JULY 2023 - JULY 2025

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN INNOVATE

REGION MEDIA GROUP INNOVATE RECONCILIATION PLAN





Region Media acknowledges the traditional owners of all country on which we work and report. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging, and honour their history, cultures, and traditions of storytelling. Region Media commits to ongoing acts of reconciliation.

"I am proud to be on Region Media's reconciliation journey and I commend our inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan which commits us to develop a deeper understanding of our influence and establish the best approach to advance reconciliation across our local communities.

"An Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan focuses on developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples."

Region Media currently operates across
Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri, Dhawaral,
Anathangayth, Alngith, Peppan, Thanakwithi
and Wathyn country – and as we continue to
grow and expand into other areas across
Australia, Region Media has a wonderful
opportunity to work with local communities
and be a strong advocate for reconciliation
across our areas of reach.

Our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan is testament to the journey we have embarked upon to strengthen community relationships and listen and learn from First Nations people to better understand the challenges faced in our communities and to provide greater opportunities for Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander people and communities. It is our opportunity to highlight First Nations Peoples' role in bringing people together to strengthen our local and regional communities.

One of Region Media's key goals is to ensure that we make a real difference in the communities we serve and bring together, and reconciliation is integral to achieving this goal. Region Media recognises the unique opportunity it has to deliver a practical Reconciliation Action Plan to further embrace our sense of belonging in our communities Our Reconciliation Action Plan is an initial and important step to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, stories, events and issues in our communities to improve their lives and build awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander challenges and strengths.

Our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan includes initiatives to improve staff awareness and engagement, strengthen our human resources policies to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment with a focus on staff development and training, allows Region Media to listen, learn and strengthen community relationships, and a commitment to highlight the contribution First Nations People make to sustaining strong local communities – our core business. We hope this is the start of a successful reconciliation journey.

I would like to acknowledge Region Media's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander champion, Genevieve Jacobs who has engaged and worked with key Indigenous elders of the communities in which we live, work and play, to pull together our first Reconciliation Action Plan. Thanks also to staff who contributed and all staff who have signalled a strong commitment to this journey of reconciliation. I am very proud to be part of this important initiative."



Glenys Beauchamp AO, PSM *Region Media advisory board chair*

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Region Media's vision for Reconciliation is to develop, maintain and foster an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures expressed through our content, workplace culture and community engagement and to play an active role in supporting our diverse workforce.

Region Media's close connection our community is vital to our long-term sustainability. Region Media is committed to investing in partnerships with communities across Canberra, the South Coast, the Riverina, Far North Queensland and beyond. Our integrity and values will increasingly be measured by our enduring commitment to diversity and inclusion, in particular our respect for, and partnership with First Nations peoples.

Regional Australia's journey towards
Reconciliation has evolved over the decades
and *Region Media* commits to continuing this
journey wherever we work, live and report the
news. *Region Media* is particularly aware of our
corporate responsibility to ensure regional
Australians are well informed about their
choices as the Voice referendum approaches.

We seek to achieve our vision through consistent fair and balanced reporting that understands and explores issues that are relevant to First Nations communities and to the national Reconciliation cause.

News media is by its very nature constantly changing and as an emerging industry leader, *Region Media* also growing rapidly. The time is right to begin a closer working relationship with traditional owners including the Ngunnawal and Ngambri and Wolagalu people of Canberra, the Yuin people of the South Coast, the Wiradjuri people of the Riverina, the Dharawal people of the Illawarra, the diverse

peoples of Cape York and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our coverage areas as our reach grows.

Region Media is committed to a vision of a more just, equitable, and respectful Australia for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, where they have access to equal opportunities and are valued and recognised as Australia's First Peoples.

As an industry leader, we strive to make a positive difference in the communities we operate utilising our unique skills for good. Through our Reconciliation Action Plan, Region Media fosters the power of our relationships and our staff's innovative spirit to make a positive impact in our industry.

