



# The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2017



*Through reconciliation, The Salvation Army acknowledge the First Nation peoples of Australia as the traditional custodians. We further acknowledge and pay our respects to past and present Elders, giving thanks for their wisdom which has sustained their people since the beginning of time and we pledge to support future generations.*



## Our Innovate RAP Journey

The Salvation Army's journey of Reconciliation had its beginnings in 1997 when we made a commitment in our original Statement of Reconciliation. At that time it was recognition of the fact that we, The Salvation Army in Australia, had not always lived out the spirit of Christ and the truths of Scripture in our dealings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. We had, on occasions, been party to attitudes, activities and the support of Government policy that devalued our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters. This was done often with the best of intentions but incorrect motives. We desired to repent of such action and attitudes and become 'agents of reconciliation' in obedience to the Word of God outlined in 2 Corinthians 5:19.

In 2009 a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group of The Salvation Army was established to guide and lead us further on this journey of Reconciliation. As the group continued to develop a stronger voice within The Salvation Army a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program staff team was established. In 2012, 6 key Recommendations were given to the executive Leadership of The Salvation Army one of which was the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

In 2014 we began foundational work on our RAP through a consultative process that saw us run over 20 focus groups and presentations held across all Divisions in QLD, NSW, ACT encompassing urban, rural and remote locations. These focus groups included officer personnel, volunteers, employees, corps members and community stakeholders. There was a diversity of ages and gender with close to 200 participants involved.

The Territorial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry coordinator and team as well as members of the National Reference Group are championing our RAP. In addition to this the territorial commander has given firm support to this initiative along with the executive leadership of The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory.

The RAP working group is comprised of personnel from The Salvation Army Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry team, corps, social and divisional areas. It has a diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel all committed to the cause.

As was the case in 1997, today we are committed to the fact that God values each person equally. None is

less important than another regardless of race, colour, social standing or potential. Our current involvement in establishing a RAP gives a firm commitment to discover ongoing ways of positive involvement in the journey of reconciliation and to act upon it in inclusive action.

We must 'walk the walk' of reconciliation and not just 'talk the talk', therefore we are establishing actions and targets that will take us further on the journey. To continue to foster understanding, togetherness and sensitivity in our onward journey of respect, relationships and meaningful opportunities for, and with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This RAP is a commitment at the territorial level. It is to be adapted for use at the divisional and local level of each corps and centre. It addresses three aspects of the Reconciliation Process – Relationships, Respect and Opportunities.

## Message From Territorial Commander (Commissioner James Condon)

The Salvation Army leadership has heard the voice of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at a national level from The Salvation Army National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group (Reference Group). We as a movement join with that voice as one people committed to the journey of reconciliation. Not only is this a strategic imperative of our movement it is a fundamental core belief as we have all been given the ministry of reconciliation.

This first RAP really brings together a long history of The Salvation Army working with and alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This is an important step in taking us further down that road. The core focus of our first RAP will be to bring about an internal awareness regarding our RAP and our commitments to reconciliation. It outlines – with key measurables – as to how we as a movement can engage at a program, ministry and community level with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to continue to build our relationships and engagement.

Our RAP commitment will see us continue to be intentional in achieving our goals towards reconciliation through practical strategies and actions. Our RAP will be a living document as reconciliation is a process that we see will evolve as we engage more with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to working together to build relationships and trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and the non-Indigenous Australian communities where we serve, work and minister.

I would like to reaffirm The Salvation Army's leadership's total commitment to reconciliation particularly within our ministries and social programs. I acknowledge and thank all those involved in the consultative process of our RAP which has been a learning curve for those who have participated. We will continue to resource, support, seek guidance and direction from our Reference Group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry team who we value as the leading authorities to work collaboratively across our territory to achieve our plan.



## Message from National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

### Reference Group Chairman (Uncle Vince Ross)

The Salvation Army at this time in its history is facing a huge challenge to be relevant to the marginalised in our communities. My own story is one of those where The Salvation Army was prepared to go where no other church would go and I believe The Salvation Army still has the best way to connect with our people.

