



Alpine Shire Council

# REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

January 2023 – June 2024



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN  
REFLECT



ALPINE  
SHIRE COUNCIL

Alpine Shire Council acknowledges that the region known as the Alpine Shire is the traditional land of many First Nations peoples. We acknowledge all Traditional Owners as the custodians of their Country.

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples of Bpangerang, Dalka Warra Mittung, Dhuroa Waywurru, Duduroa Dhargal, Gunaikurnai, Jaithmathang, Taungurung, and Waywurru.

We pay our respect to all Elders, past and present, and extend that respect to ancestors that guide through history and emerging leaders that will lead the way into the future.

We recognise the unique and continuous connections to Country for all First Nations peoples and thank you for sharing your lands and cultures.

## NGATANWARR, WATA WALOONG, WATA POORAY (Welcome, come near, come far)

BY AVA BROCK

**NGATANWARR, WATA WALOONG, WATA POORAY** means **welcome, come near, come far** when spoken in Gunditjmara language.

Overall, ten different languages were spoken across Gunditjmara Country, yet communication through core words was how they all stayed connected.

My name is Ava Brock and I am a proud Gunditjmara woman of the Kerrupjmara clan. I am 16 years of age and go to school at Myrtleford P-12, where my family have all gone. I was raised within the Alpine Shire and have learnt to appreciate the beautiful place I call home. Having never lived anywhere else, being given the opportunity to be involved truly is an honour.

This painting represents the **coming together** of all as we reconcile as one from near, from far, or from here.

The middle meeting place represents the Alpine Shire, surrounded by symbols of man, woman, and person. This acknowledges every member within our Shire as one and how we are all equal.

The **connected waterholes** to the left and below of the meeting place appreciate our connections all over Country through our waterways and the way in which the river will always lead you somewhere, as historically mob stayed in places where water was running fresh.

Along the bottom of the painting lies our mountain ranges, those which border the place we call home. These hills offer a natural



beauty only found here, attracting people from all over to the Alpine Shire.

The top left and right corners show us those hardships we may face as a community and how the **blooming support** to the right of both corners from surrounding communities brings us all together, to overcome that which can't take us down.

As a whole, reconciliation is such an important step for the future of our community. No matter your background, we are all in this together.

# Alpine Shire Council

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## Contents

Message from the Mayor and CEO	1
Message from Reconciliation Australia	2
Notes on our Reflect RAP	3
Acknowledgement of contribution	4
Our business	5
Our Shire and its people	6
Developing our Reflect RAP	7
Our partnerships and current activities	9
Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy	11
Dates of significance	12
Relationships	13
Respect	15
Opportunities	18
Governance and reporting	19

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND CEO



**Cr John Forsyth**  
Mayor



**Will Jeremy**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Alpine Shire Council is proud to present Council's first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This Reflect RAP marks Council's first formal commitment to the First Nations peoples of the Alpine Shire and we thank all of the First Nations peoples who have generously contributed their time, knowledge, and expertise to the development of this plan.**

Council acknowledges that First Nations cultures are the oldest living continuous cultures in the world and amongst the most resilient of sovereign landowners. We recognise that there are many different First Nations cultures that exist within the Alpine Shire with varying customs, traditions, and ways of living, including those of the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of the Shire and those living off-Country who call the Shire home.

Reconciliation is continuous and Council affirms that collaboration is key to developing relationships, establishing respect, and supporting opportunities. We see the value in working collaboratively not only for our communities, but also for fostering and raising awareness of the rich and multifaceted cultures of First Nations peoples. We also understand that by working towards reconciliation, we are improving our understanding of effective ways to protect our valuable natural environments.

The development of this plan has encouraged Council to reflect on our past actions. It has encouraged us to look towards how we can work together to create culturally safe and welcoming environments for First Nations peoples. As a Council, we support individual and collective journeys to self-determination and independence.

We thank all the individual people who contributed to the development of this plan. Council looks forward to continuing on this path together with the First Nations peoples of the Alpine Shire.

# MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA



**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Reconciliation Australia welcomes Alpine Shire Council to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Alpine Shire Council joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Alpine Shire Council to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Alpine Shire Council, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



# NOTES ON OUR REFLECT RAP

**Alpine Shire Council has set out to create a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that reflects our relationships with First Nations peoples of the region known as the Alpine Shire. Part of this reflection is acknowledging and respecting the Traditional Owners of this region.**

In the state of Victoria, Traditional Owners can apply to become a Registered Aboriginal Party, legally recognised under the Aboriginal Heritage Act. Registered Aboriginal Parties have responsibilities under the Act and are considered the primary source of matters related to First Nations peoples in their region. Decisions regarding who can become a Registered Aboriginal Party is made by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, an independent statutory body.

Council's Reflect RAP recognises that there are several identified registered and non-registered Traditional Owners of Country across the Alpine Shire. It is not the role of Alpine Shire Council to determine who or who is not a Traditional Owner of this region. We understand that this is a complex space and place our trust in Traditional Owners of these lands and waters with ongoing connections to Country.

As truths are told, Council recognises and accepts that it is our role to listen and be adaptable to change.

When referring to Traditional Owners, our Reflect RAP is referring to both registered and non-registered Traditional Owners collectively.

The identified Traditional Owners include, in alphabetical order: Bpangerang Aboriginal Corporation, Dalka Warra Mittung Aboriginal

Corporation, Dhuduroa Waywurru Nations Aboriginal Corporation, Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, Jaithmathang Traditional Ancestral Bloodline Original Owners (TABOO) First Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Taungurung Land and Waters Council, and Waywurru (Pallanganmiddang).

Council also acknowledges the First Nations peoples living off-Country in the Alpine Shire as Traditional Owners of their Countries and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

Throughout the development of our Reflect RAP, Council has developed relationships with Traditional Owners, First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire, First Nations-owned organisations, and other significant stakeholders working towards reconciliation.

When referring to key stakeholders, our Reflect RAP is referring to all or any one of the following: Reconciliation Australia, Reconciliation Victoria, First Peoples – State Relations, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Bushfire Recovery Victoria, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation, and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency.

When referring to known organisations working with First Nations peoples in Alpine Shire communities, this Reflect RAP is referring to all or any one of the following: Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation, and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

**Council aims to be an organisation that is respectful, inclusive, and culturally safe. To do so, we are developing relationships with Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire.**

We extend our thanks to all First Nations peoples who have generously contributed to the development of our Reflect RAP. We appreciate and thank you all for sharing your personal and professional insights with us. We will continue to listen and learn from your stories and experiences.

Council also extends thanks to our Reflect RAP Development Working Group and all key stakeholders who were involved in the process of developing our Reflect RAP.

## Reflect RAP Development Working Group

**Charlie Bird** – Former Chief Executive Officer, Alpine Shire Council

**Rebecca Crawley** – Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation

**PJ Crocombe** – Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation

**Cr John Forsyth** – Mayor, Alpine Shire Council

**Darrell Gascoyne** – Compliance Coordinator, Alpine Shire Council

**Gary Murray Snr** – Chairperson and Traditional Owner, Dhudhuroa Waywurru Nations Aboriginal Corporation

**Cr Sarah Nicholas** – Councillor, Alpine Shire Council

**Bronwyn Parker** – Manager Bushfire Recovery, Alpine Shire Council

**Lisa Weldon** – Bushfire Recovery Community Officer, Alpine Shire Council

**Bronwyn Westbrook** – Environmental Officer, Alpine Shire Council

## Council thanks the following stakeholders for their input

**Scott Allen** – Chief Executive Officer, Jaithmathang TABOO First Nation Aboriginal Corporation

**Megan Carter** – Traditional Owner, Waywurru (Pallanganmiddang)

**Amaya Chula** – Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation

**Mick Harding** – Cultural Ambassador, Taungurung Land and Waters Council

**Tamrah Johnson** – Senior Program Manager Ovens Murray, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency

**Sam Kirby** – Current Recovery Coordinator Aboriginal Culture and Healing (North East), Bushfire Recovery Victoria

**Darren Moffitt** – Former Recovery Coordinator Aboriginal Culture and Healing (North East), Bushfire Recovery Victoria

**Grattan Mullett** – General Manager – Culture, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

**Valda Murray** – Traditional Owner, Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

**Reg Murray** – Traditional Owner, Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

**Goengalla Yin Jumma Jumma Myermyal Minkele** – Senior Elder and Senior Loreman and Songman, Jaithmathang TABOO First Nation Aboriginal Corporation

