



Australian Communications Consumer Action Network

Reconciliation Action Plan 2012 – 2014



Reconciliation
A U S T R A L I A
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

ACCAN wishes to acknowledge Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of the lands and waters of Australia. We pay our respects to the elders, past and present, and look to future generations to continue the rich and diverse cultures that contribute so significantly to contemporary Australia.

Acknowledgement

This first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for ACCAN is the result of much hard work, goodwill, consultation, discussion and debate. Those at ACCAN who have participated in its development have learnt much along the way with the greatest lesson perhaps that we are just at the start of our journey.

Special thanks for getting ACCAN to this point goes to Michele Abel from Reconciliation Australia who has been our mentor through this process. We thank also all our members and staff who have provided feedback, and last, but by no means least, we want to thank the ACCAN Reconciliation Action Plan Committee Janene Collins, Teresa Corbin, Heron Loban, Vivian Pratto, Sue Salthouse, Ryan Sengara, Liz Snell and Kirisha Thanapalasantheram. Many of these committee members are still working above and beyond to make ACCAN's RAP a success.

Our Vision for Reconciliation

ACCAN has developed this Action Plan to guide our engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities. We hope that a commitment to reconciliation by organisations such as ACCAN can help build an Australian society that values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. Achieving this will involve recognising and appreciating the pre-colonial stories of Australia as well as accepting our shared history since settlement or invasion. ACCAN values diversity and as part of our commitment to inclusiveness, we aim to develop constructive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. We hope that our Reconciliation Action Plan will set us on a path towards better achieving these goals.

Our Business

Established in 2008, the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is the peak body that represents all Australian consumers on communications issues including telecommunications, broadband and emerging new services. ACCAN provides a strong unified voice to industry and government for consumers working towards availability, accessibility and affordability of communications services. Consumers need ACCAN to promote better consumer protection outcomes ensuring speedy responses to complaints and issues. ACCAN aims to empower consumers so that they are well informed and can make good choices about products and services. As a peak body, ACCAN activates its broad and diverse membership base to campaign to get a better deal for all communications consumers. We also have an extensive research program including a Grants scheme. ACCAN is funded by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and by our membership.

Although ACCAN has an office in Sydney, on Gadigal land, we are a national body with both organisations and individuals from around Australia as our members. Our Board is elected by members. ACCAN is advised by two standing advisory committees, the Standing Advising Committee on Consumer Affairs and the Standing Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, members of which are appointed by the Board.

ACCAN Goals and Activities

1. Improved accessibility, affordability and availability of communications services to all consumers;
2. Better informed consumers with access to Australian information and communications technology resources;
3. A strong, co-ordinated voice which uses our diversity as a point of strength for communications consumers, nationally and internationally;
4. Effective advocacy for consumers to Government, regulators and the industry in the development of policy, legislation and industry practices;
5. Inclusive consultation with stakeholders to identify areas and priorities for industry and/or regulatory responses;
6. Robust research to support evidence based policy development and consumer education programs;
7. Meaningful participation in regulatory and co-regulatory activities including industry codes, standards and guidelines
8. Outreach, campaigns and activities that involve consumers in the communications arena
9. Enhanced capacity for consumer representatives through information seminars, training and international engagement
10. Openness, transparency and inclusion of all parties interested in representing consumers on communications issues

ACCAN's Reconciliation Action Plan Aims

- To improve access, inclusion and participation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples in ACCAN, particularly those involved in communications
- To help build positive partnerships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples to assist ACCAN achieving its mission and implement its strategic plan
- To eliminate any discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members or employees of ACCAN; support and encourage story telling that can clarify the very different culture and priorities of the First Peoples
- To assist in reducing the 'digital divide' for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples because access to communications is essential to being able to participate in our society, in particular community generated broadcasting services
- To demonstrate how ACCAN complies with the Racial Discrimination Act and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- To be a model for how other non profit organisations and corporations engage with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities and the wider goal of achieving a reconciled Australia.

Our Journey

In October 2010 the ACCAN Board adopted a Statement of Commitment which committed ACCAN to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan by June 2011. This motion was adopted after the Board invited a speaker from Reconciliation Australia to attend a dinner and give a speech about Reconciliation.

