



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

February 2022 – January 2023



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



Acknowledgement of Country

Buslines Group respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, islands and water that constitute Australia, and the regions that we operate in.

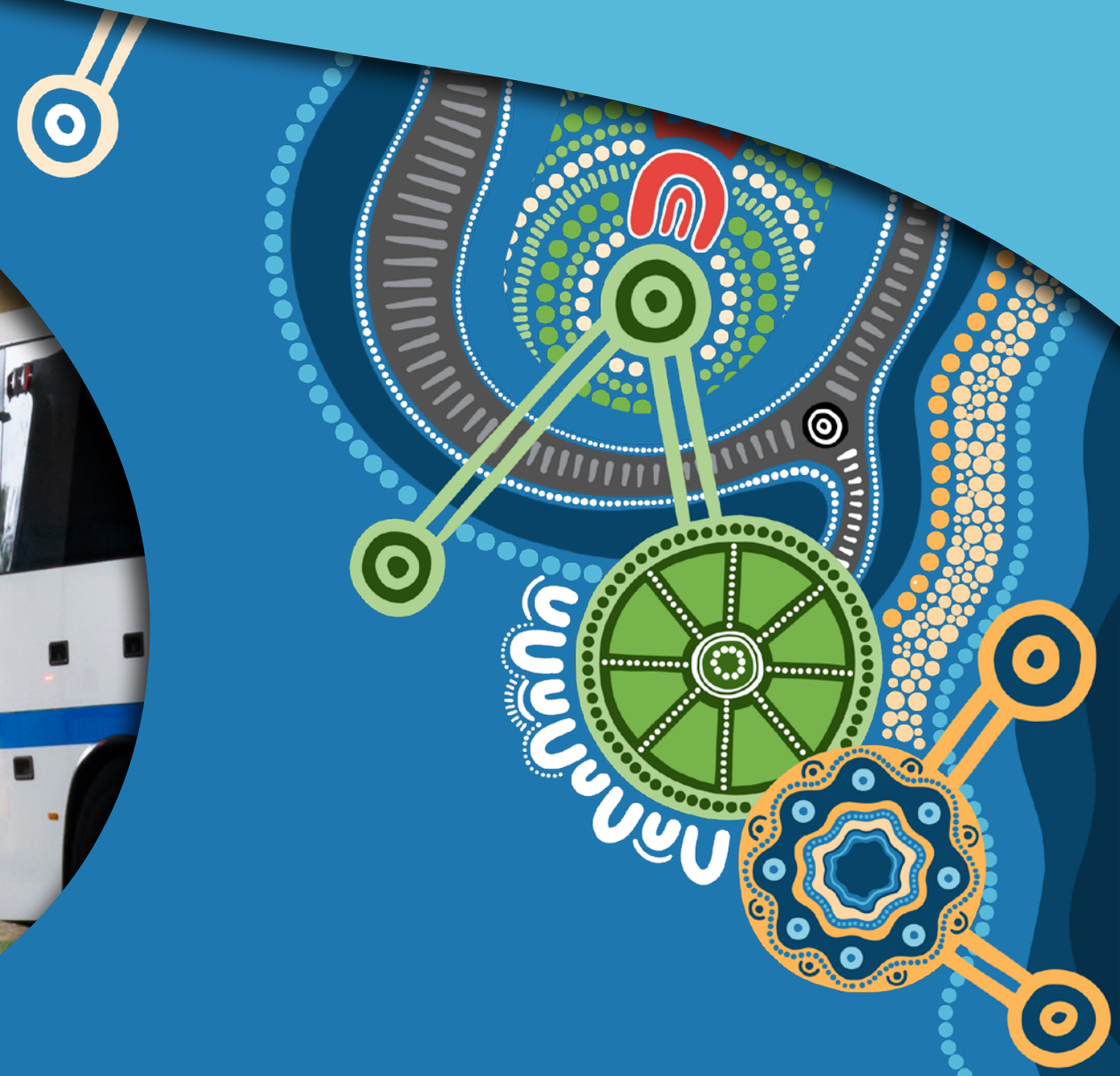
These regions include: Bundjalung, Budawang, Biripi, Dharug, Eora, Gundungurra, Kamilaroi, Tharawal, Wiradjuri and Worimi and Yuin.

