

**Rural Lifestyle Options Australia**  
**Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan**  
**2017 - 2018**



# Table of Contents

● The Artwork Story	3
● Our Business	5
● Our Reconciliation Action Plan	6
● Our Partnerships and Current Activities	7
● Relationships	8
● Respect	9
● Opportunities	10
● Tracking Progress and Reporting	11

Supporting a life of  
**CHOICE**



**RECONCILIATION**  
ACTION PLAN

---

**REFLECT**



## The Artwork Story



*In August 2017, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia approached locally known and internationally renowned artist Mr Derek Fogarty to create a piece of artwork to reflect the work the organisation does within the local community. Derek created a three canvas artwork piece for our Main Office Reception and to be incorporated into our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan named 'The Helping Hands of RLOA'. We thank Derek for taking the time to create this piece for us, which now sits in our Main Office Reception.*

### The Helping Hands of RLOA

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is an organisation, with good people. Who help the people of the Scenic Rim with disabilities, enjoy and be included in the community.

Allowing them to embrace life to the fullest and enjoy activities the same as everyone else. To have connection with country, on trips including fishing to make them happy.

This art piece, represents RLOA's helping hands in bringing these wonderful people together. Breaking down barriers, that were in their way.

The circles represent them together, and the large dots, means the travels they've taken.

The red and blue represent the Scenic Rim's mountains and rivers.

My hat goes off to RLOA, for their vision, compassion and love, that has built strong connections within our beautiful community.

**"NUMALA WANI KUBILL JAGUN"**

*"Embrace thee beautiful country."*

Derek Fogarty  
Mununjali Artist  
2017







## Our Business

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Ltd is a not for profit organisation registered with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to provide disability supports to people aged 0 to 65 years in Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, and Tasmania. Our organisation is also approved to provide Aged Care – Home Care supports to people 65 years and over (50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania and Mental Health supports to people aged 0 to 65 years living in Queensland.

Our Main Office is situated in Beaudesert, Queensland and we acknowledge that our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan journey will commence at the local level. We anticipate that over time we will open new offices as we commence services in other locations.

We believe that the experiences and learnings that are gained locally will assist our Reconciliation Action Plan journey as we expand to other locations. We currently employ over 80 staff, and have 1 employee who identifies with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia enriches the lives of people with a disability by creating opportunities and skills for life. Our story began over 36 years ago when group of families established a self-help group when their children were toddlers. Through their passion, drive, commitment, and hard work Rural Lifestyle Options Australia was established.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia has been providing disability services in the Scenic Rim Regional Council area for over 24 years and has undergone major expansion in services over the last two years to offer supports under Mental Health and more recently, under Aged Care.

Our values incorporate:

- Building authentic connections
- Belief in lifelong learning
- Compassion
- Empowerment
- Respect
- Innovation

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia affirms the principles of the United Nations Declaration of the Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability and proactively works to promote, protect and advocate to ensure the full and equal employment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

## Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia began its Reconciliation Action Plan journey in 2017, building on our desire to be more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and to support existing and encourage new employees who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia aims to ensure that our organisation and our work reflect values of diversity and inclusion and ensure equality of access to our supports and services. We aim to consult with, establish new partnerships and grow our existing relationships and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, so we can provide improved services to them.

With the commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, we have identified a gap in our knowledge and understanding in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. As Rural Lifestyle Options Australia has a commitment to service provision to all Australians, we considered a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan as an appropriate framework to develop and grow our cultural knowledge and realise our vision for reconciliation. Rural Lifestyle Options Australia recognises that the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan can bring about future social change and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Our organisation's core values align with our genuine desire to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. This will build our understanding and capacity to improved services and opportunities and the development of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is our first step in that journey. In doing so we have developed and presented a case to our Board, and Executive Team to endorse the development of a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

Through an expression of interest process, we established a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group comprising representatives from Administration staff, Support Staff, and Management. This group is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and refreshing of the Reconciliation Action Plan at the expected expiry date.

We also convened a Reconciliation Action Plan Development Workshop led by an aboriginal consultant to help guide us in the formulating of our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. This has led to a better understanding of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan journey and how it can set the foundation for future engagement and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across communities in which we work.

The Reconciliation Action Plan will be championed by our Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team, with the assistance from the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group. As the plan is implemented, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia employees will be identified as key champions within the organisation who will serve as sources of information to the wider workforce regarding the implementation of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Reconciliation Action Plan framework of Relationships, Respect, and Opportunities outlined here in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan document identifies our organisation's commitment over the coming twelve (12) months. It is our intention that we will develop long-term sustainable activities that will have mutual benefit for Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities as we progress beyond our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

## Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia has established relationships and collaboration with local Aboriginal businesses including the Mununjali Housing and Development Company, where we have provided National Disability Insurance Scheme information sessions for their members. We have also supported local events held at Jymbilung House. We recognise that we have a long way to go in improving these liaisons across the many communities in which we work.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia plans to extend these relationships and develop new partnerships in the development of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan by connecting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to assist us in educating our staff about their cultures and beliefs. In addition, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia commits to gaining better understanding of the most appropriate ways in which we can provide supports to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia also aims to gain greater insight about the issues, barriers, and opportunities presenting for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and commit to including reconciliation actions and activities in our workplaces.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia will provide a Reconciliation Action Plan Development Workshop which will assist our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group in further understanding the process and will provide guidance in the development of this important document.