**Goengalla Yin Goro Konermar Wotter** – Senior Elder, Jaithmathang TABOO First Nation Aboriginal Corporation

# OUR BUSINESS

**Alpine Shire Council is the local government body of the Alpine Shire municipality in northeast Victoria. The role of Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 2020 (VIC). Council's primary office is in Bright, with depots, libraries, and visitor information centres also located in Mount Beauty and Myrtleford.**

Council's foundational values inform how we approach our work and were considered core values in the development of our Reflect RAP.

## Accountable

We are accountable and responsible for our decisions and actions, and the impacts of these on our community and the organisation.

## Leadership

We demonstrate leadership by being informed, applying innovative thinking and solutions and making fair and timely decisions in the best interests of our community and the organisation for now and the future.

## Productive

We are productive by focusing on delivering efficient and high quality services and projects that respond to the needs and priorities of our community and the organisation.

## Integrity

We have integrity by being committed, truthful and transparent in our decision making and our interactions with our community and the organisation.

## Nurture

We nurture the relationships, contributions, and strengths of our community and the individuals of the organisation.

## Engaged

We are engaged with our community, and within the organisation, to build strong and effective relationships and inform our choices.

Our Reflect RAP is strategically aligned with other plans within Council.

## Council Plan 2021–2024

Council committed to the development of a Reflect RAP in the Council Plan 2021 – 2025 as a major initiative under Strategic Driver 1: For those who live and visit.

Our vision is for our communities to be connected, supported, and welcomed throughout all stages of life.

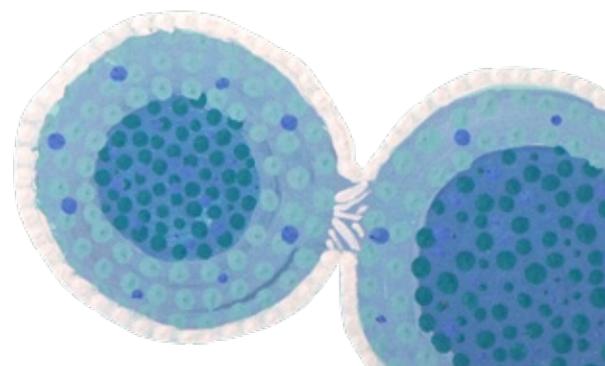
## Council Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021–2025

Council committed to improve Council's ability to collect intersectional data in Council's GEAP 2021 – 2025, including factors such as cultural identity, age, disability, and ethnicity. Council does not currently have the ability to collect the data, but has committed to apply an intersectional gender lens to support the integration of gender equality across all areas of the workplace.

## Climate Action Plan 2021–2024

Engagement with First Nations peoples, specifically Traditional Owners, is captured in the measures that Council will include in the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan, addressed in Council's Climate Action Plan 2021 – 2024.

In the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan, Council will commit to engaging with Traditional Owners to share and support traditional land and waterway management principles.



# OUR SHIRE AND ITS PEOPLE



**Image** Young people at First Nations Students Day Out 2022  
**Photo** Lisa Weldon

Alpine Shire Council is made up of seven Councillors with one Mayor and one Deputy Mayor. Council employs 171 staff with 67 volunteers enabling the public use of our libraries, our visitor information centres, and our L2P Program.

Council currently does not employ any staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The Alpine Shire is home to more than 12,000 people. For every 100 people in the Alpine Shire, just one identifies as First Nations (Alpine Shire Council Plan, 2020). However, Council acknowledges that statistical data may not be an accurate resource when it comes to understanding the true breadth of First Nations peoples that live in this region.

