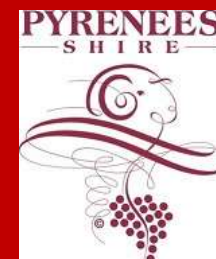




Pyrenees Shire Council

Reconciliation Action Plan

April 2019 – July 2020



Pyrenees Shire Council acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Djab Wurrung and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respects to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the Elders and people of these tribes.

Our business

Pyrenees Shire is located in the Central West of Victoria, about 130 kilometres Northwest of Melbourne and comprises an area of nearly 3,500 square kilometres. The Pyrenees Shire has a population of 7,238 (ABS 2016) and encompasses a number of small townships and hamlets, with the three largest townships being Beaufort, Avoca and Snake Valley. According to the 2016 census, 1.9% (135 individuals) of people living in the Pyrenees were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples more than double the state average of 0.8%.

The region of Pyrenees falls within the boundaries of four Aboriginal Traditional Custodians including the Wadawurrung (towards the South and East of the Shire), Dja Dja Wurrung (towards the Northeast of the Shire), Djab Wurrung (towards the Northwest of the Shire) and Wotjobaluk (in a Northwest corner). A further Native Title Claim by the Eastern Maar is currently being reviewed.

The elected Council and administration of Pyrenees Shire Council performs functions and exercises powers prescribed by the Local Government Act 1989. Section 3D (2) of the Act sets out that the role of a Council includes:

“(a) acting as a representative government by taking into account the *diverse* needs of the local community in decision-making.”

Pyrenees Shire Council’s Vision is to ensure that the Pyrenees Shire is a healthy, vibrant and prosperous community. This is achieved by:

- Providing quality road and built infrastructure for the community;
- Working with others to provide services to maintain the wellbeing of the community, and
- Operating an efficient, forward looking organisation.

Specifically, Council provides a range of services to the community including, but not limited to: maintenance of local roads and infrastructure; in-home care to aged residents or those with a disability; two community resource centres/libraries/tourist information centres; the enforcement of local laws; delivery of community and capital grants to local community groups; the registration of food premises and review of planning and building permits.

Pyrenees Shire Council currently employs approximately 120 people. Currently, we are aware of two Aboriginal employees. However, as we work to implement our RAP, we will work towards increasing and improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. There are currently five site locations, including the Council Offices in Beaufort, Community Resource Centre and Depot in Beaufort and Information Centre and Depot in Avoca. However, many council staff regularly work offsite, including Pyrenees Community Care Support Staff, Works Officers and School Crossing Supervisors.

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Our RAP

Pyrenees Shire Council's reconciliation journey began formally in early 2000 as the Dja Dja Wurrung people's Native Title Claim progressed. Since this time, we have been involved in various programs that support reconciliation, including regularly supporting the NAIDOC week schools program and more recently various other activities and projects.

These have included involvement with the Mullagh Wills Foundation in 2016, in which the 150th Anniversary of the Aboriginal Cricket Team Tour of England in 1868 was commemorated by tracing the journey that the team made to the Melbourne Cricket Ground from Western Victoria. Pyrenees Shire Council held the commemorative book for a couple of weeks and the Mayor at the time wrote a message in the book on behalf of the citizens of the Shire.

In 2017, Pyrenees Shire Council facilitated the instalment of the Koori Arts Trail at Beaufort Lake (in partnership with the Department of Justice and Regulation), which permanently showcases the artwork of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners at Langi Kal Kal Prison on the trail around Beaufort Lake for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. The artwork takes inspiration from the Lake itself and portrays to viewers important aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

In 2018, Council has committed to ensuring the flying of the Aboriginal flag at the Beaufort Council Offices during the work week and the acknowledgement of Traditional Owners on a variety of Council publications including the Council website, staff email signatures and community newsletters.

