



# REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN





## ABOUT OUR ARTWORK

In 2022, Mills Oakley commissioned Trevor Eastwood, a member of the Ngamba people on the Barwon River, part of Kamiloroi country, to create a special work representing Mills Oakley using indigenous motifs. Dots and contour lines are used to depict the diversity of modern Australia and bridging the gap between law, business and justice and also connecting five hubs representing the five Mills Oakley offices and the collaboration and connection that happens there. Journey lines depict the story of Mills Oakley and its people.

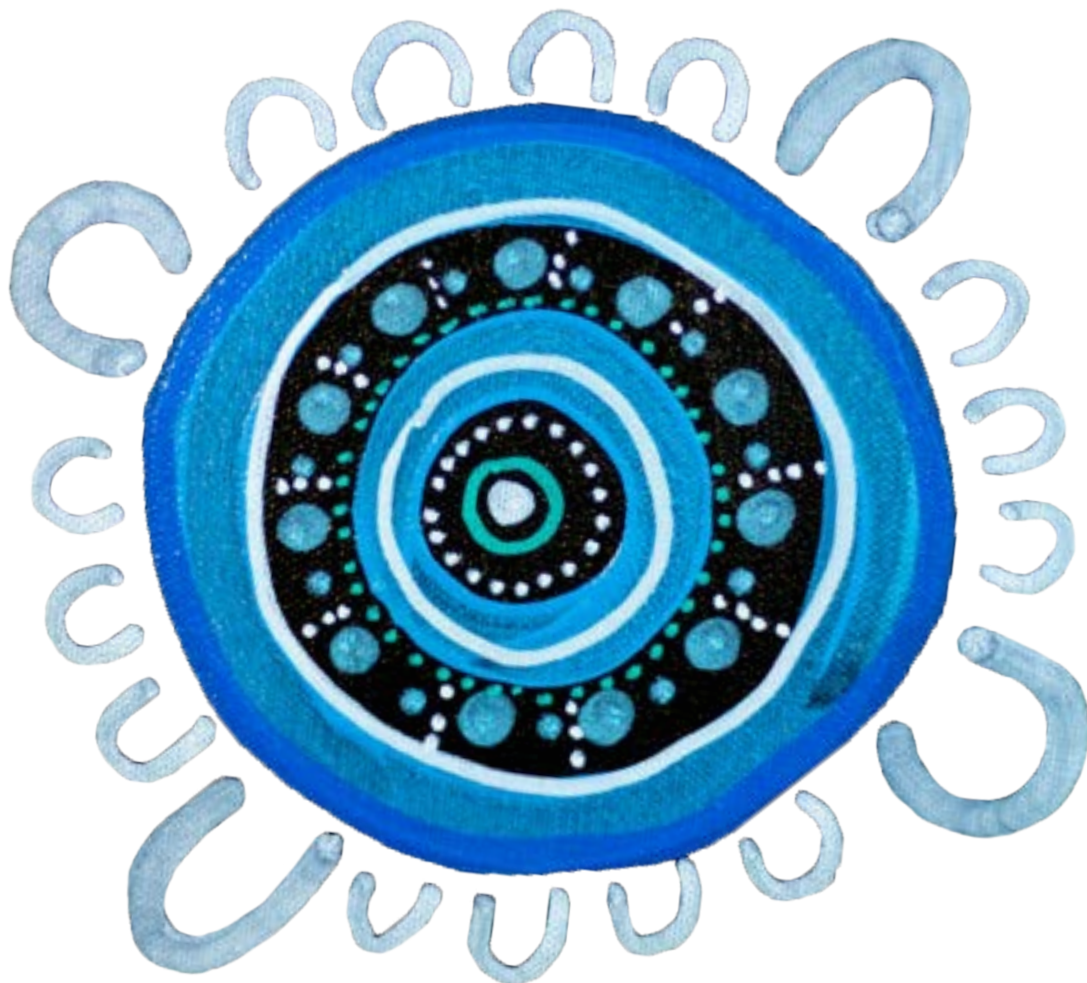






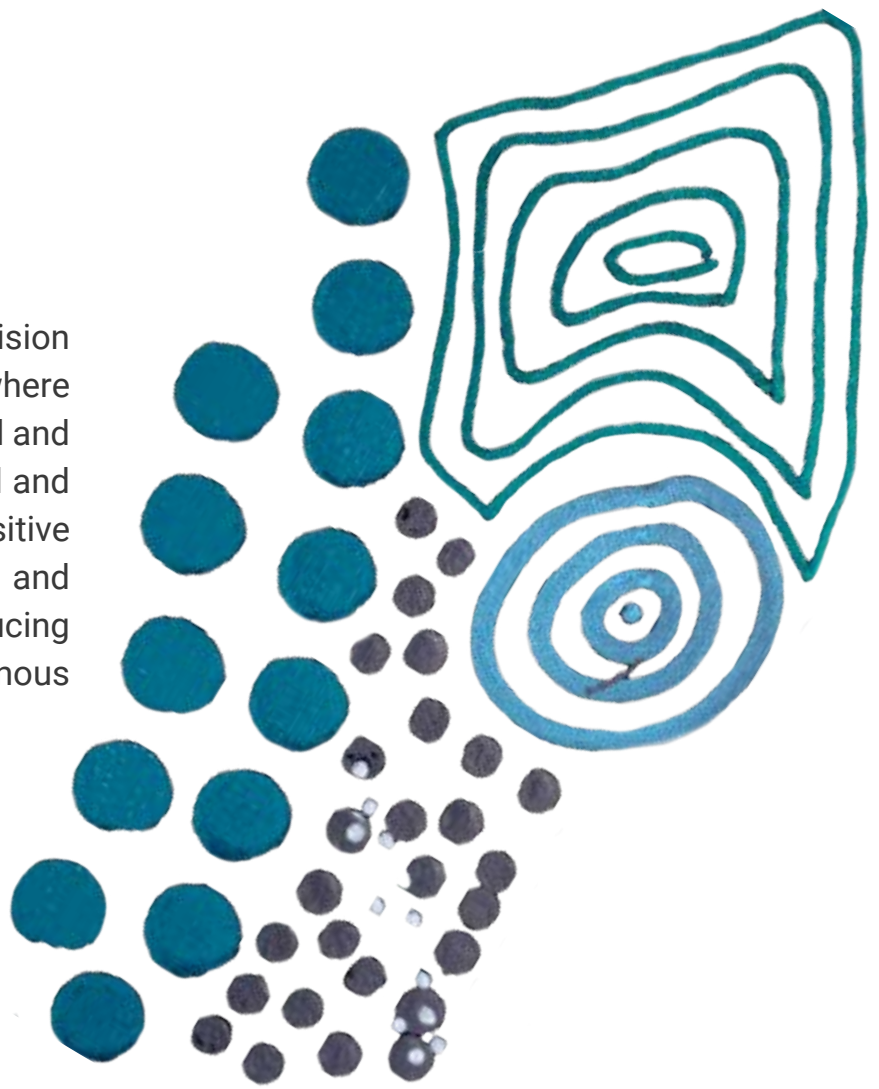
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Mills Oakley's offices are located on the traditional lands of the [Bunurong Boon Wurrung](#) and [Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation](#) (Melbourne), [Gadigal People of the Eora Nation](#) (Sydney), [Turrbal and Jagera/Yuggera Peoples](#) (Brisbane), [Ngunnawal Peoples](#) (Canberra) and [Noongar Whadjuk Peoples](#) (Perth), who are the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Mills Oakley shares Reconciliation Australia's vision of a reconciled, just and equitable Australia: where the voices, experiences and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples are fundamental and empowered. We are committed to creating positive and lasting change in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to reducing inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.



## OUR ROLE

The role of Mills Oakley in the achievement of this vision is to work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and stakeholders to overcome the challenges and disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians. It is our responsibility to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Australians and acknowledge their importance in our nation's history and future.

As a leading independent Australian law firm, it is crucial for Mills Oakley to contribute to a better community. This cannot be done without recognising the challenges which Indigenous Australians have faced and continue to face in the Australian community.

Mills Oakley believes that we are all, as Australians, products of the legacy of colonisation, and that the responsibility for the active effort of reconciliation lies with each of us.



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Every journey begins with a single step. The Mills Oakley Reflect RAP marks the beginning of a period of introspection on our firm's role in fostering strong and productive relationships with Australia's Indigenous Peoples.