Located about 300km northeast of Naarm (Melbourne) and 50km southeast of Wangaratta, the Alpine Shire covers 4,790sq km, with 92 per cent of the area consisting of public land, including the Alpine and Mount Buffalo National Parks.

The Alpine Shire is fortunate to have vital organisations in northeast Victoria providing services for First Nations peoples living in this region, including Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation, and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency. These organisations have supported the development of our Reflect RAP, for which Council extends our thanks.

There are many truths to be told about the lands and waters of the Alpine Shire. The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, together with the Victorian Government, announced the establishment of the Yoorrook Justice Commission in March 2021.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is a formal truth-telling process that will work with First Nations peoples to record injustices experienced by First Nations peoples and put forward recommendations to make way for reform.

Council supports First Nations peoples of the Alpine Shire to tell their truths and we support the Yoorrook Justice Commission.



# DEVELOPING OUR REFLECT RAP

**The development of this Reflect RAP January 2023 – December 2023 marks Council's first formal commitment to reconciliation in the Alpine Shire.**

The opportunity was borne of funding provided to Council by the Victorian Government and elevated through support provided by the Recovery Coordinator Aboriginal Culture and Healing (North East) of Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV). We thank Darren Moffitt and Sam Kirby of BRV for generously sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Council has worked collaboratively with Alpine Health in the development of our Reflect RAP as they have also developed a Reflect RAP for their organisation. By working together, we have tried to ease some of the burden on First Nations peoples to continuously give and share knowledge. Both organisations will continue to collaborate in the implementation of our Reflect RAPs and the development of future RAPs as appropriate. Council thanks Turi Berg and Nick Shaw for their support.

Council has developed our Reflect RAP with direct consultation with a Development Working Group (DWG) comprised of one Traditional Owner of Country, one First Nations person living in the Alpine Shire, two Councillors, six members of Council staff, and one representative from an organisation working with First Nations peoples in Alpine Shire communities. The DWG met multiple times in late 2021 and early 2022 to develop the actions and deliverables that make up our Reflect RAP, ensuring that they are relevant, achievable, and reflect the priorities and aspirations of Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire.

Council is committed to ensuring that responsibilities in the implementation of the Reflect RAP are clearly assigned so as to develop genuine value for the actions and deliverables put forward. Council will actively share the Reflect RAP with all members of staff and interested volunteers to invite opportunities for discussion and further reflection.

Council will develop an Implementation Working Group (IWG) to oversee the implementation of deliverables, made up of internal staff from across Council, including senior leaders. As with our DWG, we will invite and encourage Traditional Owners of Country and First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire to be on our IWG.

Our RAP Champion is our Community Recovery Officer, who will drive awareness of and engagement with our Reflect RAP.

## **Council's Reflect RAP is a reflective document that will establish foundations for us to:**

- **strengthen our relationships with First Nations peoples**
- **raise and improve our understanding of First Nations cultures and histories**
- **listen to First Nations peoples and work towards achieving relevant priorities**
- **work towards making the Alpine Shire a culturally safe place for all First Nations peoples**

# TIMELINE OF DEVELOPMENT

## July 2020

Raised the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags for the first time in front of the Council building in Bright.

## February 2021

Councillors and executive staff took part in a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony with Taungurung Elder Aunty Jo Honeysett, where Council officially raised the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in front of the Council building in Bright.

## September 2021

Registered intention to develop Reflect RAP with Reconciliation Australia.

Together with Alpine Health, wrote a letter to identified registered and non-registered Traditional Owners and known organisations working with First Nations peoples in Alpine Shire communities to inform them of our Reflect RAP and invite them to be part of our Reflect RAP DWG.

## October 2021 – November 2021

Reflect RAP DWG attended three workshops to develop the actions and deliverables for the Reflect RAP, focusing on the key areas of Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, and Governance and Reporting.

Hosted workshops with Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation and Jaithmathang TABOO First Nation Aboriginal Corporation as part of Bushfire Recovery Victoria's (BRV) Traditional Owner Engagement Plan in conjunction with BRV, Towong Shire Council, Alpine Health, Corryong Health, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and North East Catchment Management Authority throughout 2021.

