



Reconciliation ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE RAP



*"Seven Sisters" by Yarity Heffeman.
©Yarity Heffeman 2014 - courtesy Better World Arts*



About the artwork:

Yaritji's painting describes one of the epic Tjukurpa (dreamtime) stories which is central to Anangu cosmology. The story is about the Seven Sisters' journey across Australia, being pursued by Wati Nyiru (a man called Nyiru). Wati Nyiru was in love with the eldest sister but she didn't want anything to do with him. Nyiru played many tricks on the sisters but the eldest sister was always one step ahead of him and thwarted his attempts to capture her. Many land marks were left along this journey and they can be seen all over Australia. Each region has its own stories about the sisters. Today we can see the sisters in the sky, known to astronomers as the Pleiades. Nyiru is still chasing them, and is the constellation of Orion. National Shelter acknowledges Better World Arts.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION



National Shelter is committed to both the spirit and the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal people in Australia. National Shelter together with its State and Territory Shelter members aims to develop and maintain relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and strives to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations in core activities.

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2016-2018

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OUR BUSINESS



National Shelter is a non-government peak housing advocacy organisation that aims to improve housing access, affordability, appropriateness, safety and security for people on low incomes. Since 1976, National Shelter has worked towards this goal by influencing government policy and action, and by raising public awareness about housing issues Australia wide. National Shelter, with members in each State and Territory of Australia are dedicated to advocating for a fairer, more just housing system, particularly for low-income Australian households. Together their shared aim is to make housing more accessible, affordable, appropriate, safe and secure for everyone.

National Shelter and the State and Territory Shelters comprise approximately 30 employees across Australia and whilst each Shelter is state-focused, together they geographically cover the nation. Currently no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are employed at any of the state Shelters however, one Aboriginal person holds a leadership role as Chair at NT Shelter. Shelters are operating in South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania, ACT, Northern Territory (Darwin and Alice Springs), Queensland, Homelessness Australia and the National Association of Tenant Organisations. Whilst there is no Shelter in Victoria as such, Council to Homeless Persons (Vic) are members of the National Shelter Council.

OUR RAP

The National Shelter RAP actions and targets encompass the activities undertaken by National Shelter staff and the National Shelter Council comprising State and Territory Shelters, Homelessness Australia and the National Organisation of Tenant Unions. Members take responsibility to maintain respectful relationships with and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and strive to continue to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in its policy and advocacy work.

The Executive officers of National Shelter and each of the State and Territory Shelters commend the RAP to their respective Boards, staff and members and call on them all to support the actions and targets contained within it.

RAP WORKING GROUP

The National Shelter RAP working group consists of:

Adrian Pisarski
Travis Gilbert
Jean Ah Chee
Alice Clark
Amanda Taylor

Executive Officer
Executive Officer
President
Executive Director
Stakeholder Engagement Manager

National Shelter
ACT Shelter
NT Shelter, Aboriginal Representative
Shelter SA
Shelter SA



RELATIONSHIPS

Respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders including community members and government and non-government employees are essential to understand and advocate for housing, policy and services to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

| Action | Responsibility | Timeline | Target (for all National Shelter Council Members, State and Territory Shelters) |
|---|--|--|--|
| The RAP working group continues to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions and tracking progress and reporting. | Executive Officers of Shelter SA, ACT and Homelessness Australia | October 2015 Report June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RAP working group oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. Meet twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation. |
| Celebrate National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships. | Shelter Boards and Shelter Executive Officers | 27 May – 3 June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise at least one internal event each year. |
| Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians to build relationships (e.g. meetings, activities, workshops) | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Report June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/specific services are invited to participate in Shelter led meetings at least 3 times per year and for National Shelter up to twice per year. Explore representation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to join National Shelter Council. Shelter organisations attend at least 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led events/meetings per year. Distribute eBulletins and newsletters to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. |
| Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/people/communities with regard to housing issues and housing and homelessness. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | May 2016 Review June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/people/communities who can be invited to participate in the consultation process when required. Update list regularly Seek the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/people/communities with regard to housing and homelessness issues. |