We embrace our role as educators in this space and are committed to raising awareness and shaping advocates. The media industry has a vital role to play in fostering discussion, providing accurate and timely content about current issues and enabling people to make informed choices about engaging with the Reconciliation process.

Region Media recognises the importance of providing more opportunities for emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander technical and business staff.

By having a commitment in the form of a RAP visible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, our staff, clients and partners, we are hoping to make durable and meaningful impact to Relationships, Respect and Opportunities within our sphere of influence and beyond. We will work with partners and staff to understand the ongoing meaning of Reconciliation across all our operations.

OUR BUSINESS



Region Media was founded in 2016 with the vision and intent to serve local communities across regional Australia by telling their stories. Original, locally sourced editorial content is our priority. Region Media operates several major digital news platforms in the ACT, Southern NSW and Queensland including Riotact, About Regional, Riotact China, Region Riverina, Region Illawarra, Cape York Weekly and multiple social media sites.

The company employs 50 staff in three offices and multiple external contributors across the ACT, South East NSW and Far North Queensland. No current staff identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Strong, ethical and independent editorial policies drive the Region Media group. Our key commitment is to provide balanced, relevant local content, produced by professional journalists. Our reader interaction creates vibrant, entertaining, on-topic conversations, curated to ensure vigorous but fair discussion.

Our commercial partners align with our view that community comes first. Region is grounded in strong local business relationships and proactively connects them through our community partnership program with not-for-profits and charities. Region Media is commercially independent and funded by long-term contracts with local business and community organisations.

Region Media recognises that telling local stories and supporting local businesses must include a proactive commitment to Reconciliation across all our operations. Our sphere of influence is community wide, encompassing all three levels of government, local and national business through our clients and the not- for-profit sector. Region Media content currently reaches approximately 730,000 unique readers every month across seven news platforms.

Our commitment to serving our community includes recognition of major social issues and their impact, among them the call for Reconciliation. For the past four years, Region has been committed to ongoing coverage of Reconciliation across many dimensions.

In our coverage, Region has sought to engage with difficult and complex local issues including



the ACT's particularly high rates of child removal per capita, the legacy of suppressing language and culture, local histories, identity, and current challenges for First Nations people. Our intention is to create ongoing, well informed and diverse coverage of First Nations people and issues in all our locations that supports community engagement and discussion.

During the Voice referendum campaign, all Region Media mastheads have sought and published multiple opinion pieces on the referendum campaign and demonstrated leadership from our Group Editor in calling for a well-informed response to the Voice question.

Please find selected examples below from all Region mastheads:

Riotact

https://the-riotact.com/Reconciliation-must-confront-hard-truths-about-indigenous-child-removal-rates/465782

https://the-riotact.com/politicising-the-voice-vote-is-a-regrettable-step-that-hinders-the-national-conversation/649111

https://the-riotact.com/carillon-will-light-up-as-a-national-symbol-for-Reconciliation-week/378933, https://regionmedia.com.cn/carillon-will-light-up-as-a-national-symbol-for-Reconciliation-week/2488/ (Region China version)

https://the-riotact.com/tributes-flow-for-beloved-ngunnawal-elder-aunty-agnes-shea-a-champion-of-Reconciliation/643116

Region Print

https://regionmedia.com.cn/harnessing-thepower-of-country-to-inspire-indigenouscreatives/25838/

RegionRiverina

https://regionriverina.com.au/from-warangesdamission-school-student-to-union-leader-andaboriginal-rights-pioneer/19428/

https://regionriverina.com.au/lidia-thorpe-lindaburney-jacinta-price-and-the-difficult-game-ofchoosing-a-voice/25012/

RegionIllawarra

https://regionillawarra.com.au/mental-healthplan-aims-to-deliver-holistic-model-of-care-foraboriginal-communities/3597/

https://regionillawarra.com.au/the-voice-is-abeginning-for-aboriginal-and-torres-straitislander-people/2180/

Cape York Weekly

https://capeyorkweekly.com.au/cape-york-colonisers-name-removed-from-national-park/1777/

https://capeyorkweekly.com.au/premier-towitness-major-cape-york-land-agreementsigning/1758/

Our clearly articulated editorial standards ensure that clients do not have the right to influence news and community coverage. This ensures that our Reconciliation agenda can't be derailed by commercial interests, but clients can align their own Reconciliation agenda with our content through their content agreements.



