Australia  
and in our overseas posts



Australian Government  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Reconciliation Australia

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

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Please be aware that this document contains the names and images produced by now deceased people. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade strives to treat Indigenous culture and beliefs with utmost respect. We acknowledge that to some communities, it is distressing to show images produced by people who have died.



March Kudjewk, Samuel Namundja, *Magpie geese and eggs* (75 x 105 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1993)



## Secretary's Foreword

I am pleased to present the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's 2011- 2015 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This plan was developed by the Department's Indigenous Taskforce Working Group in consultation with the Indigenous Employees Network and Reconciliation Australia. It outlines the practical ways in which the Department will continue our reconciliation journey and contribute to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

Our vision to work in partnership with Indigenous Australians will focus on ensuring equality of access to policies, services and programs, as well as to foster equality of employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous Australians. The delivery of the RAP is the responsibility of the whole Department and, as such, reconciliation will be realised when we value diversity and have the capacity to engage with each other as colleagues and build a culture of shared learning, collaboration and innovation.

I encourage all staff to reflect on the role we play in the well-being and quality of life of Indigenous Australians and contribute to the implementation of this RAP in a productive and collaborative manner.

Dennis Richardson, Secretary  
May 2011





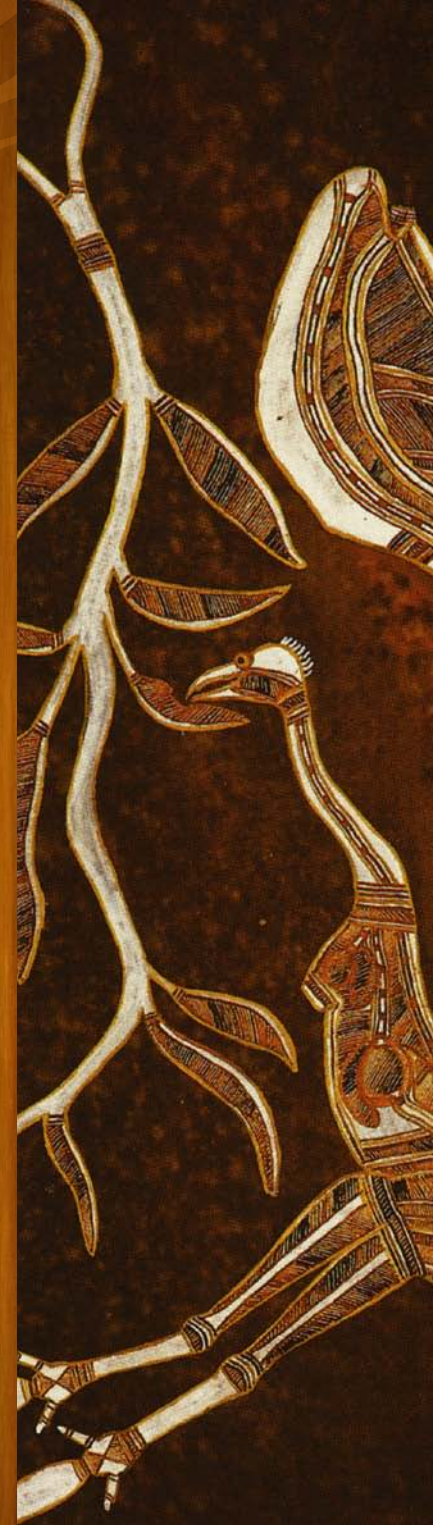
November *Kurrung*, Lofty Nabardayal Nadjamerrek, *Emus* (56 x 76 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1993)



## Our Vision

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**O**ur vision for reconciliation is that of a united Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, heritage and culture are valued and celebrated both in Australia and overseas so as to enhance our reputation as a multi-cultural country which respects the rights of the first Australians and of people from all nations.





June Yekke, Lawrence Nganjmirra, *Brolga and kangaroo*  
(105 x 75 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1993)



## Our Business

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**T**he Department is responsible for advancing the interests of Australia and Australians internationally. The Department's staff in Canberra, in our state and territory offices and around the world work to achieve the Department's three outcomes:

- the advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign and trade policy priorities;
- the protection and welfare of Australians abroad and access to secure international travel documentation through timely and responsive travel advice and consular and passport services in Australia and overseas; and
- a secure Australian Government presence overseas through the provision of security services and information and communications technology infrastructure, and the management of the Commonwealth's overseas owned estate.







