

Reflect

Destination Wollongong Reconciliation Action Plan



1 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

Acknowledgement

DESTINATION WOLLONGONG ACKNOWLEDGES ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AND THEIR CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTION TO THIS LAND. THEIR STORIES ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAND AND HOLD GREAT SIGNIFICANCE TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES, FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE SEA. DESTINATION WOLLONGONG IS COMMITTED TO WELCOMING VISITORS TO THE ILLAWARRA, TO IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF DHARAWAL COUNTRY.

Foreword

It is my honour to provide a Foreword to the Destination Wollongong Reconciliation Action Plan – a first for this organisation.

It has been my great pleasure to work closely with Destination Wollongong over the years and have always been impressed with Destination Wollongong's ability to generate new tourism ideas, work with the community and find ways to create social and economic benefits for Wollongong.

The RAP takes this community engagement to another level. As a proud Aboriginal man – I thank Destination Wollongong's Board and Management for laying out their commitment to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in promoting Dharawal country and inviting visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the area and the many activities that are staged here.

Reconciliation can be defined as 'a situation in which two peoples or groups of people become friendly again, after they have argued'. To do that – both sides need to work hard at understanding each other's perspectives and beliefs. It may well be that both groups will not always agree with other – but both sides need to regard the other with 'respect'. This plan will assist that.

I commend the Actions of the Destination Wollongong RAP to one-and-all. I look forward to working with Destination Wollongong in delivering the Plan and to it making a real difference in our community.

Richard Davis

Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer
The Illawarra ITeC Ltd and Board Member
Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation

Reconciliation is easily spoken about, but it is another thing to put actions around it. One way is to consider our Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander history and how we can build respectful relationships that can be beneficial for all, but more specifically to showcase and celebrate the oldest continuous cultural traditions known.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a great step in acknowledging this heritage in the

Illawarra which dates back tens of thousands of years. It provides a valuable framework for Destination Wollongong to work respectfully with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on developing the visitor economy in our region. Visitors want to have a genuine experience of Australia and what better way than engaging with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions and practices.

I commend Destination Wollongong for commencing this process and look forward to seeing the positive outcomes from the RAP.

**Lord Mayor
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM**
Wollongong City Council

Message from the General Manager

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to Destination Wollongong's first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Destination Wollongong shares the love of the land in which it operates with this region's First Peoples. It is our sincere hope that together we can work to communicate the beauty of the land and the ocean in our region and encourage all people to value and respect our roles in caring for and promoting to others, why they should come and see what we have to offer.

Not only will Destination Wollongong work upon reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this region, through our organisation – but will encourage our partner membership and our stakeholders to consider similar plans and initiatives that will contribute to reconciliation in this region.

Together we can achieve so much more than we could if working separately!

Mark Sleigh
General Manager
Destination Wollongong

Destination Wollongong Mission and Purpose

Enabled by the long-term strategic support of Wollongong City Council, Destination Wollongong's vision is to see Wollongong recognised as one of Australia's ultimate regional destinations. Destination Wollongong's purpose is to promote Wollongong, grow the visitor economy and attract investment to the region.

As well as delivering the Destination Marketing role for Wollongong City Council – Destination Wollongong is also a membership organisation with 200 members – who it supports and engages with, to assist in creating viable and strong tourist and visitor services businesses.

Destination Wollongong employs 17 people, either full-time, casual or contractors/consultants. 3 staff members employed are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Destination Wollongong has as its primary remit to promote and develop the Visitor Economy in the Wollongong LGA. However, in that tourists do not recognise local government borders, so Destination Wollongong's activities in the Illawarra Region including Sydney, NSW and across Australia.

Destination Wollongong's administrative centre is located on Level 1 of the iHub (93 Crown Street), whilst it has staff located at the iHub and Gateway Visitor Information Centres and around Wollongong – using 'My Gong' (Mobile Visitor Information).



Destination Wollongong Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Destination Wollongong wishes to engage more closely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the Illawarra with a view to expanding tourists’ access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural experiences. In this Reconciliation Action Plan, it wishes to confirm ways in which it can engage in a respectful and meaningful manner and welcomes the support of a variety of parties in the development and implementation of this RAP. Destination Wollongong intends to work collaboratively with members of the Region’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and become active in acknowledging the Region’s First Peoples and offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to benefit from a developing Visitor Economy.

Destination Wollongong – Current Partnerships/Activities

Destination Wollongong has already achieved much in acknowledging the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, employing people from this community and acknowledging the value of reconciliation. Destination Wollongong already engages and participates with the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation and communicates openly with the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council.

For instance, Destination Wollongong has accepted an invitation from Gumarra Aboriginal Cultural Experience and Education, as local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, to work together in developing its tourism projects and activities. Working with the Elders behind Gumarra, Destination Wollongong has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that sees Destination Wollongong provide support, advice and opportunities for Gumarra to assist them in developing their tourism product and for them to be involved in Destination Wollongong projects and activities.