RESPECT

Demonstrating respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is important to National Shelter because of their status as Australia's First Peoples and our commitment to upholding human rights. National Shelter recognises the Traditional Owners of the land we live and work on out of respect and understand that colonisation has had profound effects on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages, family and social and economic well-being.

| Action | Responsibility | Timeline | Target (for all National Shelter Council Members, State and Territory Shelters) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Engage employees in understanding the protocols around Acknowledgement to Country and Conduct Welcome to Country to ensure there is shared meaning behind the ceremonies. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | June 2016 May 2016 Report June annually Review June 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a protocol document. Include in new employee orientation process Develop a current list of contacts for conducting Welcome to Country. Arrange for a Traditional Owner to give a Welcome to Country at significant community and/or formal events at least once per year. Conduct an Acknowledgement to Country at all public/private meetings. Senior staff are capable of replying to a Welcome to Country. |
| Engage Shelter employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of different cultural backgrounds in order to lay the foundation for other RAP actions to be achieved. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | June 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and pilot a cultural awareness training strategy. |
| Undertake and/or promote activities that build cultural awareness outside of the organisation (e.g. through public websites, support for public cultural activities). | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Report June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and/or participate in at least one cultural activity/event annually. Promote cultural activities on website, written publications (e.g. newsletters) and/or on social media. |
| Inform stakeholders about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing issues, news, solutions, progress and advocacy (e.g. through social media, meetings, newsletters). | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Report June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile and distribute at least 4 newsletters/e-bulletins etc. to stakeholders and members relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing issues each year. Post at least 4 items to social media each year. Publish at least 2 media releases each year. |
| Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, non-Aboriginal staff and stakeholders to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities through NAIDOC week events. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | May 2016 July 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to Shelter staff and stakeholders participating in NAIDOC week activities. Provide opportunities for Shelter staff and stakeholders to participate in NAIDOC week activities. |

OPPORTUNITIES

Create and implement culturally appropriate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to engage more with the organisation.

| Action | Responsibility | Timeline | Target (for all National Shelter Council Members, State and Territory Shelters) |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Investigate opportunities within State and Territory Shelters to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment Opportunities. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Review June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR procedures and policies to ensure barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are able to be addressed. Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. Pilot different approaches to increasing Indigenous employment within the organisation (this may include training pathways, apprenticeships, internships, cadetships, work experience). Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media. |
| Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity within State and Territory Shelters. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Review June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review procurement policies so barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses are able to be addressed. Investigate becoming a member of Supply Nation or partnering with local Indigenous Chamber of Commerce. Educate staff about using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business. |
| Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and agencies to inform submissions to legislation and policy review. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Review June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate, National Shelter submissions relating to housing and homelessness will include material contributed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. |
| Strive to improve the provision of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers/ clients/ members/stakeholders. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Review June annually June 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend any specific forums/meetings to seek advice and from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/people/ communities with regard to current service provision and improvement opportunities. Develop and implement a feedback process from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations/people/ communities with regard to current |

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| | | | service provision and improvement opportunities. |
| Raise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and service provision issues at meetings with other service providers, governments and ministers. | All executive members of the National Shelter Council | Review June annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for collaboration between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal agencies. • Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and service provision issues as a standing meeting agenda item. • Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and service provision issues in regular newsletters/ e-bulletins etc. |

TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

| Action | Responsibility | Timeline | Target |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|---|
| Report achievements, challenges and learning to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report | RAP Working Group | September annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and submit the consolidated RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually. |
| Evaluate the RAP and associated activities | RAP Working Group | June - August annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a consolidated report annually. |

CONTACT DETAILS

For more information about the National Shelter RAP, please contact:

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We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of the ancestral lands we live and work on and their deep feelings of attachment and relationship to country.