For the past 50 years I've yearned for The Salvation Army to be more proactive in its approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries. The development of our first reconciliation action plan shows The Salvation Army's commitment in advancing its work in this area. Our desire is for a positive shift in attitude and that will

open up positive ways for The Salvation Army to be relevant to the First Nation Peoples.

I commend The Salvation Army for taking this action and will continue to be supportive of progressing this further as we focus on what is achievable into the future. I strongly believe that in the doing lies the worth and our first Reconciliation Action Plan provides a sound foundation for us to build upon. This Reconciliation Action Plan will unite our organisation in engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in not just words by real action.



## Our vision for Reconciliation

Our Vision for reconciliation is to be a faith movement committed to social justice, equity and freedom. A movement that will respect value and acknowledge the unique cultures, spiritualities, histories and languages of the oldest surviving culture in the world. We see a Salvation Army that engages in a unified and positive

relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the leading authority in guiding and directing us towards the implementation of Reconciliation across The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory.

## Our business

The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory has a geographical scope that covers QLD, NSW and the ACT. It is part of an international movement, which is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church with its message being based on the Bible. It's ministry is motivated by the love of God, it's mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

The Salvation Australia Eastern Territory has an internal mission statement that conveys our local focus that

being to "save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity". Flowing from this is our core values of Transformation, Integrity and Compassion.

The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory workforce comprises 531 active Officers (ministers), 4,125 employees and over 15,500 volunteers. We currently do not have accurate figures on the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, volunteers, officers and members. We envisage that our RAP will assist us in identifying these numbers.





## Relationships

The Salvation Army acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Nations people. We have a commitment to building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on honest acceptance of past failures and hurt, restoring broken relationships, forgiveness and moving forward together as one.

*“Fundamental to this is our core belief that the love of Christ is for all and is what calls us into relationships with one another and the foundation of us living out our faith. Jesus said, “Love your Neighbour as yourself”.*



ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1.1 Establish The Salvation Army (TSA) RAP Working Group (RWG) to monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting and the ongoing development of our RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Territorial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry Coordinator (TATSIMC)</li> <li>• Territorial Secretary for Program (TPS)</li> </ul>	September 2015  Meet monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is formed and operational</li> <li>• RWG to meet every month of RAP implementation.</li> </ul>
1.2 Explore nominations of RAP Champions at each Divisional Headquarters (DHQ) as well as Salvo Stores, Salvos Legal and Aged Care Plus to advance the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHQ Commanders (DC)</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• Heads of Salvos Legal, Salvos Stores and Aged Care Plus</li> </ul>	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHQ RAP champion nominated.</li> <li>• Salvos Legal RAP champion nominated</li> <li>• Salvos Stores RAP champion nominated</li> <li>• Aged Care Plus RAP champion nominated</li> <li>• Establish a terms of reference for the RAP Champion</li> </ul>
1.3 Raise internal awareness of the TSA RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All TSA personnel</li> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> </ul>	Reported on in February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation by TATSIMC at Territorial Policy and Mission Council and Wider Cabinet about RAP development and implementation.</li> <li>• Develop and execute a plan to raise TSA awareness about our RAP commitments.</li> </ul>
1.4 Celebrate National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities for ministry workers, employees and volunteers to participate in events or host events to build relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• Communications Department Manager</li> <li>• Events Department Coordinator</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> </ul>	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHQ and THQ host an internal event and/or activity</li> <li>• Invite an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to share their story at an internal event (e.g. Officers Fellowship, mission business days, training days, conferences etc.)</li> <li>• Identify hubs (Regional network) who participate or partner with external stakeholders for National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event/activity.</li> <li>• Support ministry workers, employees and volunteers to attend other relevant NRW local Events.</li> <li>• Promote NRW events and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories through TSA internal and external communications.</li> <li>• Register TSA events on the Reconciliation Australia website.</li> </ul>
1.5 TSA to build meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to increase trust and create partnerships to deliver common objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAP Champions</li> <li>• THQ/DHQ Executive Support</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> </ul>	By end of 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore Principles for a partnership centered approach for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.</li> <li>• DHQ's and THQ identify existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations e.g. corps or hubs</li> </ul>



## Respect

We are committed to demonstrating our respect through developing our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, languages, histories, lands and identities. We believe that respect is a critical factor in us deepening our relationships with one another.

