



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE



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July 2023 – July 2025





We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise the unique journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and the contributions their voices make within our organisation and the wider community.



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About the artwork and artist

The artwork 'The Pretty Painting'



This visually pretty painting hides the hurt, pain and suffering at the hands of domestic violence. It tells this story by using a collection of colours, marks, shapes, and symbols which, at first glance, it is easy to dismiss domestic violence happening in our families and across our communities.

You will see in the top left-hand side of this artwork; the large meeting place symbol representing the Domestic Violence Action Centre (DVAC) team banding together to work on ways to provide support and ways to help those in need.

The dinawaan/emu prints, represent others who work with DVAC to help and walk the journeys of those experiencing and recovering from domestic violence. There are other meeting place symbols of Elders sitting at the edge of safe spaces in this artwork who come together to support DVAC in their communities.

The flowers represent those who have passed away from domestic violence, linking them to the mourning of those left behind and the blue spinning symbols show the turmoil caused around in your head. The yellow marks and shapes, show the people who are breaking the domestic violence cycle.

Artist biography

Susie Klein is a Jaularoi woman and is passionate about agencies offering culturally appropriate family violence services to First Nations families and communities. Susie is a member of the Board of the Domestic Violence Action Centre and our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Party. Susie is passionate about how we continue our reconciliation journey, build relationships across the region, and promote violence prevention.

Susie has spent many years working with families who have experienced trauma, with her own company *Aim High Counselling Pty. Ltd* as well as a small business *Susie Klein Creative and Self Expressive Art*, specialising in counselling, skills training, education and mediation. Susie is a professional artist and has pioneered an Art for Relaxation therapeutic workshop that promotes healing through creative and self-expressive arts.



Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation guides our daily practice at DVAC. Our vision is to embrace unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. Where there is historical acceptance of our shared history, truth telling and removal of negative race relations. Our vision is where all Australians embrace the Elders past, present and future for the strengths and wisdom that they bring to our Nation's future.

As a values-based organisation, reconciliation is central to our organisational values of community, accountability and resilience. At DVAC we respect the cultural strength, knowledge, and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We embrace diversity and we are committed to working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities. We stand beside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, families, and communities. In our work we acknowledge self-determination, and we respect the cultural protocols, choices, and decisions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Innovate RAP will build on our relationships, our everyday practice and being through the development of our Wambinya Way. Through our Wambinya way walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence on their healing journeys.



Our work

The Domestic Violence Action Centre is a not for profit, registered charity. Established in 1996, we work with individuals, families and communities to reduce the prevalence and impact of gender-based violence.

At DVAC we have been working to increase safety for women, children and individuals for 26 years. We are passionate leaders preventing and responding to gender-based violence. We are a values-based, feminist organisation that is all about building community awareness and collaboration, and strong accountability for people who use violence. We support survivors and their children to be safer and to live a life of their choice.

Our values

Our core values are the pillar for our work at DVAC. Our values are community, accountability and resilience.



Our services

At DVAC we provide individual case management, advocacy, counselling services and group work to increase safety for women, children/young people and individuals. We provide specialist services that support survivors on their journey for safety and healing from sexual, domestic and family abuse. We provide specialist men's behaviour change programs and court support services.

Through high quality service delivery, combined with education, integrated service approaches, awareness raising and activism, we use our passion as leaders to create a world free from gender-based violence.



Our locations

We provide services from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, to people within the areas of the Yuggera, Barunggam and Bundjalung country including:

Greater Ipswich including all Ipswich metro, into Goodna, out to Laidley and just past Gatton, down to Boonah and up to Toogoolawah; and

Toowoomba including all suburbs, the Darling Downs, part of the Maranoa (excluding Roma), and the townships of Warwick, Stanthorpe, Dalby, Chinchilla, Goondiwindi, Oakey, and Pittsworth.



Our people

The DVAC team consists of trained domestic violence specialists and counsellors who are experienced in working with people who have experienced domestic, family, and sexual violence. We have 64 staff including full time, part time and casual employees. Three of our staff identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

You will find detailed information about the organisation on our website www.dvac.org.au.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children experience disproportionate levels of violence and intimate partner homicide. Alongside the gender-based drivers of domestic, family and sexual violence, the underlying context for this is colonisation and its lasting impacts.