Supported Community Recovery Officer and RAP Champion to attend the Australian Reconciliation Convention 2021 online.

## December 2021

Hosted a celebratory lunch in collaboration with Alpine Health and Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation with both DWGs and key stakeholders.

Participated in a session run by Dr Dan Cummins of First Peoples – State Relations regarding management of cultural heritage and raising awareness of significant cultural sites in the Alpine Shire.

## February 2022 – April 2022

Engaged in consultative sessions with First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire to inform the development of the Reflect RAP.

Engaged in consultative sessions with staff to provide opportunities for discussion and further reflection across the organisation.

Engaged with interested Traditional Owners and key stakeholders for input and feedback into Reflect RAP.

## May 2022 – June 2022

Celebrated National Reconciliation Week by engaging in Cultural Awareness training facilitated by Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency and hosting a Lunch and Learn for staff to learn more about National Reconciliation Week and Council's Reflect RAP.

## July 2022

New Councillor elect participated in a cultural education session with Sam Kirby, Recovery Coordinator Aboriginal Culture and Healing (North East), Bushfire Recovery Victoria.

## September 2022

Together with Koorie Education Support Officers from the Department of Education, invited young First Nations people from across the Alpine Shire to come together for the inaugural First Nations Students Day Out.

Introduced and sponsored the Proud and Deadly Award as a standing award for the Alpine Shire Youth Awards.

# OUR PARTNERSHIPS AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

**Council has a short history of developing mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with the Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire. By committing to reconciliation, Council commits to strengthening these relationships and partnerships.**



**Image** Sahara and Amaya at Alpine Shire Youth Awards  
**Photo** Giordana Genero

## Supporting NAIDOC Week in Schools

Since 2016, Council has supported local schools to engage with First Nations-led activities for the students of the Alpine Shire during NAIDOC Week.

## Partnering with Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation

In 2018, Council partnered with Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation to offer three work experience opportunities for young people. Two worked with our Open Spaces Team and one in the Bright Library, where they completed one day of work experience per week for two months.

The aim of this partnership was to develop new skills and offer different employment opportunities for the young people, which could be transferred to other environments, including at home in Wadeye, Northern Territory.

## Flying NAIDOC Week flags in Myrtleford

Since 2020, Council has supported NAIDOC Week in the Alpine Shire by flying NAIDOC Week flags in Myrtleford.

Council is looking forward to moving from supporting NAIDOC Week to engaging with NAIDOC Week more actively.

## First Nations Students Day Out

In 2022, together with Koorie Education Support Officers from the Department of Education, Council invited young First Nations peoples from across the Alpine Shire to come together for a day of cultural connection and immersion.

28 young First Nations peoples came together from kindergarten all the way through to Year 12 and beyond for a day of cultural activities, including ceremony, Wayapa practice, spear throwing, painting, and yarning with a variety of First Nations owned and operated organisations.

This event invited young people to connect with each other and celebrate their unique and varied cultures and experiences.

## Proud and Deadly Award 2022

Council hosts the annual Alpine Shire Youth Awards, which recognises and celebrates the contributions, skills, and achievements of young people aged 12-21 years.

In 2022, Council introduced and sponsored the Proud and Deadly Award, which celebrates young First Nations peoples who live out their excellence in their day-to-day activities and champion their cultures in their communities.

### Commissioning Mural in Mount Beauty

In 2021, Council commissioned the creation of three murals in Mount Beauty, one of which is a reflection and acknowledgement of First Nations peoples and cultures. Council staff reached out to four identified Traditional Owners of the Country known as the Kiewa Valley and worked with their feedback to determine a fair representation of First Nations peoples and cultures.

Melbourne street artists Mike Makatron and Conrad Bizjak created the mural, which pictures a Bogong moth flying over the hills of the Kiewa Valley, where an Aboriginal flag is laid over Country and footprints walk across the land.

