



**GOULBURN
BROKEN**

CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

2018 – 2020



VISION

To further strengthen relationships with Traditional Owners, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living and working across the Goulburn Broken CMA catchment.

To be leaders in innovative and collaborative action to strengthen cultural respect, economy and employment for Aboriginal people as we return Country to health.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The GB CMA acknowledges that Indigenous Australians were the first people on this land.

GB CMA acknowledges the Yorta Yorta people and Taungurung people as the Traditional Owners of the lands where our business is conducted. We

pay respects to their Elders past and present, and recognise their continuing obligations, rights and responsibilities to access and care for traditional lands and waters.

GB CMA has a long-standing relationship with the Corporations that represent Traditional Owners - Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) and Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (TCAC).

YYNAC represents 8 different clan groups, where the Yorta Yorta language is spoken by all of the Yorta Yorta Clans, including the Kailtheban, Wollithiga, Moira, Ulupna, Bangerang, Kwat Kwat, Yalaba Yalaba and Ngurai-illiamwurrung clans. Yorta Yorta Country takes in towns from Cohuna to a point west of Albury/ Wodonga and includes Echuca, Shepparton/Mooroopna, Murchison, Euroa, Benalla Wangaratta, Rutherglen Corowa and extends north to near Deniliquin in NSW.

TCAC represents the interests of the 15 different clan groups of Taungurung; Budhera-Bulok, Leuk-Yilam, Mum-Mum-Yilam, NaterrakBulok, Nira-Bulok, Waring-Yilam-Bulok, Yaran-Yilam-Bulok, Yiran-Yilam-Bulok, Yawang-Yilam-Bulok, Benbendore-Balluk, Gunung-Yellam, Ngurai-Ilaam-Balluk, Tenbringnellams, Walledriggers, and Warrinillum.

The Taungurung (Daung wurrung) people occupy much of central Victoria. Taungurung Country encompasses the area between the upper reaches of the Goulburn River and its tributaries north of the Dividing Range. From the Campaspe River in the west, eastwards to the Great Dividing Range, the Ovens River in the north and south to the top of the Great Dividing Range. Boundaries with adjoining Aboriginal tribes are respected in accordance with traditional laws.

GB CMA also acknowledges Aboriginal people - who as a result of dispossession, protection and assimilation policies of the day - were forcibly removed to missions and reserves on Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Country. Many of these people over generations have come to regard Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Country as home.

Today the lands on which our business is conducted are home to a diverse population of Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians. This Reconciliation Action Plan is focused on building respect, relationships and opportunity within our organisation, and where we can, influence more broadly.



OUR COMMITMENT

This Reconciliation Action Plan expresses our continuing commitment to reconciliation including as leaders for increased cultural respect, engagement, equity and opportunity for employment and business on Country for Traditional Owners, and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We are committed to these outcomes locally and through collaborative work with our Tri-State Alliance colleagues (7 Regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) bodies along the Murray River Corridor) to build capacity and capability for Aboriginal-led business, and employment. As the Tri-State Alliance lead facilitator, we have an opportunity with our Regional NRM colleagues to grow the economy and employment opportunity for Aboriginal people along the Murray Corridor encompassing (New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia), while managing cultural and natural values.

GB CMA has a demonstrated commitment to building respect, recognition, relationships and opportunity in partnership with Traditional Owners, and with relevant stakeholders such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community led organisations and other agencies focused on addressing disadvantage and creating opportunity across our catchment.

We understand there is much work to be done with Traditional Owners and the broader community to return Country to health, to protect cultural heritage, and to build relationships between Traditional Owners, the broader Aboriginal community and other Australians who live and work in the region.

We believe this Reconciliation Action Plan will guide our own organisation, and those who do business with us about how we can work together to achieve significant outcomes locally, and more broadly for reconciliation.

Chairperson

Goulburn Broken Catchment
Management Authority

CEO

Goulburn Broken Catchment
Management Authority

OUR BUSINESS

Our core business is land, water and biodiversity management in the catchment.

The Goulburn Broken CMA (GB CMA) is a statutory Authority established by the Victorian Parliament in 1997 under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. The GB CMA is accountable for its performance to the Minister for Water and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. The Goulburn Broken Catchment covers 2.4 million hectares, extending north from near the outskirts of Melbourne to the Murray River on the border of NSW.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment has a rich and diverse community. The catchment has an estimated population of 205,000 people, which includes 6,000 Indigenous Australians, many whom identify as the Traditional Owners of this area. There are approximately 59 staff working within the GB CMA, 3 Indigenous Natural Resource Management team members support our work with Traditional Owners.

Our Head Office is based in Shepparton, Victoria.