Through our work every day with individuals and families, DVAC is committed to contributing to overcoming racism, recognising equality and equity, and creating opportunities for historical acceptance and truth telling. We work with victim survivors to provide culturally safe and person lead support. We partner with innovative projects to improve outcomes for victim survivors, such as co-locating a worker with Queensland Police and advocating to police where our assessment shows a mis-identification of a client as a 'respondent.' We partner with community stakeholders to support activities that contribute to reconciliation in our local area and partner with Aboriginal Community Organisations and groups such as Liworaji Aboriginal Corporation to work together to reduce the prevalence and impact of gender-based violence.

Our RAP

We are excited to be embracing our Innovate RAP and to goals that we have set. With this RAP our team at DVAC will learn and grow and make progress toward our vision for reconciliation. Our CEO and Board First Nations Cultural Advisor (identified) and members of our RAP Working Group are our RAP champions.

Our RAP champions drive and champion internal engagement and awareness of the RAP and collaborate with our whole DVAC team to achieve progress toward our vision for Reconciliation. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are encouraged to be on our RAP Working group.

With membership across all levels of the organisation, active members include our Board First Nations Cultural Advisor, Chief Executive Officer, Domestic and Family Violence and Counselling Specialists, and our Integrated Service Response Specialist. Three (3) members of our RAP working group identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Our RAP implementation

DVAC values our relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and community organisations. We have mature referral and care support partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and look to extend this by increasing awareness about our RAP and reconciliation and identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders within our local communities.

Throughout our *Reflect RAP* we learnt that building relationships and meaningful partnerships takes time and cannot be rushed. Our partnerships in our local area have deepened and grown over the RAP journey. Through our partnership with Liworaji we have learnt about how our service capacity limitations can impact on the cultural safety of our service delivery and we have worked together to improve this for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples we support. We look forward to building on this more within the *Innovate RAP*.



Our *Reflect RAP* created strong foundations for our organisational systems and culture. Our team learnt through training and yarning circles about the history of Colonisation and its ongoing impacts in our local communities and people we support. We reflected on the importance of cultural protocols like Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country and ensured we embedded a whole of organisational policy and approach to these important protocols.

Built on the foundations of the *Reflect RAP*, the *Innovate RAP* brings life to reconciliation in everyday practice at DVAC through the development of our Wambinya Way, to create safety, belonging and healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who access our services. This is an ambitious goal that will only be made possible with learning, reflection and support.

DVAC established a RAP Working Group, ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and board representation are central to our Working Group. We meet at least quarterly to progress our RAP deliverables and involve our staff in our RAP. We report back to our broader DVAC community on our RAP implementation progress.

Our reconciliation journey since the development of our *Reflect RAP* has been a journey of growth and learning, establishing and strengthening the understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights, promoting reconciliation and healing. We look forward to extending this in our *Innovate RAP*.



Relationships

DVAC is an ally of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. DVAC believes that building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is important to our organisational values and core purpose: to increase safety for women and children from domestic, sexual and family violence.

Connecting people, knowledge, and sharing experiences is essential to our organisation. This informs us how to deliver inclusive, respectful services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our community.

Our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations are important in providing connected services that respect cultures and self-determination for the people who access our services.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. 	July 2023	Integrated Services Response Worker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations that engages and creates space for conversations, reciprocity, and deep listening. 	July 2023	RAP Champion
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	July 2023 and July 2024	Integrated Services Response Worker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and board members to participate in an external NRW event. 	27 May – 3 June, 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 and 2024	Integrated Services Response Worker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate NRW within DVAC each year and register NRW event at Reconciliation Australia. 	27 May – 3 June, 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce. 	August 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through broad mediums such as communication to all staff through internal channels, internal posters, social media and website. 	July 2023 September 2023 April 2024 December 2024	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. 	December 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to support reconciliation. 	July 2023 December 2023 April 2024 December 2024	RAP Champion
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	July 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training to all board and staff on cultural capability. 	May 2024	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. 	December 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation. 	December 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include reconciliation, intersectionality, social justice and self-determination within the DVAC organisational practice principles and articulate how this contributes to our reconciliation commitment. 	September 2023	RAP Champion
5. Increase public awareness, understanding and support around preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase public awareness, understanding and support around preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. 	July 2023 December 2023 April 2024 December 2024	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share proactive social media content that addresses the drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, including the impacts of colonisation. 	July 2023 December 2023 April 2024 December 2024	Business Services Team Leader