Local everywhere.

OUR RAP

Region Media is proud to be launching its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), as we expand our coverage area across the ACT, Southern NSW and Queensland. In doing so, we formalise a commitment towards Reconciliation with First Nations peoples and embedding positive cultural change in our business. This process will be led by our group editor, Genevieve Jacobs AM.

Genevieve Jacobs is Region Media's RAP champion. Growing up on Wirdajuri Country, Genevieve has a demonstrated lifelong commitment to Reconciliation. She was the cochair of the ACT's inaugural Reconciliation Council, which founded and guided Reconciliation Day in the Territory. Her role in the company is to represent the editorial conscience of Region Media, speaking for its interests publicly and representing the company's values.

In this role, Genevieve works closely with First Nations communities, regularly facilitating conversations and speaking at public events including Reconciliation Day. She instigated the Region Media RAP process, has led Reconciliation action within the company and wrote the Region Media RAP.

Our advisory board chair, Glenys Beauchamp PSM, AO, will also play a key role in our internal working group. Glenys has demonstrated ongoing commitment to Reconciliation throughout her career, including her role as Department Secretary, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2002–2009).

Our RAP working group will also include Region Riverina editor Chris Roe, Region Illawarra editor Jen White, Cape York editor Matt Nicholls and content director Kim Treasure. The Region Media executive will also be accountable to track delivery against our actions.

Region Media will be externally advised at each location by Ngunnawal Elder Dr Caroline Hughes, Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Cheryl Penrith, Dhawaral Elders in Wollongong and Ernest Madua Jnr from the Alnigth clan group at Weipa.



Building on an existing legacy of covering stories about First Nations peoples and Indigenous issues, this plan articulates our aspirations to deepen and formalise our First Nations relationships.

The aspirations in this RAP will be referenced in our five-year strategic vision for Region Media, reviewed annually, and will be hardwired into our governance.

Within the next five years we will work with our external advisor to deepen our work with local Traditional Owners to ensure we understand how best to deliver on our commitments. Before we draft our next plan, we will evaluate what has worked and ask for feedback. Where necessary we will work with specialist advisers to ensure training or guidance is provided as required.

We will strive to align these commitments into our business planning and strategic vision and hardwire them into our content, mentoring and staff training. The Region Media advisory board will ensure the organisation is accountable for these commitments and will report against them in our annual report each year.

Region Media recognises the importance of maintaining and updating our RAP outcomes each year, among the growing number of Australian media organisations that have registered RAPs since 2006.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. Timeline: July to December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor, Riverina, Illawarra and Cape York editors Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and Reconciliation materials to our staff. Timeline: May 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. Timeline: 27 May to 03 June 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor, Riverina, Illawarra and Cape York editors Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. Timeline: 27 May to 03 June 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor Organise at least one NRW event each year. Timeline: May 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. Timeline: May 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor
3. Promote Reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of Reconciliation across our workforce. Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor, Riverina, Illawarra and Cape York editors

ACTION	DELIVERABLE
	Communicate our commitment to Reconciliation publicly.
	Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive Reconciliation outcomes.
	Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Co-CEO's, Group editor
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance Reconciliation.
	Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Co-CEO's, Group editor
	 Collaborate with representative digital media organisations (eg Digital Publishers Alliance, Local and Independent News Association) on industry Reconciliation initiatives.
	Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor
	Utilise industry bodies (eg Walkley Foundation) for First Nations staffing resources and network building.
	Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor
4. Promote positive race relations through antidiscrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. Timeline: December 2023
	 Responsibility: Content director, commercial director Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.
	Timeline: December 2023