**September Wurrkeng**, Thompson Yulidjirri, Ngurdyawok  
(56 x 76 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1992)

**O**ur RAP has been developed with input from staff across the Department through an internal RAP Indigenous Taskforce Working Group made up of representatives from the Indigenous Employees Network, Indigenous Taskforce, Workplace Relations Committee and Workplace Diversity Unit.





## Our RAP

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**O**ur RAP reflects the Department's commitment to promoting diversity and reconciliation in Australia and in our overseas posts through:


- incorporating the Indigenous Recruitment and Career Development Strategy 2011-2015 into the RAP;
- the Torres Strait Treaty Liaison Office on Thursday Island working directly with Indigenous Australians in the Torres Strait (and with Indigenous traditional inhabitants in Papua New Guinea) to implement the Torres Strait Treaty signed by Australia and PNG;
- the Department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public diplomacy program projecting an accurate and comprehensive image of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples internationally;
- the Department's participation in key multilateral forums which address Indigenous issues, such as the United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council and Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and actively seeking to uphold the principles enshrined in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*;
- actively seeking the views of Indigenous representatives and NGOs, including through regular NGO consultations held in Canberra and development of networks at post to inform its international activities;
- being mindful of trade aspects that benefit Indigenous Australians economically and as an active participant in discussions regarding the promotion and protection of traditional knowledge; and
- working in partnership with other Australian Government agencies to represent and promote APS-wide interests, which will enable our approach to reconciliation to be outcomes-focused, realistic and achievable within Reconciliation Australia's National Program of Action.



May Bangkereng, Tony Bangalang, *Freshwater fish and turtles* (56 x 76 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1993)

The RAP incorporates actions that collectively emphasize the Department's commitment to an Indigenous recruitment and career development strategy, thus bringing together into one document the various strands of the Department's Indigenous activities. The Human Resources Manual, specifically Chapter 2 (Recruitment and Selection), Chapter 6 (Human Resources Development), and Chapter 12 (Workplace Diversity) will be updated to reflect these activities.






**T**he Department will maintain both informal and formal consultative mechanisms through the Indigenous Employees Network (IEN) and the Indigenous Taskforce which will continue to play an important role in establishing relationships and dialogue across the Department on a range of key Indigenous issues. The internal reporting mechanisms will assist the Indigenous Taskforce to implement and monitor the actions in this RAP and address issues that arise and further develop strategies.

#### *Administering our RAP*

The Department's Indigenous Taskforce and Indigenous Champions will provide leadership in the ongoing implementation, monitoring and evaluation of targets and outcomes. Progress against all of the RAP targets will be reported annually to the Departmental Executive and Reconciliation Australia. Reporting requirements for the Annual Report and the Australian Public Service Commission State of the Service Survey will also be met.



## RELATIONSHIPS

**R**espectful relationships between Indigenous Australians and the wider community will enhance our corporate, foreign and trade policy interests, achieve greater success and build stronger partnerships which serve to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians.

**Focus area: Enhancing the ways in which Indigenous Australia is reflected in our corporate, foreign and trade policy interests.**

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a RAP Working Group, led by a Deputy Secretary-level Indigenous Champion, to oversee and implement RAP strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group</li> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	Meet every May and November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy Secretary Champion identified.</li> <li>RAP Working Group established.</li> <li>Progress reported to Reconciliation Australia, Indigenous Taskforce and Departmental Executive annually.</li> <li>Indigenous Taskforce Membership and Terms of Reference reviewed.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage, as appropriate, in bilateral and multilateral negotiations on Indigenous issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Organisations Branch</li> <li>Papua New Guinea and Fiji Branch</li> <li>Office of Trade Negotiation</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of positive outcomes arising from the promotion of Australia's interests on Indigenous issues in bilateral and multilateral negotiations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver and support cultural programs and activities, including major Australian country promotions, touring exhibitions, lectures and artists exchanges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Diplomacy Branch</li> </ul>	December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tour at least one Indigenous exhibition each year.</li> <li>Number of Indigenous exhibitions, performances and artists promoted.</li> <li>Number of publications and information kits on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures targeted to overseas activities and as resource materials provided for the Department's overseas posts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore internal and external workforce mobility initiatives for Indigenous employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch</li> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uptake of workforce mobility programs in APS and non-government sectors by Indigenous employees.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure appropriate support for Indigenous employees:</li> <li>Promote and support the Indigenous Employees Network as a key consultative network.</li> <li>Provide Indigenous employees with information on APS-wide learning and development, mentoring and networking.</li> <li>Develop a formal Indigenous Mentoring Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Indigenous Employee Network</li> <li>Indigenous Taskforce</li> <li>RAP Working Group</li> </ul>	March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new Indigenous employees offered membership and provided with information on Indigenous Employees network.</li> <li>Pool of suitable, trained mentors, including at the SES level and across different areas of the Department, matched with Indigenous employees.</li> </ul>