We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future, in maintaining their cultures, Countries and spiritual connections to the land.



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Messages from the Managing Director and Co-CEOs

Message from Anthony D'Apuzzo, Managing Director

Buslines Group's vision is to provide a great service to people living in the rural and regional towns we service.

We've always nurtured an inclusive environment. However, this public declaration further reiterates our commitment to reconciliation amongst our staff and customers.

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) gives us a framework for action. To continue to build a culture of respect and embrace the traditional owners of our country.

Message from Adam D'Apuzzo, Co-CEO (RAP Champion)

We're looking forward to the process of developing our RAP. As a proud family-owned, Australian company, we're determined to play our part. We want to show respect to our customers and the communities we operate in. To provide more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. To contribute in a meaningful way to the reconciliation process.

By building a more inclusive culture for our staff and customers, we're determined to help build a more inclusive, equitable Australia.

Message from David D'Apuzzo, Co-CEO

Being actively engaged with the local communities in which we operate is a priority for us. As a close, family-owned business, we have a united vision.

We're committed to providing great service to our customers. We'll continue to create opportunities and clear promotional pathways for people within the company. We always ensure a safe and supportive working environment for all our staff.

Being involved in the RAP process is another step towards affirming this commitment.



RAP artwork

"Connecting Along the Journey"

© 2022 by Amy Allerton, Contemporary Aboriginal Artist of the Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung and Gamilaroi nations

This artwork tells the story of Buslines' relationships with the individuals, communities and Country across New South Wales, as they connect along their journeys. The communities in the Buslines Group network, from dusty plains to mountains and coastlines, are represented in the story and are all connected together by the many paths we take along our journeys. Connections are at the forefront of this story; the people who make up Buslines Group are connected to the unique communities in the Buslines network, and those connections ripple out to surrounding communities and beyond. They are not only connected to the local Elders, businesses, families and Aboriginal land in each community, but they are an essential part of ensuring that everyone is supported and cared for as they embark on their journey, no matter what their journey looks like.

RAP artist and designer

Amy Allerton is the owner and founder of Indigico Creative and a contemporary Aboriginal artist. Descended from the Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung nations, she was born and raised on Gamilaroi country in Tamworth NSW, where she is based with her husband, two children and toy cavoodle.

Amy has been providing graphic design services Australia-wide since 2014, collaborating with businesses and partnering with communities to creatively communicate the stories that bring us together. Amy is driven by her personal and professional vision that every story is given value and a voice, to revitalise communities, reconnect to culture and restore identities to build a stronger future.

A natural progression from designing visual communications in the corporate market, Amy applies her skills in digital illustration to deliver a modern approach to Aboriginal storytelling. Amy's artworks are an extension from her journey of exploring her own cultural identity, bringing her unique ability to speak in colour and imagery to create visual representations of the journeys and values of organisations and communities.



Message from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Buslines Group to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Buslines Group 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 Buslines Group 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 Buslines Group, 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

Buslines Group is the largest rural and regional bus company in NSW. We exist to serve the communities in which we operate. For over 80 years, we've placed our customers at the centre of everything we do.

Buslines has had a long and proud history of delivering safe, reliable and quality local transport networks to our customers. Starting with our first bus operation in Tamworth in 1943, we now operate in and around Ballina, Bathurst, Berrima, Dubbo, Forster, Griffith, Lithgow, Kandos/Rylstone, Northern Rivers, Orange, Tamworth, Ulladulla and Wingham communities.

As a family-owned business, we understand the importance of building strong relationships with local communities and stakeholders. We see our role as supporting a connected community by providing a reliable, friendly service so people can travel safely and comfortably to work and school, to the local shops and to community events.

Our staff are key to our success. We employ over 550 people, including 10 who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. From depot managers to administrative staff, mechanical staff to bus drivers, the men and women who work at Buslines Group bring their unique expertise to their chosen areas of work.

We know the importance and celebrate the value of having a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the communities we serve. We respect their skills and their experience. Their passions and their points of view.

The fact that our people come from a variety of cultural backgrounds enriches our workplace environments, supports our growth, and enables us to provide an outstanding service to our customers.