*"God places immense value on all people and we are called to do likewise through respectful relationships"*



ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>2.1 Celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures by participating in NAIDOC Week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• Communications Department Manager</li> <li>• Events Department Coordinator</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> </ul>	<p>July 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to share their story during NAIDOC Week activities.</li> <li>• Support local NAIDOC events hosted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.</li> <li>• Support staff, volunteers or ministry workers to attend other relevant NAIDOC local Events.</li> <li>• Promote NAIDOC events and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories through internal and external TSA communications.</li> <li>• Identify hubs who participate, partner or host NAIDOC activities.</li> <li>• Provide an opportunity for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to share something of their culture and life experiences to increase understanding and appreciation of contemporary challenges.</li> <li>• DHQ and THQ to host an internal event and/or activity for NAIDOC</li> </ul>
<p>2.2 Develop guidelines for Welcome to Country AND Acknowledgement of Country to promote mutual respect and understanding across The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory and to the wider community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• Executive Leadership</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> </ul>	<p>December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with TSA National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group with regards to guidelines.</li> <li>• Guidelines developed and included into TSA events checklists.</li> <li>• Welcome to Country by a Traditional Owner to be included in Commissioning/Congress and other significant events</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of Country performed by executive leadership in their visits across the territory</li> </ul>
<p>2.3 Create services and ministries that are culturally inclusive, appropriate and accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• THQ Executive Leadership</li> <li>• DHQ Executive Leadership</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> <li>• TSA Corps Officers and Centre Managers</li> </ul>	<p>Reported on in February 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage flags, signage and or artwork displayed at TSA buildings in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff, volunteers or ministry persons.</li> <li>• Consult with Traditional Owners on the appropriate use of artwork and signage</li> <li>• Identify existing locations that display flags, signage and/or artwork.</li> </ul>
<p>2.4 Develop the capacity of TSA in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practices to enable appropriate behaviors in service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group</li> <li>• HR Manager</li> <li>• Booth College Principal</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> </ul>	<p>June 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with TSA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group who has identified cultural competence as a key issues area on their agenda.</li> <li>• Consult with Booth College with regards to incorporating cultural awareness/competence into Cadet training.</li> <li>• Collate information from extensive TSA RAP consultations to develop further cultural learning and development.</li> <li>• Include information that broadly covers national, regional and local perspectives.</li> <li>• Engage with external cultural competency and awareness training opportunities locally.</li> </ul>



## Opportunities

The Salvation Army is about people finding freedom and as such we see the immense disadvantage that exists for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as a barrier to an equitable Australia. Working in consultation and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities we are committed to providing appropriate and meaningful opportunities.



ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>3.1 Create opportunities within TSA to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career development. To better equip TSA to deliver programs and services that reflect the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• HR manager</li> <li>• Communications Department Manager</li> <li>• Events Department Coordinator</li> </ul>	<p>December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Employment Strategy</li> <li>• Base line data gathered on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees/personnel to monitor progress towards 2.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in TSA workforce</li> <li>• Develop and promote employment opportunities through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media outlets.</li> <li>• Include questions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs, ministry and work in corps, social, divisional and territorial reviews</li> <li>• Review and adapt communications with identifiable artwork and language for programs &amp; ministries to encourage access to services.</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 Encourage Supplier Diversity through purchasing from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• DHQ Leadership Team</li> <li>• THQ Leadership Team</li> </ul>	<p>December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and Identify local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers.</li> <li>• Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business</li> </ul>
<p>3.3 Increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to contribute to divisional and territorial forums and conferences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• TPS</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> </ul>	<p>December 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide divisional and territorial opportunities at key relevant events in partnership with Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people.</li> </ul>
<p>3.4 To develop Communications and Marketing material in accordance with culturally appropriate language, style and imagery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• Communications and Public Relations Secretary</li> </ul>	<p>December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with divisional or territorial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel.</li> <li>• Use of authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services delivery images and stories</li> </ul>