The signing of the commitment statement was celebrated with a gathering for the unveiling of a plaque at our reception area that acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land. ACCAN's Statement of Commitment promises we will implement an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander traineeship, build cultural awareness and understanding at ACCAN, and developing culturally appropriate consultation, engagement and campaigns on communications issues with member organisations representing Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander consumers & communities.

Since its establishment, ACCAN has practiced the protocol of holding a Welcome to Country ceremony for all its major public events, with Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of internal meetings.

ACCAN also now has a growing collection of resources including books and DVDs to assist ACCAN staff and members to develop a better understanding of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities. When visitors come to ACCAN's office they can see the Aboriginal Australia map on display. ACCAN staff members are encouraged to attend events to build on their understanding of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures.

In 2011 all ACCAN staff attended a full day cultural awareness training workshop. For some staff this was the first training of this kind they had ever participated in and the training was the beginning of a deeper dialogue within the staff about issues regarding reconciliation.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The development of the ACCAN Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is supported by the ACCAN Board. Current and former Board members are represented on the RAP Committee together with staff members from all sections and levels of the organisation including management and the CEO. This team has ensured that our RAP reflects our values as an organisation. The broad roles and skills of the team will ensure the RAP becomes embodied in the culture as well as policies and procedures of our organisation.

The ACCAN RAP has been compiled after consultation with our broad and diverse membership base which includes a number of groups with high Indigenous membership. We have also sought out comments from a range of organisations directly concerned with Indigenous communications issues.

The ACCAN RAP will form part of our annual reporting to our members, our funders and Reconciliation Australia. We will chart our progress and record all our attempts, successful or not, as well as our achievements along the way.

1. Relationships	ACCAN is the peak body representing individual, small business and NGO communications consumers. We seek respectful relationships with all our constituents. ACCAN is committed to a two way exchange that will result in better communications services for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will build our relationships with Indigenous people and organisations, based on respect for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people & cultures.
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Focus area: Building and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples & organisations locally & nationally

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Budget Implications
1.1 Develop our relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people and organisations including existing members, to ensure we are meeting their needs as communications consumers and to assist policy, campaigns and research work using culturally appropriate strategies and materials.	Director Policy & Campaigns	Dec 2011 – June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultation plan and protocols. • To be created in collaboration with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ACCAN members and representatives. • Meet with local Sydney elders and seek opportunities to consult with elders in other areas, on developing our relationships in the communities. • 100% retention of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ACCAN members. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership by at least three organisations per year and build our contact list. • ACCAN will sponsor at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational representative to attend our annual conference. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
	CEO	June 2012		
	Membership Officer	June, annually		
	Management Group	June, annually		

<p>1.2 Build relationships with relevant organisations from consumer and communications sectors that have developed RAPs, and with reconciliation organisations.</p>	<p>All Staff</p>	<p>June, annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one staff member to attend a Sydney based workshop or event of a reconciliation organisation. • All staff members are encouraged to participate in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples events annually e.g. National Sorry Day on 26 May; and National Reconciliation Week from 27 May-2 June; NAIDOC in 1st week of July. 	<p>All within current budget allocations and staff work plans</p>
<p>1.3 After approval by Reconciliation Australia, launch our RAP as part of an awareness raising event</p>	<p>RAP Team Admin Officer – Events Organiser</p>	<p>November 2011 December 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration by Reconciliation Australia; • List of attendees recorded and event evaluated. 	<p>All within current budget allocations and staff work plans</p>

2. Respect	ACCAN's core business is consumer rights in communications and to best represent consumers, respect for diversity is essential. We are committed to conversations that respect the legitimate cultural rights, practices, values and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
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Focus area: Fostering respect for cultures of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples through an awareness raising process with staff, Board and members