Respect is fundamental to all relationships and a core pillar for our practice at DVAC. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights is important to DVAC because it provides the platform to understand, appreciate and celebrate the unique value and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

DVAC develops and reflects on ways we conduct business that respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. We are committed to growing, learning and embedding respect into our daily practice.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	• Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	September 2023	RAP Champion
	• Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	November 2023	RAP Champion
	• Develop reflective practice opportunities for all staff to reflect, learn and develop practice that embeds respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– self-education and reflective practice– sharing reading and resources– formal training and workshops– inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest presenters at DVAC internal practice development sessions at least once per annum.	November 2023	RAP Champion
	• Develop a core cultural competency training and reflective practice program for all DVAC board and staff utilising Aboriginal Training Businesses.	January 2024	Business Services Team Leader
	• Provide opportunities for the RAP Working Group, all staff and board to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	November 2023	RAP Champion



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. 	July 2023	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including embedding training on cultural protocols into new employee induction. 	September 2023	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year. 	December 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. 	December 2024	RAP Champion
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to lead DVAC involvement in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	First week in July, 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. 	May 2023 May 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage all staff and board to participate in NAIDOC Week. 	First week in July, 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
9. Develop the DVAC Wambinya Way (Support Way) in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to create increased safety, belonging and healing for peoples who access our services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about the cultural safety and accessibility of DVAC services and integrate feedback into DVAC quality improvement systems. 	July 2023 December 2023 July 2024 December 2024 June 2025	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a vision for our Wambinya Way in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through yarning and workshops. 	December 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and investigate opportunities to increase cultural safety of our workplaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 	December 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop our Wambinya Way practice guideline for DVAC staff and publicly available Wambinya Way framework. 	December 2024	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and improve the cultural safety and accessibility of the service delivery tools that we use to embed language and symbolism that promotes safety, belonging and healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	December 2023	Integrated Services Response Worker

Opportunities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities are important to DVAC achieving our purpose and goals. Building our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce at DVAC fosters our organisational culture and strengthens DVAC as an employer of choice.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing and board membership to inform future organisational governance roles, employment and professional development opportunities. 	July 2023	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and board to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. 	August 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. 	November 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. 	November 2023	HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. 	November 2023	HR Business Partner
11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. 	July 2023	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	July 2023	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff. 	January 2024	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	January 2024	Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	January 2024	Business Services Team Leader
12. Improve referral pathways and integrated supports between DVAC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-based organisations and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create systems and opportunities to assess cultural needs and strengths for all clients to ensure our services are appropriately tailored to individuals. 	April 2024	RAP Champion Business Services Team Leader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the principles for a partnership centred approach for NGOs working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities developed by APONT. 	January 2024	RAP Champion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide streamlined referral pathways and access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services, community groups and identified roles for people accessing our services. 	January 2024	RAP Champion

At DVAC we all share responsibility for the Reconciliation Action Plan, and our governance provides the mechanisms to which we are all accountable.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
13. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	February, May, August and November 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Review and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August and November 2023 and 2024	Executive Assistant
14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Continue to engage all of staff and board in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2024	RAP Champion
	• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2023	RAP Champion
	• Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	July 2023	CEO
15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	July 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Provide regular communication to all staff and board about the activities of the RWG and our progress.	July, September 2023 and May, June and September 2024	RAP Champion
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	July 2023 October 2023 December 2023 April 2024 July 2024 October 2024 December 2024	RAP Champion
	• Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	October 2023 and 2024	RAP Champion
	• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	RAP Champion
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2024	RAP Champion
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	July 2024	RAP Champion



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