



# Fire Rescue Victoria Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

December 2022 – June 2024



# Acknowledgement of Country

**Fire Rescue Victoria proudly acknowledge  
the Traditional Owners of Country  
throughout Victoria.**

We recognise their continuing connection  
to land, waters and culture and their  
unique ability to care for Country.

We pay our respects to their Elders past,  
present and future, whose knowledge and  
wisdom has and will ensure the continuation  
of culture and traditional practices.



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## About The Artist and Artwork



**Samantha Richards is a descendent from the Wurundjeri and Dja Dja Wurrung tribes through the Terrick family. Samantha has great passion for combining creativity and culture, and enjoys sharing this through art and education.**

Samantha's business is called 'Connecting Two Worlds', and they're passionate about sharing traditional and modern Indigenous culture through interactive incursions, and art.

 @connecting\_two\_worlds  
 [connectingtwoworlds.com.au](https://connectingtwoworlds.com.au)



## ***Bunjil is the protector, watching over us.***

The themes of our artwork combine Victorian Indigenous art, fire, and the work that FRV does in the community.

The artwork is layered, using traditional Wurundjeri symbols. The story is about our stations across the community, represented by the large red and black circle. These are surrounded by smaller circles; meeting places where everybody talks.

The layers of red, yellow and orange represent the situations we respond to, and landscapes across Victoria, from the three triangles of mountain ranges, to the four circles of water, and the lines of everything in between.

The double circles represent the physical, mental and emotional strength of FRV members and their dedication to using combined knowledge: the single circles, to assist in supporting the community.

# A Message from Our Commissioner



## Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities continue to strengthen and grow with the ongoing practice of language, lore and cultural knowledge.

We recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to Victorian life and how this continues to enrich our society.

We acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who have come before us, who have fought tirelessly for the rights of their peoples and communities.

It is my privilege as Commissioner to present Fire Rescue Victoria's (FRV) first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2022-2024. Our Reflect RAP is a demonstration of our commitment to recognise and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and practices - to progress and foster collegiality, collaboration and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community.

FRV is located on the traditional lands made up of 47,000 plus peoples from 38 original nations that have been here for over 60,000 years. As such, FRV is committed to promoting respect, trust and positive relationships between our employees and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations. We support and adhere to all federal, state and global anti-discrimination and human rights legislation and guidance.

### This includes:

- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005

- Equal Opportunity Act (Victoria) 2010
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (Victoria) 2001
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (Victoria) 2006

Increasing and promoting cultural awareness among our members and staff requires improving our knowledge and the observance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, protocols and dates of significance.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' self-determination is a human right as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and we commit to working towards a future of equality, justice and strength.

### As a clear commitment of the first step in our reconciliation journey, we pledge to:

- Build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Encourage respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Take opportunities for reconciliation
- Track progress against our intentions

I encourage each of us, as individuals, managers and leaders, to take actions to implement our Reflect RAP and other RAPs that are to follow.

**Ken G. Block**  
Fire Rescue Commissioner  
Fire Rescue Victoria

# A Message from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia



## Reconciliation Australia welcomes Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

FRV 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 over 2.3 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 FRV 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 FRV, 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

# About FRV

## FRV was established on 1 July 2020 as part of Victoria's Fire Services Reforms.

There are 85 FRV fire and rescue stations across the state. Our firefighters operate 47 fire stations in metropolitan Melbourne and 38 regional stations, most of which are co-located with Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteer brigades.

FRV consists of approximately 4500 operational, corporate and technical employees as at 30 June 2022. While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who identify is low, we acknowledge that there are system and other limitations which may prevent people from identifying their cultural heritage and we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this.

We respond to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills.

Our operational, corporate and technical employees are highly skilled and collectively are ready to respond to emergencies across Victoria, Australia and the world.

We work as one in the emergency services sector. FRV proudly works with the CFA, which is a community-based volunteer fire service. Volunteers are vital to Victoria's strong fire and

rescue service capability. The safety of our community and our firefighters relies on us working together.

Our fire stations are staffed by career firefighters – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FRV is a new organisation that builds on the accomplishments Victoria's fire and rescue services have delivered for the community for more than a century. FRV's organisational Values are Community, Teamwork, Integrity, Respect and Accountability. Our values guide our work and shape our culture.

FRV's purpose is to keep Victorian communities safe.

### We achieve this through:

- delivering expert fire and rescue services to the community we serve
- driving systemic change to the built environment through reforms to building design, regulations and legislation, and
- educating the community through fire prevention programs that improve community safety and build resilience.