## RESPECT

**R**espect for Indigenous Australians culture, land, kinship, relationships and local communities is critical to the Department creating a diverse, inclusive, culturally safe workforce in Australia and at posts overseas.



**Focus area: Increased appreciation and acknowledgment of the diverse skills, attributes and experiences of Indigenous employees.**

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate Cultural Awareness training into mandatory induction program for all new staff:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate formal cultural awareness training into other non-SES Training and Development Initiatives, specifically Professional Skills Development Programs.</li> <li>Additional courses and e-learning available on request by divisions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new staff to complete the training.</li> <li>Cultural Awareness training incorporated into other Training and Development initiatives.</li> <li>Development of e-learning module on Indigenous cultural awareness.</li> <li>Indigenous Australians Cultural Awareness training included in DFAT Policy and International Graduates Regional Training Program.</li> <li>Number of employees undertaking mandatory cultural awareness training.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop opportunities for Indigenous staff to contribute to major policy and program initiatives undertaken in the Department.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous Taskforce</li> <li>Indigenous Champions</li> <li>RAP Working Group</li> <li>Division Heads</li> </ul>	August 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal consultations and linkages developed between Divisions, Indigenous Taskforce and Indigenous Employees Network.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and celebrate key events of cultural significance to Indigenous Australians and communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Public Diplomacy Branch</li> </ul>	May-July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of two Indigenous events of cultural significance celebrated in Australia and overseas offices - NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week.</li> <li>Develop calendar of Workplace Diversity Events on intranet.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement 'Welcome to Country' or 'Acknowledgement of Country' at major Departmental forums, at Department funded project opening ceremonies and at working group meetings focused on Indigenous issues.</li> <li>Develop standard cultural and communication protocols for adoption by Divisions.</li> <li>Implement protocols at all Department state and territory offices and Australian Passports Offices.</li> <li>Implement protocols at Indigenous Taskforce meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Divisions</li> <li>Public Diplomacy Branch</li> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous leaders and elders identified and invited to perform 'Welcome to Country' at major events.</li> <li>'Acknowledgement to Country' performed by Departmental staff at relevant meetings and forums.</li> <li>Protocols developed and released on intranet.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Departmental recognition of ceremonial leave entitlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Management Division</li> </ul>	September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate management guidelines on leave reflect ceremonial leave entitlements.</li> </ul>





## OPPORTUNITIES

**C**reating opportunities for Indigenous Australians allows us to recruit, retain and provide career development and progression opportunities for Indigenous Australians, enabling our Department to ensure we meet the Australian Government's Closing the Gap Indigenous employment targets.

**Focus area: Recruitment, retention, career development and progression opportunities for Indigenous Australian employees.**

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in APS-wide Indigenous employment programs including, but not limited to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APSC Indigenous Cadetship Program;</li> <li>APSC Indigenous Traineeship Program;</li> <li>APSC Indigenous Graduate Program; and</li> <li>DEEWR Indigenous Australian Government Development Program.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch</li> </ul>	November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful recruitment (subject to available candidate numbers and suitability for engagement):                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three Indigenous graduates;</li> <li>- Three Indigenous cadets; and</li> <li>- Six Indigenous Entry-level trainees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to recruit Indigenous employees, particularly at high levels through lateral transfer, bulk recruitment and specialist rounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress recruitment initiatives targeting Indigenous EL2 and SES Band 1 Foreign Policy/Corporate opportunities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to have at least four flexible (designated) Indigenous positions utilising, if necessary, Special Measures available under the Public Service Commissioner's Directions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Staffing Branch</li> <li>Division Heads</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Indigenous Special Measures Guide for Team Leaders and Divisions.</li> <li>Successful placement of Indigenous employees in at least four (designated) Indigenous positions across Divisions:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>APS 6-EL1</b> - Cultural Diplomacy Section, Public Diplomacy Branch;</li> <li>- <b>APS 6- EL1</b> - Human Rights and Indigenous Issues Section, International Organisations Branch;</li> <li>- <b>BB2</b> - Torres Strait Treaty Liaison Office, Thursday Island, Papua New Guinea and Fiji Branch; and</li> <li>- <b>APS 6 - EL1</b> - Corporate Management Division (to be identified).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Focus area: Recruitment, retention, career development and progression opportunities for Indigenous Australian employees.**

