

Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2015



Department of
Parks and Wildlife



Reconciliation
AUSTRALIA
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS



Foreword

The Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) is committed to the national reconciliation effort of building better relationships between Aboriginal people and the wider Australian community, for the benefit of all Australians.

The department recognises the disadvantages which face some Aboriginal people and will continue to work with other government agencies in an attempt to close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal people and other Australians. Our Reconciliation Action Plan is just one strategy to assist in achieving this outcome.

DPaW's Reconciliation Action Plan focuses on the steps the department is making toward improving the delivery of the department's policies, programs and initiatives over the next two years, through:

- acknowledging and respecting the unique role and expertise Aboriginal people have as traditional custodians of the lands and waters DPaW manages
- recognising the valuable contribution which Aboriginal people make to the department through their cultural knowledge, networks and skills
- fostering strong working partnerships and community relationships with Aboriginal people
- improving DPaW's cultural awareness through education and policy integration in order to recognise, protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people
- providing employment and economic independence opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Effective implementation and achievement of the outcomes in DPaW's Reconciliation Action Plan will be the measure of our success.

Jim Sharp
Acting Director General
Department of Parks and Wildlife





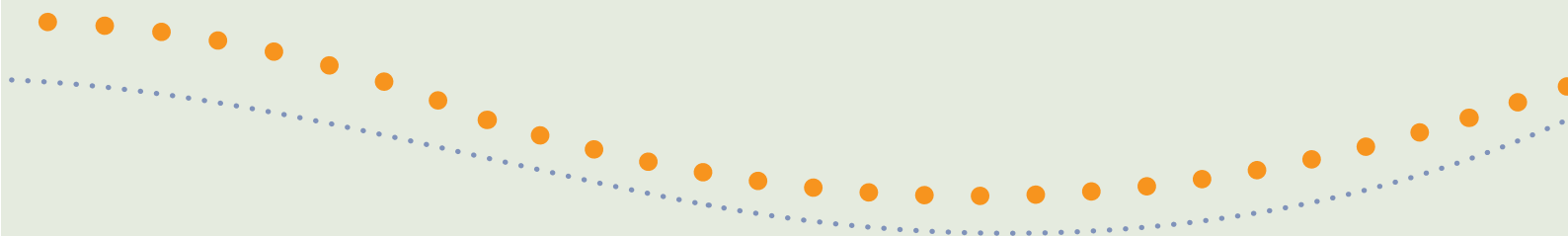
Our vision for reconciliation

The Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) is committed to ensuring Aboriginal Australians are extended the same opportunities and advantages as all other Australians, in order to achieve equity and the rights of all citizens. DPaW's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is an overarching strategy which underpins the department's approach and commitment to improving the quality of life of Aboriginal people, and maintaining their cultural integrity.

Our business

DPaW, created on 1 July 2013, has the lead responsibility for protecting and conserving the State's environment on behalf of the people of Western Australia. This includes delivery of services in the areas of nature conservation, science, sustainable forest management, and parks and visitor services. DPaW has about 1,700 staff in a diverse range of roles across the State of Western Australia, operating from Perth as well as from nine regions and 16 district centres. DPaW staff include permanent full-time employees, contractors, casual and seasonal workers, and trainees. About three per cent of DPaW's workforce is of Aboriginal descent.

In September 2011, amendments were made to the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* to incorporate Aboriginal cultural heritage into management planning, provide a mechanism for management partnerships of parks and reserves with Aboriginal people, and facilitate the exercise of Aboriginal customary activities on DPaW-managed estate. These amendments aim to recognise the connections between Aboriginal people and country, and will help to fulfill the longstanding aspirations of Aboriginal people to be involved in the management of the land and to carry out traditional activities on country.





Our Reconciliation Action Plan

All activities taking place within DPaW are underpinned by the values of the organisation, and all strategies in this plan are aligned with these values. DPaW's RAP covers the years 2013–2015 and details specific actions, responsibilities and timelines to ensure objectives are met. The plan sets out how the department will strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal Australians and is also a tool for cultural change.

Executive leadership has driven DPaW's RAP, through consultation and cooperation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff from various divisions and levels of the department. A committee led by representatives of DPaW divisions will direct the development, implementation and monitoring of the RAP.



Relationships

DPaW recognises the unique role and expertise Aboriginal people have as Traditional Owners of the lands and waters DPaW manages and conducts business on. Through effective leadership and advocacy, increased Aboriginal collaboration and policy integration, the department will promote reconciliation and foster strong working partnerships and community relationships with Aboriginal people.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Develop, launch and monitor a RAP	Director Parks and Visitor Services, Director Corporate Services, and Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs	November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A RAP committee is established by Corporate Executive to oversee the implementation and evaluation of the RAP. • Aboriginal staff are members of the RAP committee. • DPaW's RAP is launched by November 2013 and published on the DPaW intranet and internet sites. • The RAP committee meets three times per year to monitor and review RAP progress. RAP progress will be reported on the intranet and internet and in the DPaW annual report. • A divisional level reporting process is developed by the RAP committee.
The principles of substantive equality are applied in all the department's relationships with Aboriginal stakeholders	Director Parks and Visitor Services, Director Corporate Services, and Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant DPaW policies and practices are regularly reviewed to reflect the principles of substantive equality, as outlined in the Equal Opportunity Commission 'Framework for Substantive Equality'.
Build respectful partnerships and work collaboratively with Aboriginal stakeholders to enhance the work of DPaW	Director Parks and Visitor Services RAP committee	December 2015 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy is developed to affirm DPaW's commitment to work in collaboration with key Aboriginal stakeholders in management of country and DPaW-managed land. • All DPaW divisions identify and establish a resource directory of key Aboriginal stakeholders.
Build relationships with Aboriginal people, organisations and/or communities in DPaW through celebrating National Reconciliation Week	Director Parks and Visitor Services	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An event is held annually for National Reconciliation Week.
The 2011 amendments to the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> are implemented	Director Parks and Visitor Services	December 2013 December 2013 December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A communication and education strategy is implemented to provide information on the new legislation to Aboriginal stakeholders and DPaW staff. • DPaW policies and guidelines relating to customary activities and joint management are implemented to assist in facilitating local area arrangements and initiatives to manage parks and reserves in partnership with Aboriginal people. • Management planning processes and guidelines are revised to incorporate the new management planning objective of 'protecting and conserving the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons'.