It is this partnership that has motivated the facilitation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Workshop and initiation of a Supplier Database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural, hospitality and entertainment products.

Gumaraa were engaged at a recent Cruise Ship Visit Day, to present a Welcome to Country, along with a traditional dance in the ‘Welcome Precinct’. Destination Wollongong also works with Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation and recently used one of their artworks in the 2019 Wollongong Visitor Guide to compliment an Acknowledgment of Country.

Destination Wollongong has established a Reconciliation Working Group. Members include the Visitor Services Manager and the Marketing Co-ordinator (both Aboriginal staff members), the Project Manager, and the Accounts Supervisor - with external representation from the Novotel Northbeach HR Manager (involved in the implementation of the Accor Hotel RAP) and the Aboriginal Enterprise Development Officer at the Illawarra iTeC.

The Group has compiled a Terms of Reference and Business Plan for the Working Group to operate effectively.



Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1 Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation to create a list of business and organisations to assist DW in identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our Region. Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	October 2020 October 2020	Project Officer Marketing Co-Ordinator
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and reconciliation materials to our staff and partners RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	May 2020 May 2020 May 2020	Visitor Services Manager Visitor Services Manager General Manager
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. Identify organisations with RAP's and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with us, on our reconciliation journey. Seek agreement from Partners to share their experiences in preparing their RAP's 	May 2020 June 2020 October 2020	Accounts Supervisor Marketing Co-ordinator Project Co-ordinator
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	February 2020 February 2020	Major Event Manager Accounts Supervisor
5 Increase engagement with stakeholders to assist with delivery of the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek active co-operation of other stakeholder organisations, to achieve input, involvement and support and to engage more closely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the Illawarra. Expand tourists' access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural experiences. 	October 2020 May 2020	Marketing Co-ordinator Major Events Liaison Supervisor



Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>6 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	<p>October 2020</p> <p>April 2020</p>	<p>Project Manager</p> <p>Accounts Supervisor</p>
<p>7 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange Cultural Awareness Training for all staff, to develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within Destination Wollongong's operational area. Increase staffs' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. Develop a Protocol to ensure that Destination Wollongong delivers Acknowledgment of Country at all Partner Functions and across all DW business activities. Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year. 	<p>June 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p>	<p>Accounts Supervisor</p> <p>Visitor Services Manager</p> <p>Project Manager</p> <p>Genreal Manager</p>
<p>8 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area. Destination Wollongong, as an organisation, to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	<p>June 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p> <p>July 2020</p>	<p>Visitor Services Manager</p> <p>Project Co-ordinator</p> <p>Project Manager</p>
<p>9 Facilitate events, projects and activities that acknowledge our reconciliation journey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a Reconciliation Event for the 2020 Wollongong Tourism Week'. Include an Acknowledgement of Country on staff email signatures Order and distribute/sell Reconciliation Badges and other significant Reconciliation items that acknowledge our reconciliation journey. 	<p>November 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>April 2020</p>	<p>Project Manager</p> <p>Marketing Co-Ordinator</p> <p>Visitor Services Manager</p>



Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within Destination Wollongong 	April 2020	Accounts Supervisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of previous and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing, to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	March 2020	Accounts Supervisor
11 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current and possible suppliers of retail product to the Visitor Information Centres 	March 2020	Visitor Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses, including investigating Supply Nation Membership and the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation listing. 	March 2020	Accounts Supervisor
12 Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship programs to Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage an Employment Services Organisation to assist in developing a Traineeship Program 	March 2020	Accounts Supervisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote an Indigenous Traineeship Program to Destination Wollongong Partners 	August 2020	Business Development Manager
13 Deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan an Indigenous Tourism Workshop (with IAC and DNSW) 	November 2020	Project Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile a Database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entertainment, cultural and educational providers in the region, for use by local tourism, business, community and other organisations 	February 2020	Project Manager
14 Launch the Destination Wollongong RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Destination Wollongong RAP at a DW Partner Function 	March 2020	Business Development Manager

Governance

15	Provide appropriate organisational support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation 	February 2020	Accounts Supervisor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Destination Wollongong senior officers in the delivery of RAP commitments and encourage Board support. 	March 2020	General Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments, including reports to Wollongong City Council. 	July 2020	Accounts Supervisor
16	Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	February 2020	Project Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update a Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	July 2020	Project Manager
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	February 2020	Project Manager
17	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 September, 2020	Visitor Services Manager
18	Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	August 2020	Visitor Services Manager

CONTACT DETAILS

If you are interested in being involved in this plan, please email our RAP Team at tourism@wollongong.nsw.gov.au or call **02 4267 5910**.