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your Comments
2.1 Develop the cultural competency of ACCAN Staff.	Management Team RAP team to promote and propose possible events	May to July annually; On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff members are encouraged to participate in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples events annually e.g. National Sorry Day on 26 May; and National Reconciliation Week from 27 May-2 June; NAIDOC in 1st week of July. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
	Management Team	Plan annually in February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ACCAN supervisors to ensure Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultural competency activities are included in their staff work plans, e.g. visits to organisations, cultural tours, attendance at forums, workshops or conferences as well as using events and resources ACCAN can provide. 	
	RAP Team	Annual planning day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACCAN's Induction process updated to include information about, and encourage understanding of, ACCAN's RAP 	
		Dec 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of Staff, Board and Standing Advisory Committee members to participate in local reconciliation events. 	
		On-going		

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your Comments
2.2 Invite local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representatives to conduct a Welcome to Country ceremony at all major events.	Management Team Admin team – events organiser	December 2011 On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACCAN policies & procedures to include information on engaging with Traditional Owners or their representatives. A Welcome to Country opens all public conferences, AGMs and seminars. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
2.3 Start ACCAN meetings and launches, as appropriate, with an acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the land	CEO	December 2011 On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Acknowledgement” protocols to be developed in collaboration with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ACCAN members and representatives. Provide training for ACCAN staff and Board members about the protocol of acknowledging country 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
2.4 Acknowledge the traditional owners in ACCAN documents as appropriate.	All Staff	December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy developed for acknowledging traditional owners in ACCAN documents. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your Comments
2.5 Build relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander media outlets and explore ways to work together.	Media & Communications Manager	October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to establish a working relationship with at least one new Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander media organisation each year 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
2.6 Publish articles in ACCAN web news on topics relating to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples communications issues, as appropriate	Policy Assistant(s) All staff	October 2011 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least four stories appear in Web news each year. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
2.7 Build awareness of Reconciliation Action Plans in the community sector	All staff Media and Communications Manager	On-going December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved RAP uploaded to our website, including the RAP logo on ACCAN website RAP page Encourage other organisations to commit to a RAP through a news item in ACCAN magazine once a year. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans

3. Opportunities	ACCAN values the mutual exchange of ideas and learnings between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons and mutual capacity building opportunities.
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Focus area: Providing opportunities for exchanges that build the capacities of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples in the area of communications, and build on and embed cultural competency within ACCAN staff Board and members.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your comments
3.1 Purchasing policies will support employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	All Staff Business Manager	July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify 4 suppliers that support employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and consider options for future purchases and service delivery such as AIMSC. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
3.2 Consider options for a mutual exchange involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons and ACCAN, including involvement in a traineeship program.	Management Group	December 2012 September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship & training opportunities indentified. Begin one internship or other training opportunity in 2012. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
3.3 Promote Grants Scheme to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander groups.	Research and Development team	March, annually April, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcement in relevant media. Aim to assist at least 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or individuals with applications to ACCAN grants program. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your comments
3.4 Identify and make easily available relevant research on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples in relation to communications issues.	Research and Development Team	October 2011 and update quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect, catalogue, and maintain a resource library of materials and sources as part of ACCAN's research and knowledge management tools. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
3.5 Use culturally appropriate images and materials in ACCAN publications and consumer education resources	Media and Communications Manager	October 2011 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACCAN publications and ACCAN online presence reflects our inclusion of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities. 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
3.6 Consider ways to partner with an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander organisation for research projects conducted by Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander researchers	Management Group	2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a trial community linkage project conducted by and/or with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander researchers or organisations as partners Develop ethical guidelines for conducting such research 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans

Tracking progress and reporting				
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Your Comments
4.1 RAP is integrated into ACCAN's governance and aligned with strategic plan	Board	August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCAN Board adopts RAP 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
	Management Group	November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Plan in place 	
	Supervisors	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP integrated into staff work plans 	
	CEO	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes of the RAP form part of reporting in Annual Report and to funding bodies 	
4.2 Short report to staff and board	RAP team	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail activities held and upcoming, successes and challenges 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans
4.3 Annual Report to Board and then Reconciliation Australia	RAP team	June, Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail activities, successes and challenges with suggestions for continuous improvement 	All within current budget allocations and staff work plans

Contact Information

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