Relationships (continued)

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
The customary rights of Aboriginal people, and the value of cultural heritage, are promoted as core DPaW business.	Director Parks and Visitor Services	December 2013 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information packages/sessions are developed for DPaW staff working on Aboriginal heritage and native title matters. A policy is developed outlining the guiding principles for consultation, identification and management of cultural heritage sites and values on DPaW-managed land.
Aboriginal input is sought for the development and review of DPaW policies.	Director Parks and Visitor Services	December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standard process of consultation is developed to ensure that the Aboriginal perspective is incorporated into all relevant policies as they are developed and reviewed.

Respect

DPaW has a strong commitment to gaining an awareness of the cultural diversity and history of Aboriginal people in Western Australia in order to recognise, protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Increase staff awareness of the culture, history and diversity of Aboriginal people in Western Australia	Manager People Services Branch, and Director Parks and Visitor Services Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs	December 2013 December 2014 December 2014 December 2013 December 2015 December 2014 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A DPaW induction program is developed to advise new staff of Aboriginal affairs in DPaW and their implementation, including the RAP. A departmental cross cultural awareness training program is developed and made compulsory for all new DPaW employees. An audit is undertaken to determine how many existing DPaW employees have participated in cross cultural awareness training. A strategy is developed and implemented to ensure existing staff who have not participated in cross cultural awareness training attend. The number of DPaW staff participating in cultural awareness training is reported to the RAP committee (three times per year) and Corporate Executive (annually). Aboriginal heritage and native title training is provided for staff working in relevant areas. DPaW's community education programs are reviewed to provide Aboriginal content where appropriate.
Protocols on the Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country are observed at official DPaW events	Director Parks and Visitor Services	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DPaW policy on observation of Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country is upheld.
DPaW to have knowledge of Traditional Owners in each DPaW region and district	Director Corporate Services, Director Parks and Visitor Services, and Director Regional Services	December 2014 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPaW buildings and properties display acknowledgment of Traditional Owners where appropriate. A database identifying Aboriginal stakeholders relevant to divisions/regions (such as local Aboriginal corporations) is developed as a resource for DPaW to connect with the Aboriginal community.

Respect (continued)

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
DPaW staff participate in key Aboriginal events and dates of significance including NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week	Director Parks and Visitor Services Division, and RAP committee	July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A calendar of events will be published and events promoted to DPaW staff. • Staff participation in events is monitored by the RAP committee.
Aboriginal images are included in DPaW marketing materials and buildings as appropriate	Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs	July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols for the selection and use of Aboriginal images in DPaW material are developed.
Aboriginal names are investigated for application to DPaW areas, features and assets	Director Regional Services, and Nomenclature Committee	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with DPaW's Nomenclature Guidelines and in consultation with relevant local Aboriginal communities, the use of Aboriginal language is considered in the naming of DPaW areas, features and assets.
Aboriginal news, events, staff achievements and RAP progress is promoted through DPaW and Aboriginal media forums	RAP committee	December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy is developed to ensure news, events achievements are promoted in DPaW and Aboriginal forums.



Opportunities

DPaW recognises the valuable contribution which Aboriginal people make to the department through their cultural knowledge, networks and skills. Equally valuable is the contribution DPaW can make to Closing the Gap commitments through providing employment and economic independence opportunities for Aboriginal people.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Implement DPaW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2011–2014 across all employment levels, occupational groups and locations The strategy will focus on: - employment targets - recruitment and selection - learning and development - retention.	Manager People Services Branch	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPaW works towards an Aboriginal employment target of seven per cent of the workforce. • The Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2011–2014 is implemented, monitored and reported annually to Corporate Executive and the RAP committee.
Formalise employment opportunities through native title negotiated outcomes	Director Parks and Visitor Services, and Director Regional Services	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for employment, service provision and training for Aboriginal people are incorporated into joint management agreements and Indigenous land use agreements.
The department supports Aboriginal people to build economic independence through procurement opportunities	Director Corporate Services	July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy is developed to support fee-for-service, tender contracts and commercial opportunities with Aboriginal communities in liaison with State Government procurement authority.

Tracking progress and reporting

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Include RAP in new employees' welcome pack	Manager People Services Branch	February 2014	RAP information included in new employee induction packs.
Publish RAP on DPaW intranet and internet website	DPaW RAP committee	November 2013	RAP published on intranet and internet.
RAP committee established to review and report on progress	DPaW RAP committee	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress meetings held three times per year. • Progress reported to Aboriginal Employee Reference Group and Corporate Executive after each meeting. • RAP committee to publish RAP progress reports on intranet and internet. • RAP committee to develop a short news article for DPaW staff communicating RAP news articles after each meeting. • RAP committee to complete and submit annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaires to Reconciliation Australia.
Develop new RAP	DPaW RAP committee	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New RAP is developed adopted.