## Tracking progress and reporting

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. RWG report to The Salvation Army National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group and TPMC on RAP progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RWG</li> </ul>	March, June & October Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAP updates provided at reference group meeting.</li> </ul>
2. Annual Report to Reconciliation Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> </ul>	September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to be provided to Reconciliation Australia for review by 30 September each year</li> </ul>
3. Review and revise The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory RAP annually to track progress, expand current actions and identify new actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> <li>• TATSIMC</li> </ul>	End of 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAP revised after first year, and then a new RAP developed after two years.</li> <li>• Annual review report provided to Reference Group, TPMC and Wider Cabinet members.</li> </ul>
4. The implementation and progress of the RAP is published on The Salvation Army and Reconciliation Australia websites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• TPMC</li> <li>• Communications Department Manager</li> </ul>	End of 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish the RAP on The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory and Reconciliation Australia website.</li> <li>• RAP progress and achievement is embedded into The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory reporting processes.</li> </ul>
5. Communicate RAP to The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory leadership through Wider Cabinet and TPMC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TATSIMC</li> <li>• RAP Champions</li> </ul>	Annually in February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAP presentation to Wider Cabinet and TPMC.</li> </ul>

## RAP Contact Person

### Shirli Congoo

Territorial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry Coordinator

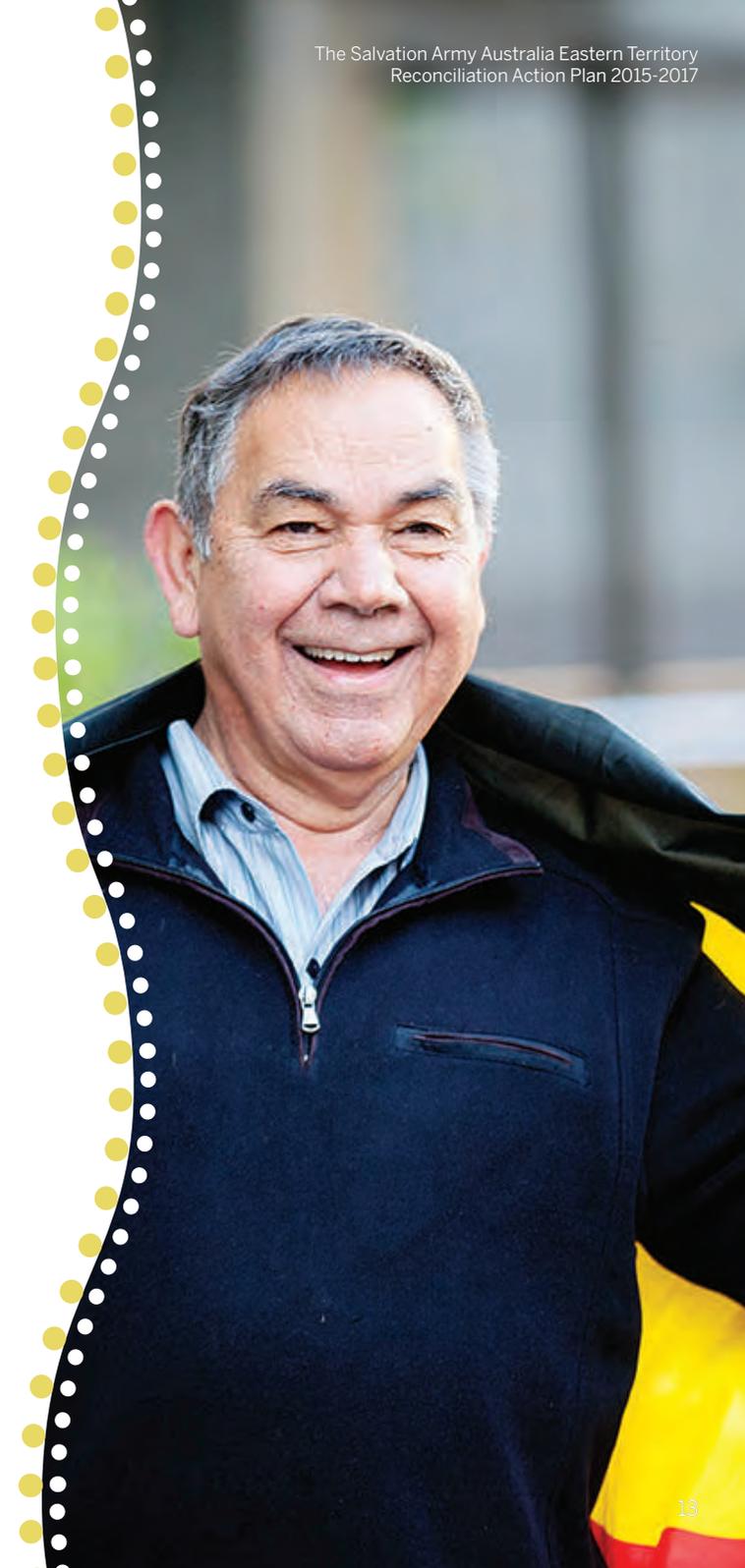
shirli.congoo@aue.salvationarmy.org

P: 07 4723 5607

M: 0400 713 819

## Glossary of Terms:

CORPS	Salvation Army Church
DHQ	Divisional Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HUB	Regional network of Salvation Army expressions
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Observance Committee
NRW	National Reconciliation Week
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RWG	RAP Working Group
SAMIS	Salvation Army Mission Information System
TATSIMC	Territorial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry Coordinator
