



Australian Government
Independent Parliamentary
Expenses Authority

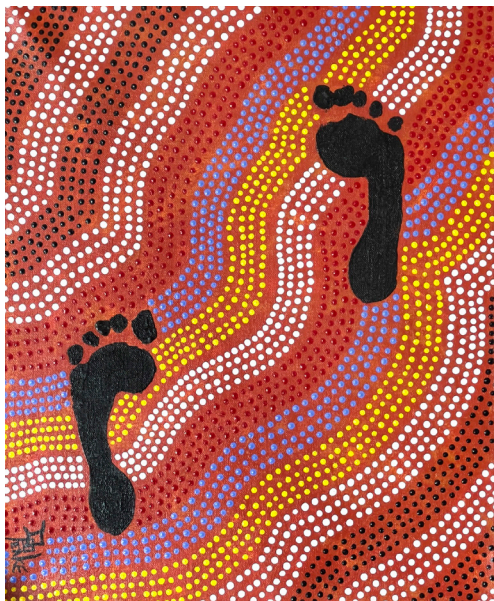


Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2021 – December 2022





Artist: David Peake



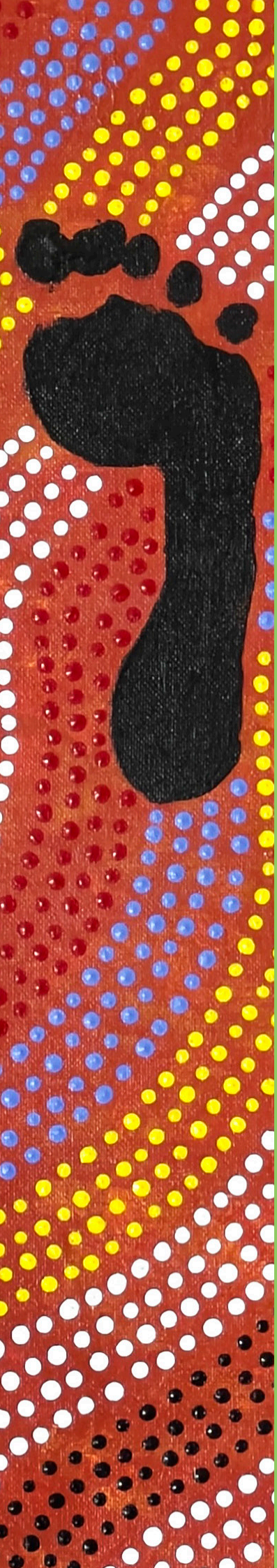
Artist: Jacob Peake

David (father) and Jacob (son) Peake are Koori/Nunga artists from Australia.

They endeavour to capture the beauty of this vast land of contrasts. Both have travelled to many communities throughout Australia and have been inspired by the rich culture, breathtaking landscapes and animal life.

Their unique way of looking at life is captured in their colourful paintings which use traditional and contemporary styles and techniques.

As Indigenous men, both artists express their love of culture in their artwork.



ACKNOWLEDGING STATEMENT

I acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) is located. From our office in Canberra, we engage with parliamentarians and their staff in electorates all over Australia.

We pay our respects to the past, present and emerging Traditional Custodians of the nation. We recognise the important, diverse and intertwined cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the valuable contribution this diversity brings.



I am delighted to present the IPEA 2021-2022 Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Our Reflect RAP is the formal launch of IPEA's reconciliation journey. Through our RAP, IPEA commits to recognising and understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and contribution. By enhancing IPEA's understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we are better able to reflect the Australian community whom parliamentarians are elected to represent.

In consultation with Reconciliation Australia, this plan was developed by IPEA's RAP Working Group as part of the People and Cultures initiative. As a relatively small and still forming organisation, our journey is one of practical and consistent steps. Our vision is to create a welcoming and trusting environment based on respect for all our current and future staff.

By taking the step to formally embrace a RAP early in our organisational journey, IPEA aims for understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to be embedded in our DNA to grow and mature as we do.