The mural was developed with \$30,000 funding received from the Commonwealth and State under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

### Participating in Bushfire Recovery Victoria's Traditional Owner Engagement Plan 2021 – 2022

As a result of Bushfire Recovery Victoria's (BRV) Traditional Owner Engagement Plan, Council has developed relationships with two Traditional Owners of the land and waters of the Alpine Shire: Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation and Jaithmathang TABOO Aboriginal Corporation.

The Plan was developed by Darren Moffit, Recovery Coordinator Aboriginal Culture and Healing (North East) of BRV, who engaged the following organisations across North East Victoria: Alpine Health, Corryong Health, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, North East Catchment Management Authority, and Towong Shire Council throughout 2021.

Through the process, each organisation hosted online workshops with Traditional Owners to form and develop mutually beneficial relationships.

Council looks forward to continuing our relationships with Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation and Jaithmathang TABOO Aboriginal Corporation, as well as the other identified registered and non-registered Traditional Owners.

### Regional Commitment to Reconciliation

In 2022, Chief Executive Officers from Alpine Health, Alpine Shire Council, Corryong Health, Tallangatta Health Service, Towong Shire Council, and Walwa Bush Nursing Service came together to develop a regional commitment to reconciliation.

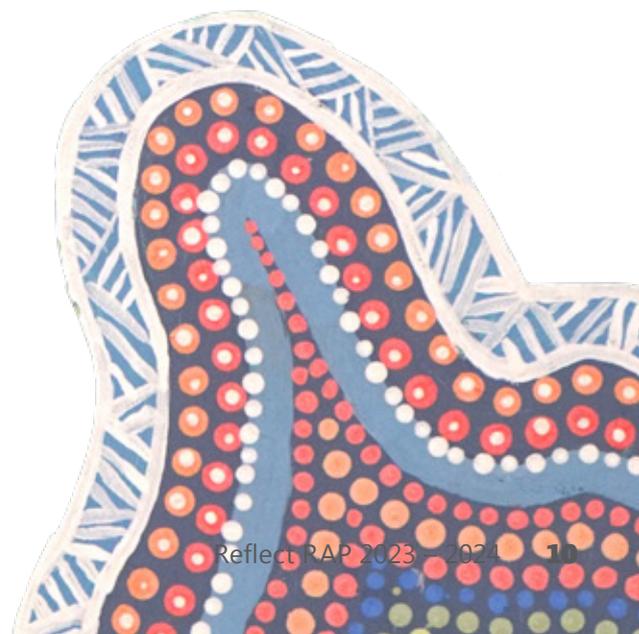
Through the devastation of the 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires, an opportunity was presented through the Bushfire Recovery Victoria priority for Aboriginal and Cultural Healing. Given the impact of bushfires across the Alpine and Towong local government areas, Bushfire Recovery Victoria brought our organisations together to explore what Aboriginal and Cultural Healing meant for our broader region.

Our shared purpose was to participate in an engagement model to support future engagement with Traditional Owner groups and assist potential Traditional Owner groups to identify their recovery priorities.

While the outcomes of the engagement model focussed primarily on recovery priorities for incorporation into Municipal Bushfire Recovery Plans, a by-product of this opportunity was to engage and build relationships with multiple Traditional Owner groups in the region and to commit to and support each other in the development of our respective organisational Reconciliation Action Plans.

Alpine Health, Alpine Shire Council, Corryong Health, Tallangatta Health Service, Towong Shire Council, and Walwa Bush Nursing Service all commit to collaboratively engaging with all potential Traditional Owner groups seeking to formalise claims across our region.

Further, we all commit to advancing on reconciliation action across our region while recognising the nuances of our individual organisational plans.



# VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY 2021–2026

## **In 2022, the Victorian Government released the Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy (VALGS) 2021–2026.**

The VALGS is a roadmap for First Nations peoples living in Victoria, the Victorian Government, and Local Government to work towards self-determination.