	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1.1	Establish a Reconciliation Action Plan Development Group	Chairman of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and review a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan, comprising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation.</li> </ul>
1.2	Build internal and external relationships	Project Officer	November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations in the communities in which our organisation works that we could approach to connect with regarding our reconciliation journey.</li> <li>Develop a list of Reconciliation Action Plan organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>
1.3	Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week	Chairperson of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	27 May – 3 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host a single internal event to raise awareness with our staff.</li> <li>Ensure our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group encourages our participation in an external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.</li> </ul>
1.4	Raise internal awareness of our Reconciliation Action Plan	Chief Executive Officer	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a communication strategy to advise staff about the Reconciliation Action Plan, to raise awareness of all staff across the organisation about the Reconciliation Action Plan and to outline the commitment, and responsibilities of all involved. (Aligned to Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Strategic Plan 2017-2018 – Positive Partnerships initiative)</li> <li>Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our Reconciliation Action Plan.</li> </ul>
1.5	Include other internal and external stakeholders, in implementing the RAP.	Chairperson of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	November 2017 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build upon existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations in communities in which Rural Lifestyle Options Australia works.</li> <li>Engage our Board &amp; Executive Team in the delivery of Reconciliation Action Plan outcomes.</li> <li>Raise external awareness of our Reconciliation Action Plan by engaging local aboriginal businesses in the RAP process.</li> <li>Raise awareness of the Recognise campaign with Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Staff.</li> <li>Support our state/territory based reconciliation council.</li> </ul>





	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
2.1	Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	General Manager	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capture data and measure our employees current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and achievement.</li> <li>Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation.</li> <li>Develop a strategy to increase the awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and achievements across our organisation.</li> </ul>
2.2	Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	Chairperson of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	July 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate an Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workshop – To 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.</li> <li>Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting events in the communities in which we work.</li> <li>The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group will actively promote and support employees and participants' engagement in local NAIDOC celebrations.</li> </ul>
2.3	Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Chief Executive Officer	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore existing partnerships to determine which of our partner organisations have a current Reconciliation Action Plan and promote awareness where required.</li> <li>Scope and develop a list of local traditional owners of the lands and waters within the areas in which our organisations operates.</li> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols).</li> <li>Invite guest speakers to attend staff meetings to talk about their culture.</li> <li>Explore online resources to assist staff to better understand cultural practices.</li> </ul>
2.4	Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural celebrations as part of our core business.	General Manager	July 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate NAIDOC Week resources to Rural Lifestyle Options Australia staff and sites to share the meaning of NAIDOC week.</li> <li>Promote the NAIDOC week celebrations on the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia website and through other social media programs.</li> <li>Encourage staff and participants to celebrate National Reconciliation Week</li> <li>Encourage staff and participants to engage in NAIDOC week celebrations.</li> <li>Investigate cultural immersion programs/ Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool to be used by staff as part of their professional development.</li> </ul>



	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
3.1	Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	General Manager	May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct survey of representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within current Rural Lifestyle Options Australia workforce.</li> <li>Develop an action plan to demonstrate actions toward exploration of opportunities and options to create and grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in our workforce.</li> </ul>
3.2	Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	Chief Executive Officer	June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> <li>Develop a business case for how our organisation can develop a supplier diversity program.</li> </ul>
3.3	Develop opportunities for potential employment	General Manager	June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop options and potential opportunities where Rural Lifestyle Options Australia can promote through partnerships and in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to present to the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.</li> <li>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships).</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to increase pro bono activities and support scholarships.</li> </ul>





	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
4.1	Build support for the RAP	General Manager	March - April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.</li> <li>Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on Reconciliation Action AP activities.</li> <li>Complete the annual Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>
4.2	Review and Refresh RAP	Chairperson of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	March - April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for review.</li> <li>Submit draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.</li> </ul>

Supporting a life of  
**CHOICE**

### Contact Details

Michelle Latailakepa  
Chief Executive Officer  
**1300 032 175**  
[ceo@rloa.org.au](mailto:ceo@rloa.org.au)





RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

---

**REFLECT**

Supporting a life of  
**CHOICE**

**Rural Lifestyle Options Australia**

**[www.rloa.org.au](http://www.rloa.org.au)**

**1300 032 175**