Annwyn Godwin

Chief Executive Officer, Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CEO STATEMENT

Reconciliation Australia welcomes the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA) to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

IPEA 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 over 2.3 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 IPEA 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 IPEA, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



OUR BUSINESS

On 13 January 2017 the Prime Minister announced a range of changes to parliamentarians' work expenses, including the establishment of the Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA). IPEA became an independent authority under the *Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority Act 2017* (IPEA Act) on 1 July 2017. From 1 January 2018, the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act) and associated regulations and determinations came into effect. A CEO, appointed by the Minister for Finance, and Members of the Authority, appointed by the Governor General, lead IPEA.

The establishment of IPEA as an independent statutory authority and the changes to the legislative environment were some of the most significant reforms to parliamentarians' work expense arrangements in 25 years. With the implementation of the PBR Act, Australia moved from a rules-based approach to a principles-based approach to administering and monitoring the work expenses of parliamentarians and their staff. IPEA administers and advises on travel expenses and travel allowances and, monitors, reports on and audits all parliamentarians' work resources.

Why the focus on travel and travel related expenses? Australia is the sixth largest country in the world and distances matter when trying to stay connected. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have always had a deep connection to this land and the distances this entails. For a parliamentarian to meet with constituents and colleagues, while also balancing family and other commitments, involves a complex and unique set of travel circumstances. In complying with the principles, their decisions must, amongst other requirements, be time and cost effective and provide value for money.

IPEA is committed to pursuing our twin goals of providing support to parliamentarians and former parliamentarians in the exercise of their parliamentary functions, and creating a culture of accountability and transparency in the provision and use of parliamentary work expenses. As at 1 June 2021, IPEA had 60 employees engaged on either an ongoing or non-ongoing basis. Our well-informed IPEAn (those who work for IPEA are known as "IPEAns") workforce is delivering innovative, high quality and timely services. We place a high priority on the development of a strong and capable workforce. While at this time, no IPEAn identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, this RAP confirms IPEA's commitment to welcoming Indigenous representation in our workforce.



OUR RAP

IPEA has developed our first RAP as a formal statement of our commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As a relatively new organisation, IPEA is fortunate to draw upon the experiences of more established organisations who are well progressed on their journeys. We believe in respecting, acknowledging and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We want to work with our colleagues and community toward a shared understanding and acknowledgement of past histories and experiences. Our CEO, Ms Annwyn Godwin, is IPEA's RAP Champion.

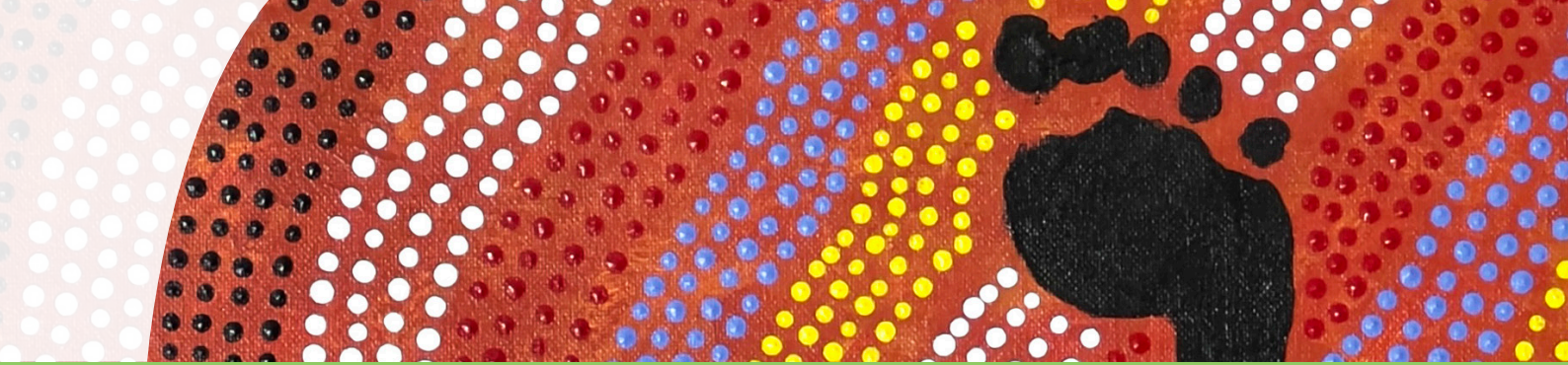
IPEA both advises parliamentarians and their staff on travel related expenses, and provides assurance to Australians that those expenses are consistent with the Parliamentary Business Resources framework (the Framework). As an organisation working to build trust in government, all Australians will be better served by a workforce with an understanding of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and diversity.