The Reflect stage of the RAP is also about developing a practical plan of action. We are all familiar with the old business adage 'what gets measured gets done.' This process begins with ensuring that our firm has the right infrastructure in place. That means empowering the relevant people within our organisation and providing a mechanism for these people to report to our Board. It also means setting expectations on what we hope to achieve in the Reflect stage of our RAP and how we measure those outcomes.

Of course, all of this is a path towards a greater end. We are genuinely excited by the scope for a national law firm to take a leading role in making a difference in the lives of peoples within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. That process begins at home: focusing on cultural learning and promoting a sense of respect for our First Peoples. We also believe that we have much to contribute by engaging with Indigenous businesses and expanding the employment opportunities to indigenous persons.

In this document, you will find a detailed blueprint of how we seek to achieve these goals and how Mills Oakley is committed to reconciliation with Australia's Indigenous Peoples. We look forward to continuing the conversation.



John Nerurker  
Chief Executive Officer





## OUR BUSINESS

Mills Oakley is a full-service, independent commercial law firm with a national client base, over 100 partners and more than 700 staff servicing clients located in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and Perth. With a history of over 150 years of legal practice, Mills Oakley has come a long way; however, our core values remain the same.

Mills Oakley's lawyers have a diverse range of legal backgrounds that enable us to deliver advice and solutions for a wide array of sector specialisations. We service a full range of clients, from corporate through to government departments and agencies, private companies, not-for-profits and individuals.

We understand that the practice of law is not only about excellent technical skills but also about people. We are committed to making the legal system accessible through our Pro Bono initiatives, and are actively involved in our community through our participation in numerous community development and fundraising programs.

Mills Oakley is a proud member of the Diversity Council Australia, an independent, not-for-profit workplace diversity adviser to businesses in Australia. Through this connection we strive to foster and promote an inclusive culture for all with equal access to opportunities and growth throughout our firm.

After many years of collaboration and building expertise in this space, Mills Oakley took the step in January 2021 of launching our own not-for-profit law firm dedicated to supporting the missing middle.

Everyday Justice operates from every Mills Oakley office throughout Australia, with local MO staff and partners supplementing the Everyday Justice team with their own expertise and mentorship. Everyday Justice has developed a specialised model whereby free legal services can be provided to eligible clients through the use of technology, irrespective of location.

All of our lawyers are encouraged to use their skills for community value, leading to a number of affiliations with legal support groups.

We bring all of these skills, resources and experience to our Reconciliation Action Plan.





# OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Mills Oakley has developed a 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan in recognition that our organisation is in the formative stages of a reconciliation journey. This is the first Reconciliation Action Plan developed by the organisation. The 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan provides a platform for us to establish meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and lay strong foundations for the development of future Reconciliation Action Plans.

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan commences an exploration of how we can strengthen internal processes and build the cultural competency of our staff. Mills Oakley intends to review this process in one year's time and advance to an 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan. We believe it is critical to commit the time needed to adequately assess the internal needs of the organisation and to progress our journey.

The development of our Reconciliation Action Plan has been an experience shared across Mills Oakley, including our Diversity & Inclusion Committee and the RAP Working Group as part of MOSAIC initiatives. The Diversity & Inclusion Committee, with assistance from the RAP Working Group will oversee the progress of the plan and provide updates to the Board.

Our RAP journey may only just be beginning but we are proud to be taking the first steps.



# RELATIONSHIPS

## FOCUS AREAS: DEVELOPMENT OF RAP WORKING GROUP, INTERNAL AWARENESS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish RAP Working Group	Monitor, track and report the progress of the RAP implementation across all areas of the organisation to the Board	Complete	D&I Committee
	Ensure the working group oversees the endorsement and launch of RAP		
Build internal and external relationships	Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey	2 months	RAP Working Group
Participate and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Introduce our staff to NRW by encouraging staff to attend a NRW event	May	RAP Working Group
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff	May	RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff to participate in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	May and ongoing	RAP Working Group
Raise internal awareness of RAP	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments	1 month	RAP Working Group
	Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP	3 months	RAP Working Group
	Amend the staff induction checklist to include reference to the RAP	2 months	HR Manager
	Publish the RAP on the organisational intranet for easy access by staff	2 weeks	HR Manager