The VALGS has seven Strategic Pillars, under which markers of success are explained and actions are outlined. These Strategic Pillars are:

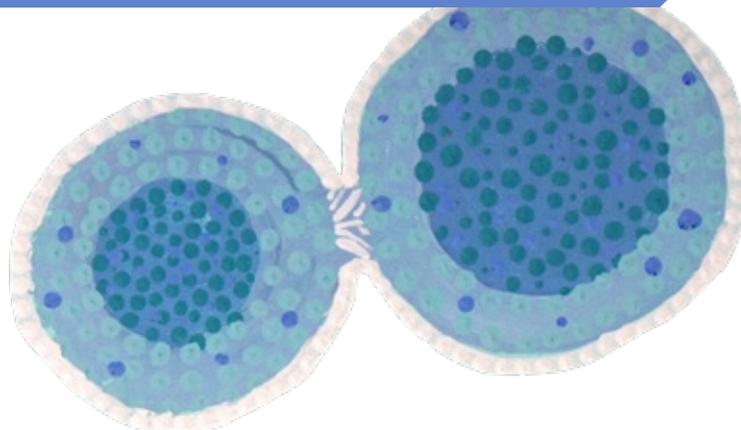
- 1. Cultural, Respect, and Trust**
- 2. Awareness and Engagement**
- 3. Accountability and Direction**
- 4. Governance and Participation**
- 5. Economic Participation**
- 6. Health and Wellbeing**
- 7. Resourcing and Funding**

The actions are separated into three stages that measure success: understand, embrace, and embed. Distinct actions are listed for the joint stakeholders of Aboriginal Victorians, Victorian Government, and Local Government.

Council is proud to use the VALGS as a guide to support the implementation of deliverables in our Reflect RAP. Many of the deliverables in our Reflect RAP align with actions in the VALGS under the pathway of understand, which positions Council to form relationships, understand aspirations, and agree on ways to work together.

Council's future RAPs will further align with the VALGS through our development of initiatives that guide our movement through to the embrace and embed stages of success and therefore guide our ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

Through our next RAP, Council will begin implementing initiatives that build on the investigative and foundational work outlined in our Reflect RAP.



# DATES OF SIGNIFICANCE



Day of Mourning for First Nations Peoples	January 26
Anniversary of National Apology Day	February 13
National Close the Gap Day	3rd Thurs March
Harmony Day	March 21
ANZAC Day	April 25
National Sorry Day	May 26
Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum	May 27
National Reconciliation Week	May 27 – June 3
Mabo Day	June 3
NAIDOC Week	1st – 7th Sun July
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day	August 4
UN International Day of World’s Indigenous Peoples	August 9
Indigenous Literacy Day	1st Wed September
Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	September 13
Remembrance Day	November 11



# RELATIONSHIPS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	1. Identify First Nations stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	2. Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	3. Establish preferred communication and engagement strategies with Traditional Owners and First Nations stakeholders to share with all staff.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	4. Support the Yoorrook Justice Commission if called upon by the Victorian Government or the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria for First Nations peoples of the Alpine Shire.	June 2024	Chief Executive Officer
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	1. Circulate RA's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all staff.	May 2023; 2024	Communications Officer
	2. Reflect RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2023; 2024	Director Assets
	3. Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 2023; 2024	Director Assets
	4. Support local NRW events organised by Alpine Shire communities by offering funding opportunities through Council's annual Event Funding Program.	May 2023; 2024	Manager Economic and Community and Development

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	1. Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff by actively highlighting the value of reconciliation with all staff at department meetings.	June 2024	Chief Executive Officer
	2. Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2024	Chief Executive Officer
	3. Identify and develop a resource list of RAPs and other like-minded organisations that we can approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey and to support reconciliation initiatives.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	4. Liaise with government agencies and non-government organisations also working with Traditional Owners to share resources and work towards developing a collaborative strategy for ongoing engagement.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	5. Raise awareness of Reflect RAP commitments amongst Council officers, Councillors, and interested volunteers in consultation with Reflect RAP Working Group.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	6. Review staff induction process to determine how Council can implement training that communicates commitment to reconciliation to all new staff.	December 2023	Human Resources Coordinator
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	1. Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	2. Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	May 2024	Director Corporate Performance