DELIVERABLE

 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our antidiscrimination policy.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor

• Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor



Region Media is committed to an inclusive and diverse Australia, where First Nations identity, culture and ongoing contribution is recognised and celebrated. Region Media's vision is to be a respected and trusted media company across Australia, providing balanced, independent media in all locations. Through active engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, we can facilitate community-wide conversations.

Region Media can engage all stakeholders, celebrate achievement and grow understanding by creating responsible, well-informed content with and about First Nations peoples, and living those values withir the organisation.



Region

Local everywhere.

DELIVERABLE

5. Increase
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 our organisation.

Timeline: December 2023

Responsibility: Group editor, Content editor

 Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.

Timeline: December 2023
Responsibility: Group editor

• Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.

Timeline: December 2023

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director

 Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Content director, Commercial director

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

 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025. Responsibility: Group editor

 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor

 Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025. Responsibility: Group editor



ACTION DELIVERABLE • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 7. Build respect for Timeline: First week in July 2024, 2025 Aboriginal and Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director **Torres Strait** Islander cultures · Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff and histories by participating in NAIDOC Week. celebrating NAIDOC Week. Timeline: December 2024 Responsibility: Content director, Commercial director • Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. Timeline: First week in July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director Include and regularly discuss First Nations perspectives in news coverage across all platforms. 8. Build awareness among the wider Timeline: First week in July 2023, 2025 community of First Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director, Nations cultures, Riverina, Illawarra and Cape York editors histories and protocols • All Region Media staff seek to attend once a year at least one external First Nations conference, festival, forum or other event. Timeline: First week in July 2023, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director, Riverina, Illawarra and Cape York editors



OPPORTUNITIES

Region Media provides wholly local content, written and produced by local journalists and content creators in all locations. Diverse media voices cannot exist without diverse staff, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander journalists, business and technical staff to bring individual perspectives.



9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and **Torres Strait** Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.

DELIVERABLE

• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.

Timeline: July 2025

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director

• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.

Timeline: December 2023

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Commercial director

• Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.

Timeline: December 2023

Responsibility: Content director, Commercial director

 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Content director, Commercial director

• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Content director

10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Content director

• Investigate Supply Nation membership.

Timeline: December 2023

Responsibility: Commercial director

ACTION DELIVERABLE

 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Commercial director

 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Commercial director

 Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Commercial director

11. Create First Nations specific content

• Deliver at least one news series dealing with specific First Nations issues on each news platform annually.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Riverina, Illawarra and

Cape York editors

 Provide pro bono coverage of NRW and NAIDOC Week activities, issues and events across news platforms, social media and other external outreach channels.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Riverina, Illawarra and

Cape York editors

• Create feature content on First Nations stories, personalities and histories regularly on each news platform.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Group editor, Content director, Riverina, Illawarra and

Cape York editors



GOVERNANCE

ACTION

12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.

DELIVERABLE

• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor

 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025

Responsibility: Group editor, Advisory board chair, Co-CEO's

DELIVERABLE

13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.

Timeline: December 2023 Responsibility: Group editor

• Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

 Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.

Timeline: July 2023

Responsibility: Group editor, Advisory board chair

14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

 Contact 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.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.

Timeline: 01 August 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.

Timeline: 30 September 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor • Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.

Timeline: July 2024, 2025 Responsibility: Group editor

• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.

Timeline: July 2025

Responsibility: Group editor

15. Continue our Reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

• Register via Reconciliation Australia's <u>website</u> to begin developing our next RAP.

Timeline: December 2024 Responsibility: Group editor

CONTACT

Genevieve Jacobs

Group editor - Region Media gjacobs@region.com.au 0428 432 621