Our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples via a RAP is therefore twofold.

1. To support parliamentarians (and their staff) who are elected representatives of electorates with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander constituents. This includes parliamentarians and their staff who are themselves, or descended from, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
2. To assure all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, that taxpayers' funds are spent appropriately and are consistent with the Framework.

IPEA has an engaged workforce and actively embraces and encourages diversity in the workplace. Our CEO Ms Annwyn Godwin, leads participation in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events. These have included:

- invitations to participate in the Reconciliation Bridge Walk
- celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cuisines using Australian native ingredients
- actively seeking input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander companies and companies employing First Nations staff
- cultural diversity training, including an Ngunnawal Language workshop and Reconciliation Action Plan workshop.



We engaged with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues in the Australian Public Service to support the development of our first Reflect RAP. Within our first year of formally becoming a statutory authority, IPEA made a small but significant statement to engage an Aboriginal design company to facilitate the visual design of our signature blocks.

Each year IPEAns are invited to join a whole-of-IPEA initiative. These committed IPEAns take responsibility for the development and implementation of the work program and regularly keep colleagues informed of progress and how they can participate. IPEA's RAP is built upon three important and intertwined journeys.

- 1.** People and Cultures – enabling all current and future IPEAns to grow and contribute in a welcoming and trusting environment based on respect for diversity of experiences, cultures and thoughts.
 - a.** Encourage training in cultural diversity and sensitivity to welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
 - b.** Provide opportunities to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to grow and develop their careers.
 - c.** Embed an open trusting culture to build respect for the diverse experiences, cultures, and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2.** Community partnerships – building relationships with other organisations and colleagues to learn from their RAP journeys.
 - a.** Partner with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).
 - b.** Engage with Ngunnawal and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders in the Canberra region.
 - c.** Learn from other like organisations and public sector agencies.
- 3.** Internal activities/initiatives – implementing practical initiatives to embed understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in our everyday work.
 - a.** Acknowledge and respect Traditional Custodians by an Acknowledgement of Country at events and our signature block.
 - b.** Celebrate NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week and other culturally sensitive occasions.
 - c.** Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses where possible.



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify and list Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence to connect with our reconciliation journey.	December 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	27 May – 3 June, 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June, 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June, 2022	IPEA CEO
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff at an All Staff meeting	August 2021	IPEA CEO
	Identify external stakeholders, RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	August 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	August 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to external stakeholders, including a digital Acknowledgement of Country on our Website and in our email signature block.	September 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Publish the IPEA RAP on the IPEA website.	September 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2021	Branch Manager, Corporate
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	December 2021	Branch Manager, Corporate



Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p>	Host activities throughout the year that promote understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	December 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	August 2022	Branch Manager, Corporate
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2022	Branch Manager, Corporate
<p>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p>	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	July 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
<p>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	4 - 11 July 2021	IPEA CEO
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	5-12 July 2021 & 2022	IPEA CEO
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	5-12 July 2021 & 2022	IPEA CEO



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	July 2022	Branch Manager, Corporate
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	July 2022	Branch Manager, Corporate
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	August 2021	IPEA Procurement Officer
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2021	IPEA Procurement Officer



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	August 2021	Branch Manager, Corporate
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	August 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	August 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	August 2021	IPEA CEO
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	August 2021	IPEA CEO
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2021	Chair, RAP Working Group
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2021 & 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	July 2022	Chair, RAP Working Group



CONTACT DETAILS

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