# RESPECT

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Increase understanding, value, and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	1. Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value, and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	2. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	May 2024	Human Resources Coordinator
	3. Develop and implement opportunities for all staff to attend cultural awareness training.	June 2023	Human Resources Coordinator
2. Demonstrate respect to First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols.	1. Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of the Alpine Shire by strengthening our relationships with Traditional Owners.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	2. Increase Council officers' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols, by sharing resources from Reconciliation Australia and First Peoples State Relations with all staff via email and by posting on organisation intranet for ongoing access.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	3. Develop and distribute an internal best practice guide to engage Traditional Owners for Welcome to Country ceremonies for Council-led events and, when unavailable, best practice for Acknowledging Traditional Owners of Country.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	4. Insert Acknowledgement of Country on all staff email signatures.	April 2023	Manager Corporate

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	5. Make Acknowledgement of Country clearly visible on Alpine Shire Council website.	April 2023	Communications Officer
	6. Investigate development of Acknowledgement of Country signage for all Council-managed buildings.	June 2023	Manager Facilities
	7. Investigate opportunities to incorporate Traditional Owners into Council's civic events as per their interests, priorities, and recommendations.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
3. Build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	1. Raise awareness and share information amongst all staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2023	Manager Planning and Amenity
	2. Introduce staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in person or online.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	3. RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023	Director Assets
	4. Support local NAIDOC Week activities organised by Alpine Shire communities by offering funding opportunities through Council's annual Community and Events Funding programs.	May 2023	Manager Economic and Community Development
4. Recognise and celebrate culturally significant events for First Nations peoples.	1. Record days or events of significance for First Nations peoples for Council to communicate both internally and externally via Council communication channels.	June 2024	Communications Officer
	2. Develop an internal staff calendar of days of significance for First Nations peoples.	February 2023	Manager Corporate
	3. Develop a culturally sensitive approach for Council to acknowledge January 26 in consultation with Traditional Owners, First Nations communities in the Alpine Shire, and key stakeholders.	January 2024	Chief Executive Officer
	4. Recognise the significant contributions and sacrifices of First Nations peoples in our shared histories, including on January 26, ANZAC Day, and Remembrance Day, by acknowledging these contributions and sacrifices in media collateral published by Council.	June 2024	Communications Officer





# OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention, and professional development.	1. Develop a business case for First Nations employment within our organisation.	May 2024	Human Resources Coordinator
	2. Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2023	Human Resources Coordinator
	3. Investigate processes to record diversity measures in workforce recruitment and retention to be more inclusive of diverse employees, including First Nations peoples.	December 2023	Human Resources Coordinator
	4. Support First Nations staff to actively participate in the Local Government Koorie Staff Network.	June 2024	Human Resources Coordinator
2. Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	1. Develop a business case for procurement from First Nations owned businesses.	March 2024	Manager Corporate
	2. Investigate membership with Supply Nation, and corporate partnerships with organisations such as Kinaway Chamber of Commerce.	March 2023	Manager Corporate
	3. Investigate addition of First Nations owned businesses as an evaluation criterion in next review of the Procurement Policy.	May 2024	Manager Corporate
	4. Share funding opportunities relevant to First Nations organisations, including state and federal grants, both internally and externally via Council communication channels.	June 2024	Communications Officer



# GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	1. Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation by liaising with Reflect RAP Development Working Group (DWG) and developing key selection criteria to engage members.	February 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	2. Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG using the Terms of Reference developed for the Reflect RAP DWG to guide development.	February 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	3. Establish First Nations representation on the RWG by engaging with Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples living in the Alpine Shire.	February 2023	Community Recovery Officer
	4. Establish a feedback mechanism to allow opportunities for the Reflect RAP DWG to facilitate improvement for future RWGs.	June 2023	Community Recovery Officer
2. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	1. Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	2. Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	3. Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure, and report on RAP commitments.	March 2023	Manager Asset Development

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings.	1. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2023	Director Assets
	2. Share Reflect RAP milestones with stakeholders identified through the Reflect RAP development process and with the wider Alpine Shire community through Council communication channels.	June 2024	Communications Officer
4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	1. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	February 2024	Director Assets

**Alpine Shire Council RAP Champion**

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**Australian Government**



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