The Bidja Stone, located at FRV Burnley Complex, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.

Bidja Stone, which means fire store depicts the corroboree of Aboriginal clans of the Kulin Nation and other tribes who would meet for ceremony at Burnley Park.

Artists: Lee Darroch, Yorta Yorta, Mutti Mutti and Boon Wurrung, in collaboration with the Artery Cooperative.



# Our RAP and Our Vision for Reconciliation

## We continue to advocate for strategies to support equity and equality between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community.

### Our RAP will help us achieve this by:

- Guiding our relationship building between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, organisations, and the broader Australian community.
- Helping us continue to uncover and develop opportunities to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- Enriching our understanding and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- Helping us live our values and connect with Australian organisations who seek to be leaders in inclusion, and signal our intent to support the national reconciliation movement.
- Supporting our goal of achieving social and environmental responsibility when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Our Executive Leadership Team champions our RAP to encourage management and employees to understand and promote our RAP commitments and to be engaged in all aspects of our RAP.

Presently, FRV's Diversity and Inclusion Lead, in conjunction with those who have identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, have the lead on bringing this first RAP together. The establishment of a RAP Working Group which will lead subsequent RAPs is an action item for this Reflect RAP.

We believe this RAP will support us to build on our knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, as well as to help us cultivate that knowledge in the wider community. We look forward to strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and creating opportunities both within our organisation and externally.

Over the next 18 months FRV commits to the following actions and deliverables.



# Relationships



Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Lead
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	a. Identify and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June 2023	District Assistant Chief Fire Officer
	b. Research best practice approaches and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our sphere of influence.	February 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
2. Build relationships through acknowledging and celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	a. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our employees.	May 2023	Director Media and Communications
	b. RAP Working Group members are supported to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	c. Encourage and support employees and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. Support all on duty personnel to attend NRW events.	May 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	a. Communicate with and educate employees on our commitment to reconciliation.	Ongoing	Director Media and Communications
	b. Identify internal and external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	c. Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations / sector partners that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination and anti-racism strategies.	a. Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations, anti-discrimination and anti-racism.	May 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	b. Engage with internal stakeholders to conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	March 2024	Director Organisational Development & Business Partnering

# Respect



Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Lead
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	a. Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	August 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	b. Engage with internal and external stakeholders to conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	a. Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	April 2023	District Assistant Chief Fire Officers
	b. Increase employee understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2023	Director Media and Communications
	c. Increase employee understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural burning / fire and its use.	November 2023	Community Resilience
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	a. Raise awareness and share information amongst our employees about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	b. Introduce our employees to NAIDOC Week and encourage attendance at NAIDOC events by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	c. RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
8. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by increasing cultural safety within FRV.	a. Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags at the front of the building at FRV Headquarters and other FRV sites.	October 2023	Property Services Department
	b. Display Acknowledgment of Country Plaques at entry to FRV sites.	October 2023	Property Services Department
	c. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork to be displayed at all FRV office sites.	October 2023	Property Services Department
	d. Explore the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork for FRV to be used in logos and branding with the inclusion of signage and information for employees and public.	January 2023	Director Media and Communications
	e. Explore delivery options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety training.	December 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead

# Opportunities



Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Lead
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	a. Develop a business case and Employee Value Proposition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	February 2024	Senior Manager Diversity and Inclusion
	b. Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2023	Manager, Strategic Workforce Planning and Projects
	c. Explore establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network.	October 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	a. Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	January 2024	Senior Manager Diversity and Inclusion
	b. Investigate Supply Nation membership.	January 2024	Manager Procurement
	c. Establish procurement policies that monitor and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spend and adhere to the; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy; and</li> <li>• Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy</li> </ul>	March 2024	Manager Procurement
11. Improve the quality of services provided by FRV.	a. Develop a framework to identify Aboriginal providers and organisations that support provision of FRV services in a culturally competent manner to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.	June 2024	Manager Procurement
	b. Explore the development of a framework for the measurement of data collection and capture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.	April 2024	Corporate Strategy Performance and PMO Department



NAIDOC Week Event 2022 - Aboriginal Advancement League, Thornbury, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country

# Governance



Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Lead
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	a. Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	March 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	b. Draft a Terms of Reference reflective of self-determination principles for the RWG.	January 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	c. Establish Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	February 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	a. Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Annually	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
	b. Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	April 2023	Organisational Development and Business Partnering
	c. Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January 2023	Manager, Employee Advisory Services
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	a. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023	Diversity and Inclusion Lead
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	a. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2024	Diversity and Inclusion Lead

## Contact details

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