From our base in Burwood NSW, we coordinate over 4,000 regular passenger bus services every week, with more than 200,000 services every year. We operate dedicated school bus services within towns and to rural areas, where we help approximately 45,000 students travel considerable distances to and from school each day.

We operate charter services, partnering with the organisers of many iconic events across NSW including the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Bathurst V8 and 12-Hour Races and Splendour in the Grass. Since 2007, we have also successfully operated taxis in the Griffith and Dubbo communities.



Our RAP

Our job is to offer people safe passage around their community. As we travel around this land, we acknowledge that it's now time to deepen our understanding of the history of First Nations people and their connection to Country. To make amends and begin to rebuild relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and those who have later settled in Australia.

True reconciliation starts with listening. Hearing the voices of those who have not been heard.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart calls for a Makarrata, a coming together after a struggle. And so it is that, in our small way, we'd like to contribute to forging a better future for First Nations Peoples.

While we've always strived to foster a respectful, inclusive workplace culture, we recognise that we have a part to play in nurturing relationships with our staff and our customers who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To do this meaningfully, we must commit to taking real steps towards a positive reconciliation process.

This Reflect RAP is the first step of our journey. It outlines our intention to set out a more formal plan to support inclusion and reconciliation and develop our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

To ensure we achieve the commitments detailed within this RAP, we've appointed Adam D'Apuzzo, our Co-CEO, as the RAP champion and established a RAP Working Group (RWG) to oversee the process. Together, we will consult with stakeholders to guide our way and ensure our practices are inclusive and welcoming to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our sphere.

Our partnerships and current activities

Buslines Group operates in many rural and regional communities with significant populations of Australia's First Nations peoples. We plan to seek ways of deepening our involvement as we move through the RAP process. We have been involved in a number of activities to help promote inclusion and reconciliation:

- We've organised training and employment opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Groups.
- Each year during NAIDOC week in the Northern Rivers we donate a bus to the local community. In Tamworth, we set up a stall to educate the community about bus travel.
- In Tamworth, each week we provide transportation and food for those attending a bible study gathering.
- We're also regularly involved in connecting with other organisations to learn about how we can continue to support both employees and customers in our reconciliation journey.
- Dubbo Buslines provides secure vehicle parking for the Bamara Driver Licensing Access Program, a free learning to drive program for community groups who may not have access to the necessary resources to obtain a driver licence.



Relationships

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|---------------|---|
| 1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. | February 2022 | Group Business Support together with each Depot Manager |
| | Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | March 2022 | Head of Compliance together with Group Business Support |
| 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) | Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all employees. | May/June 2022 | Group Operations Assistant |
| | RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. | May/June 2022 | Group Operations Assistant |
| | Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. | May/June 2022 | Co CEO together with Head of Compliance |
| 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. | March 2022 | Managing Director |
| | Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. | April 2022 | Co CEO together with Head of Compliance |
| | Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. | April 2022 | Co CEO together with Head of Compliance |
| 4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. | February 2022 | Head of HR |
| | Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. | March 2022 | Head of HR |



Respect

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| 5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. | February 2022 | Co CEO |
| | Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. | February 2022 | Head of HR |
| 6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. | February 2022 | Group Business Support together with each Regional Manager |
| | Increase our staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. | February 2022 | Managing Director together with the Co CEOs |
| 7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. | Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. | July 2022 | Co-CEO, Group Operations Assistant and Group Business Support |
| | Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area. | July 2022 | Co-CEO, Group Operations Assistant and Group Business Support |
| | RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. | First week in July 2022 | Co-CEO, Group Operations Assistant and Group Business Support |

Opportunities

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|----------------|----------------|
| 8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. | August 2022 | Head of HR |
| | Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | August 2022 | Head of HR |
| 9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. | September 2022 | Co CEO |
| | Investigate Supply Nation membership. | September 2022 | Co CEO |

Governance

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|----------------|---|
| 10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation. | May 2022 | Co CEO |
| | Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. | May 2022 | Co-CEO together with Head of Compliance |
| | Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | May 2022 | Co CEO |
| 11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | Define resource needs for RAP implementation. | July 2022 | Managing Director |
| | Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. | July 2022 | Managing Director |
| | Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | October 2022 | Head of Compliance |
| 12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | September 2022 | Head of Compliance |
| 13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | November 2022 | Co CEO |



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