Our business is done with adherence to legislative and policy directions including the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, *Traditional Owner agreements*, *Native Title*, *Aboriginal Heritage*, *the National Water Initiative*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*, as well as the *Catchment and Land Protection Act*. Registered Aboriginal Parties have been appointed in Victoria to represent the interests and rights of Traditional Owners and the GB CMA works collaboratively with YYNAC and TCAC as Registered Aboriginal Parties.

Our work has included close collaboration in the development of Whole of Country Plans, Joint Management Plans, Regional Catchment Strategies and a range of on-Country activities aimed at increasing the engagement of Traditional Owners as partners in environmental and cultural resource management.

The Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-19 sets out the framework for coordinating land, water and biodiversity management in our catchment.

GB CMA also strives to implement directions from the Council of Australian Governments' Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage, the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) and Indigenous Opportunities Policy (IOP) alongside the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Affairs Framework and Aboriginal Economic Strategies.

WHICH RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN IS RIGHT FOR US?

Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan Framework provides organisations with a structured approach to advance reconciliation. There are four different types of Reconciliation Action Plans that an organisation can develop. These include: *Reflect*, *Innovate*, *Stretch* and *Elevate*. Each of these types is designed to suit an organisation at different stages of their reconciliation journey.

The GB CMA feels an *Innovate* Reconciliation Action Plan reflects where we are as an organisation at the present time. An *Innovate* approach focuses on developing and strengthening relationships with all Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

WHY WE HAVE DEVELOPED OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN?

We are intent on accelerating action and outcomes for growing the economy and employment of Aboriginal people while healing and caring for Country.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan was developed to capture and communicate the range of activities already in place to support reconciliation with our partners and stakeholders, and to prioritise the most effective action for future engagement and partnership.

The Reconciliation Action Plan development process was particularly focused on strengthening the effectiveness and impact of our partnerships and engagement with Traditional Owners, and the broader Aboriginal community.

We are acutely mindful of the continuing disadvantage Aboriginal people living across our catchment experience, including in relation to health and wellbeing, education and employment. We acknowledge that there have been inter-generational impacts from past government policies and practices on families, and communities.

We have a long-standing and demonstrated commitment to reconciliation, particularly through increased engagement as partners with Traditional Owners in natural and cultural resource management and employment. However, we believe we can achieve more through identifying and focusing on priority actions internally, and through the advice and input of our partners and stakeholders to increase respect, recognition and opportunity linked to our business.

Our CEO champions our Reconciliation Action Plan, supported by the Working Group which includes our Indigenous (Natural Resource Management Facilitator), the GB CMA Land and Biodiversity Program Manager, and the Indigenous Natural Resource Management (Cultural Heritage) Co-ordinator.

Externally our CEO, Chairperson and Indigenous (Natural Resource Management Facilitator) champion our Reconciliation Action Plan with partners and stakeholders.

The GB CMA also hosts the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Consultation Group comprised of the Traditional Owner Corporations and CMAs who work with other partner agencies and groups across the catchment.

We have also commenced consulting with the Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group.

The following provides a summary of our key achievements to date. These experiences have enabled us to learn and refine approaches to reconciliation and partnership. They have also guided us in the development of this Reconciliation Action Plan.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

- Initiated and developed the Goulburn Broken Reconciliation Action Plan (2017-2018)
- Development of the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Participation Plan (2017)
- Providing the Indigenous project lead for the Tri State Alliance – 7 Regional NRM bodies across the Murray River Corridor committed to growing the economy, employment and more efficient, effective cultural and resource management
- Contribution towards and adoption of Victorian CMA Indigenous Guidelines
- GB CMA were key drivers and supporters in the development of both Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Whole of Country Plans
- Established the Goulburn Broken Traditional Owners Consultation Group (2016)
- Ongoing support and integration of both Yorta Yorta (Woka Wolla) and Taungurung works crews into our Catchment management role (since 2010)
- Cross cultural training with Yorta Yorta and Taungurung people for CMA staff and
- Capacity and capability building of Yorta Yorta and Taungurung people for works on country including first aid training, fire training with DELWP, contract management training, Traditional Owner fire management with CFA (ongoing)
- Cultural awareness project development and support across the Catchment. Example projects include Rock Correa Walk (Dookie), Yea Wetlands Indigenous Garden, Mount Major Walking Trail and Gowrie Street Primary School Indigenous Garden (under development).
- Strong CMA culture of supporting Indigenous advancement
- Established the Wayne Tennant Indigenous Cadetship Program to provide vocational and higher education pathways for a local Aboriginal person in cultural and natural resource management (2016)