THQ	Territorial Headquarters
TPMC	Territorial Policy and Mission Council
TPS	Territorial Program Secretary
TSA	The Salvation Army



## Acknowledgements

In developing our RAP we have had significant support and input from a wider array of people. We are most appreciative of all those that participated in more than 20 focus groups across the territory and also for the various opportunities to engage through Hubs, Business Mission days, DHQ leadership meetings and various boards and councils. The participation of volunteers, staff, Salvation Army Officers and soldiers as well as community stakeholders has helped shape and guide the development of our RAP.

We also make special mention of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group for its

input and wise counsel in developing our RAP. Many of our elders that are members of this group have been pioneering this work in The Salvation Army and wider community for many years and we acknowledge their sustained and tireless efforts.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry team have also been instrumental in the development of our RAP. Its expertise, passion and commitment to seeing our RAP move from being a concept into a reality that will take us further on the journey of reconciliation has been extremely valuable.

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## Relevant documents

This RAP has been built upon previous work done by The Salvation Army in laying the foundations for its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry and work. This has been seen through the 1997 Statement of Reconciliation alongside this was the Reconciliation Painting a commissioned artwork piece by Aboriginal artist Cindy Alsop. Further on from this was the development of a Salvation Army Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry Policy in 2012. This document was included as an official Salvation Army Minute as part of policy and procedures.

This Aboriginal Australia map attempts to represent language, tribal or nation groups of Australia's Aboriginal people and Australia's Torres Strait Islander people. It shows the diversity that exists between individual Aboriginal groups and Torres Strait Islander groups.

“The map shows Australians and the international community that this country was occupied everywhere with a diversity of indigenous people and their languages,” Dianne Hosking linguist told *Australian Geographic*.



**The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory**

**Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2017**

Designed by The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory  
Communications and Public Relations Department

[salvos.org.au](http://salvos.org.au) | 13 SALVOS (13 72 58)