# RESPECT



## FOCUS AREAS: CULTURAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Investigate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	Conduct an internal review to determine cultural awareness training needs within the organisation, including to assess cultural competency and areas for development, such as understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	6 months	RAP Working Group
	Hold two organisational workshops/guest speaker series to bolster organisational cultural awareness	6 months	RAP Working Group
	Explore opportunities for cultural awareness for all staff	Each meeting of RAP Working Group	RAP Working Group
Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	Develop – 2 months Implement – 6 months	RAP Working Group
Participate and celebrate NAIDOC Week	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities	July	RAP Working Group
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area	July	RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff to participate in an external NAIDOC event or initiative	July and ongoing	RAP Working Group



# OPPORTUNITIES

FOCUS AREAS: EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPLIER AGREEMENTS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Promote opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	Promote employment opportunities in our business for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	12 months	HR Manager & RAP Working Group
Investigate opportunities for procurement of goods/services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	9 months	National Practice Manager & RAP Working Group
	Establish business relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses as part of our procurement and supply chain management	12 months	National Practice Manager & RAP Working Group

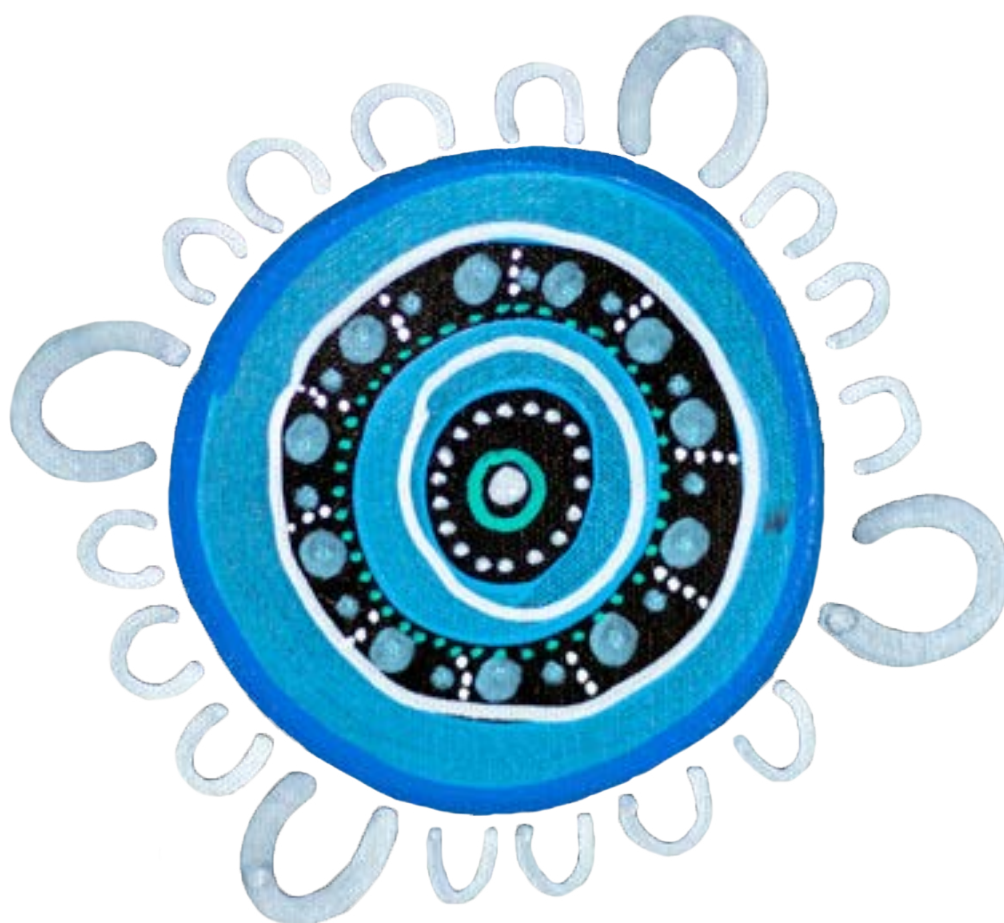




# TRACKING AND REPORTING

## FOCUS AREAS: BUILDING SUPPORT, CLEAR PROJECT OUTLINE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Build support for the RAP	Develop resource needs for RAP development and implementation	Complete	D&I Committee
	Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities	4 months	RAP Working Group
Review and refresh RAP	Review RAP based on lessons learned, and identify and record both achievements and ongoing challenges	4 months after reporting	RAP Working Group





# CONTACT



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Chief Executive Officer

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