ACTION PLAN

RELATIONSHIPS

We acknowledge that the Traditional Owners of the land and waters we work on have an unbroken and continuing obligation, rights and interests in healing, protecting and working on country. It is critical that our organisation builds and maintains strong relationships with Traditional Owners so we can do better work on country together as partners. It is also critical that we build relationships with the broader Aboriginal community as we strive to grow business, education and employment opportunities to redress long-standing disadvantage for Traditional Owners, and other Aboriginal people living across our catchment.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 Working Group (WG) of CMA staff and reps from our YY/TCAC staff established and actively monitoring and reporting progress for Reconciliation Action Plan Actions | Terms of Reference in place for WG | March 2018 | WG |
| | Aboriginal Peoples are represented on the WG | In place | |
| | WG to oversee the development, endorsement & launch of the Plan | Launch May/ June 2018 | |
| | Meetings occur 2-3 times per year to monitor & report outcomes | March & October each year & as required by RA | |
| | Reporting process on the Plan's progress established for Traditional Owners, and local Reconciliation Group | April 2018 | |
| 2 Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships, and knowledge sharing between Aboriginal and other Australians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WG to organise an internal event for NRW – Register NRW events on the RA website – Collaborate and/or co-invest on an external event to mark NRW | | WG and all GB CMA organisation |
| 3 Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations to support positive outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to build as a primary relationship for business our relationship and agreements with YYNAC and TCAC – Develop relationships more broadly that could accelerate education & employment pathways, particularly with young people | | WG and all GB CMA organisation |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility | |
|--------|---|---|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 4 | Raise internal and external awareness of our Plan to promote reconciliation across the business | Embed Plan awareness into GB CMA cultural awareness training | 2018-2019 | WG and all GB CMA organisation |
| | | – Regularly brief Board members about Reconciliation Action Plan progress and outcomes, as a standard item on Board meeting agenda | On-going | WG reps |
| 5 | Continue to lead the Tri-State Alliance Indigenous project to broaden the base of relationships and opportunity for Aboriginal business and employment across the Murray Corridor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Report on progress with Tri-State to internal & external champions – Identify specific business and employment targets for the Tri State project, and capacity/capability building strategies and investments | 2018-2019 | WG and all GB CMA organisation |
| 6 | Investigate relationship building and shared activity with agency peers also committed to addressing health and wellbeing, education and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through their core business | – Meet with agencies such as Department of Health & Human Services, Department of Justice, Parks Victoria, Regional Development and DELWP to identify where shared activity can occur such as schools-based programs, procurement activity with Traditional Owners, opportunities and support to vulnerable youth for reconnection with country and culture | 2018-2019 | WG and all GB CMA organisation |
| 7 | Working Group to clarify the GB CMA role and potential activity in relation to existing regional and other policy and program initiatives aimed at Closing the Gap (COAG linked activity) | – Map all existing regional strategies and determine GB CMA potential role and activities to support each | 2018-2019 | WG |

RESPECT

Before dispossession and colonisation, Aboriginal people effectively managed the land, waters, cultural and natural resources of Australia over thousands of years. We respect the vast and deep knowledge, referred to today as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) that Aboriginal people applied to keeping country and people healthy. We respect that today it is in the best interests of country and people that we work as partners to heal the extensive damage to country, and disadvantage to Aboriginal people that has resulted from dispossession and colonisation.

It is critical to our business as managers of land and waters today that we find ways of respecting and working in partnership with traditional knowledge holders alongside contemporary knowledge holders. We firmly believe through this knowledge sharing that we will achieve our shared interest in seeing country and people healthy again.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility | |
|--------|---|--|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | GB CMA staff and Board continue to undertake cross-cultural education as part of induction, and professional development employees and leaders business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cross-cultural education will include appreciation of traditional ecological knowledge, local history and culture, alongside appropriate consultation processes for free, prior and informed consent decision-making with Traditional Owners in all land and water issues on Country – Cultural education platforms will be explored such as on-line, face to face, cultural immersion on Country and engagement in Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC activities | 2018-2020 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 2 | GB CMA will as part of their core cultural education program, including for induction, be supported to understand the significance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Overarching cultural protocol/ procedure document is developed and process for engaging for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, agreed with the Traditional Owner Corporations – Protocol includes approved wording and guideline for use in internal & external meetings | 2018 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 3 | Provide opportunities for Aboriginal staff to engage with their culture and communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish an internal opportunity for celebrating culture with GB CMA peers – Facilitate release for Aboriginal staff for community and cultural events | In place | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility | |
|--------|--|--|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 4 | Support Aboriginal Cultural Strengthening and respect for country for young Aboriginal people living across the catchment in partnership with Traditional Owners, and relevant stakeholders through activities such as Youth Journey with Traditional Owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investigate a cross-agency investment into 2 camps per year for young people with Traditional Owners and relevant other organisations interested in supporting young people – Investigate how camps could include information about education and careers in cultural and natural resource management, and related industries | 2018-2020 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 5 | Provide Aboriginal and other young Australians with an opportunity to work together to learn about, and to protect cultural and natural resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investigate broadening our schools-based programs for bush foods gardens development, and cultural and natural resource management education – Integrate health and nutrition in cultural education and interpretation programs for youth, to assist with region/catchment wide challenges linked to poor health and obesity for young people | 2018-2020 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 6 | Provide Aboriginal and Australians broadly with an opportunity to work together to learn about, and to protect cultural and natural resources such as with Landcare groups working collaboratively with Traditional Owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Engage with relevant other stakeholders such as Landcare and Volunteer groups to understand where they can assist RAP activities and outcomes | 2018-2020 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |

OPPORTUNITIES

The GB CMA maintains a significant commitment to increasing employment, procurement and Aboriginal-led business as part of our core business activities. This has been evidenced in our early investment and collaboration to assist the establishment of the YYNAC (Woka Walla – Country and Water) and TCAC contract works enterprises. It is our commitment to, and central to our core business to see far greater engagement of Aboriginal people in the business of managing country, and related industries such as tourism and sustainable agriculture.

We have a significant initiative in place – the Tri-State Alliance – that is providing an emerging connected leadership across the Murray Corridor to accelerate and build Aboriginal-led business and employment. Our commitment to this initiative will include being clear about the capacity and capabilities of Aboriginal land-based businesses, and where we are best placed in our role as CMAs to assist Aboriginal people.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Continue to lead the Tri- State Alliance Indigenous project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gather information about capacity and capability needs and interests of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal landholders for procurement and other business, such as sustainable agriculture and tourism – Identify and collaborate with relevant investors to assist capacity and capability building needs, such as government, the business and philanthropic communities – Investigate the knowledge and awareness levels amongst Tri-State Alliance partners about government policy such as the Indigenous Opportunities Policy, and how these incentives could be applied to increasing employment and business opportunities | 2018-2020 GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 2 | Continue to support YYNAC and TCAC for Works on Country and more broadly for engagement in natural and cultural resource management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Employment allocated to the Corporations (0.6-0.8 FTE) for partnership activity with GB CMA – Investigate how collaborative activity with peer agencies could increase the procurement offers to YYNAC and TCAC – Promote capabilities of Traditional Owner work teams to partner agencies and community | 2018-2019 GB CMA organisation guided by WG |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility | |
|--------|---|--|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 | Investigate a GB CMA Education and Employment Aboriginal Pathways Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue the Wayne Tennant Scholarship to promote a tertiary pathway for a young Aboriginal person to cultural and natural resource management – Collaborate with Traditional Owners and relevant other organisations for vocational training opportunities for young people – Promote with partners vacancies/ opportunities for employment such as DELWP Project Fire Fighters, Parks Victoria positions | 2018-2019 | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 4 | Liaise with YYNAC and TCAC regarding further employment and business initiatives that could be supported from the CMA, such as cultural tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investigate as part of Whole of Country plans and relevant other directions, and forums such as the YYNAC and TCAC Consultation Groups, where collaborative action could progress Traditional Owner led business on Country | 2018 Ongoing | GB CMA organisation guided by WG |
| 5 | Ensure access and information about employment opportunities within the GB CMA are provided to YYNAC, TCAC and more broadly where appropriate for Aboriginal potential applicants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review GB CMA HR and recruitment policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal employees, and potential future applicants – Connect Reconciliation Action Plan intent to our endorsed GB CMA Diversity & Inclusion Plan (2017-2022) | 2018 | GB CMA People & Wellbeing Manager |

GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

The GB CMA maintains a significant commitment to increasing employment, procurement and Aboriginal-led business as part of our core business activities. The GB CMA believes a short (2018-2020) timeline of achievable actions followed by a review period is the best way forward in driving the Reconciliation Action Plan process.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|-----------|----------------|
| Report the Plan's achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Plan's Impact Measurement Report | Complete and submit the Plan's Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | TBA | WG |
| | Develop and implement the internal systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on Plan activities. | 2018 | |
| Report the Plan's achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally | Share the Plan's achievements, challenges and findings with GB CMA partners and stakeholders, community-wide. | 2018-2020 | WG |
| Review, refresh and update the Plan | Conduct annual reviews of the Plan for lessons and refinement of actions. | May 2019 | WG |
| | Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new Plan, based on the findings, challenges and achievements of our Innovate Plan. | | |
| | Continue to Liaise with Reconciliation Australia about our progress and plans for activity beyond 2020. | | |

REFERENCES

- Aboriginal Participation Guidelines for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities (Victorian - 2016)
- Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Management Strategy (2013-2019)
- Goulburn Broken Regional Biodiversity Strategy (2016-2021)
- Memorandum of Understanding YYNAC and Goulburn Broken CMA (2014-2017)
- Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Whole of Country Plan (2017)
- Tri-State Alliance Project Prospectus
- Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Whole of Country Plan (2012-2017)
- Wayne Tennant Cadetship Pilot Program (Goulburn Broken CMA)
- GB CMA Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2017-2022)



GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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