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote, monitor and recruit through targeted Indigenous media and Indigenous networks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Staffing Branch</li> <li>Public Diplomacy Branch</li> </ul>	June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising APS jobs in Indigenous specific media as well as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>direct contact with Indigenous studies centers;</li> <li>university careers advisory services and career fairs; and</li> <li>Indigenous employee profiles on website and in marketing campaigns.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant Selection Advisory Committees inclusive of Indigenous representation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch in consultation with Indigenous Employees Network and Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least one Indigenous identified person on Selection Committees where there are identified Indigenous candidates.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish pool of Indigenous Contact Officers for all vacancies that are advertised through Indigenous media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch in consultation with Indigenous Employees Network and Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pool of contact officers established and circulated to relevant managers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the training and development needs of Indigenous employees, especially new employees, are addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Staffing Branch</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new non-SES Training and Development Initiatives inclusive of targeted professional and personal development for Indigenous employees, specifically:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership and Management Development Program; and</li> <li>Professional Skills Development Program.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist Indigenous employees to extend their experience to work in other policy/ trade/ corporate/service delivery areas to reflect diversity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> <li>Staffing Branch</li> </ul>	April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wider range of job roles identified to Indigenous employees and career pathways developed.</li> <li>All new recruits have career pathways in place within 12 months.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Closing the Gap Indigenous partnerships with higher education universities which have Indigenous programs to encourage students to work with the Department on their thesis and major research projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing Branch</li> <li>International Organisations Branch</li> </ul>	October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with tertiary institutions established.</li> </ul>

## Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report progress to the Indigenous Taskforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management, Strategy, Conduct and Diversity Section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every May and November</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two reports produced annually outlining programs, targets and outcomes of RAP.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report progress to Departmental Executive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management, Strategy, Conduct and Diversity Section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report detailing programs, targets, outcomes from RAP.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report progress in Annual Report.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management, Strategy, Conduct and Diversity Section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report includes RAP outcomes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management, Strategy, Conduct and Diversity Section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually April 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report, utilising case studies, submitted and approved by RA.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update RAP after each reporting year in consultation with Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workplace Diversity Unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually April 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated RAP developed and endorsed by DFAT Executive and Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>





May Bangkereng, Tony Bangalang, *Freshwater fish and turtles* (56 x 76 cm ochre/gouache on paper, 1993)



Front cover:

**March Kudjewk  
Samuel Namundja**

*Magpie geese and eggs*  
75 x 105 cm ochre/gouache on  
paper 1993

At this time of the year, magpie geese are a familiar sight flying in the sky in v-configurations. Magpie geese *manimunak* and their eggs *wirlarrk* are an important source of food. In the past, geese were hunted with sticks but today they are hunted with rifles. The magpie geese are shown eating the seeds of lice grass *dord* (left), and the native grape *mandjalkeh* (at right). Many bush foods ripen including the bush plum *mandjurrkkumarlba*. Some yams, including *karrbarda* the long yam, *manyuku* and *manwidu*, are ready to be dug.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution that a number of people have made to this project, including: Wally Caruana, Peter Carroll, Felicity Wright, Chips Mackinolty, Injalak Arts and Crafts, and the artists: Tony Bangalang, Thompson Yulidjirri, Gabriel Maralngurra, Lawrence Nganjmirra, Danny Djorlom Nalorlman, Peter Nabarlambarl, Lofty Nabardayal Nadjamerrek and Samuel Namundja. Photographer: Ian Morris. We especially thank the Hogarth Galleries Aboriginal Art Centre, Sydney, for their professionalism and commitment in coordinating the project.

Reproduced by kind acknowledgment of Injalak Arts Centre

We would also like to acknowledge Graphic Designer, Julie Connor, for the design of this RAP.



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