The Recognition and Settlement Agreement between the Dja Dja Wurrung People and the State of Victoria (28 March 2013), has encouraged us to formalise and deepen our organisational commitment to reconciliation by developing a RAP. As an organisation, we also recognise that our nation's history, including acts that were perpetrated and policies upheld in our Shire, has shaped the current circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We believe that due to our influence we have in our local area, that we have a role in the country's reconciliation journey. Our own reconciliation journey and RAP has been championed by our CEO and supported by our Councillors and Senior Leadership Team as well as Aboriginal and non-Indigenous staff members. We have consulted with some Traditional Owners in the development of our RAP as well as with interested community members and organisations, neighbouring councils and existing partners, including Langi Kal Kal Prison. We hope that as we implement our RAP that we are able to consult with a broader and more diverse range of stakeholders, including all Traditional Owner groups in our local area.

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Our partnerships/current activities

Pyrenees Shire Council currently sits on Langi Kal Kal Prison's Community Advisory Group, which has allowed us to collaborate on many projects that promote reconciliation. This has included the Koori Arts Trail as well as the launch in July 2018 of a six week 'NAIDOC week Aboriginal Art Exhibition' showcasing the art of incarcerated Aboriginal men, with the aim that this will become an annual event. Pyrenees Shire Council also worked closely with The Torch Project to support the sale of the works. The Torch "aims to reduce the rate of reoffending [of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners] by encouraging participants to explore identity and culture through art, develop confidence and define new pathways for themselves upon release from prison."

Council is also currently involved in the Central Highlands Integrated Water Management Forum, which is facilitating our support for and involvement in local Cultural Heritage projects, including a high priority project for Traditional Owners groups in the region to map cultural along waterway corridors, creating a knowledge base which can be managed by these groups.

Pyrenees Shire Council Community Wellbeing Staff including Pyrenees Community Care Staff and our Maternal Child Health Nurse are required to attend cultural awareness training, including 'Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency' delivered by the Koorie Heritage Trust. All attending members of staff have found this training extremely valuable and Council intends to explore cultural awareness training for a greater number of staff in the short term.

In 2018, we have also actively promoted National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week internally (and to a smaller extent externally) and encouraged staff and residents to participate in local events by displaying posters, using our email signature and internal communications mechanisms. We hope that the implementation of our RAP will enable us to deepen our existing partnerships as well as help us develop new ones.

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Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish a RAP Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation. 	Apr 2019	Chief Executive Officer Manager Governance, Risk & Compliance
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. 	Apr 2019	Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. 	Apr 2019	Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event. 	27 May- 3 Jun 2020	Communications Officer Director Corporate & Community Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	27 May- 3 Jun 2020	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May- 3 Jun 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments. 	Dec 2019	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP. 	Dec 2019	Communications Officer
5. Acknowledge and support local contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide in-kind venue hire for local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander groups or groups working to support reconciliation. 	Oct 2019	Manager Economic Development and Tourism Manager Community Wellbeing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install signage and better promote the Koori Art Trail to alert residents and visitors. 	Mar 2020	Manager Economic Development

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Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation. 	Dec 2019	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. 	Mar 2020	Manager People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation. 	Apr 2020	Manager People and Culture
7. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. 	Jul 2020	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. 	Jul 2020	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	Jul 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
8. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area. 	Dec 2019	MFPO Environment and Sustainability Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence. 	Dec 2019	Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols). 	Dec 2019	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure use of disclaimer on publications and public displays where images of deceased Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples may have been used. 	Dec 2019	Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure protocol for Acknowledgement of Country is followed at all external meetings held at Council. 	Feb 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance

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Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and display Acknowledgement of Country plaques on all Pyrenees Shire Council places of work – including the Beaufort Council Offices, Beaufort Resource Centre, Avoca Information Centre, Beaufort Depot and Avoca Depot and Section 86 buildings including Beaufort Community Bank Complex, Brewster Hall, Landsborough Community Resource Centre, Lexton Community Centre, Snake Valley Hall and Waubra Community Hub. 	Mar 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at the launch of the Reflect RAP at the Beaufort Council Offices once Acknowledgement of Country plaque has been put in place. 	Mar 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a Welcome to Country is arranged for each Annual Staff Day. 	Aug 2019	Manager People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fly Aboriginal flag at Beaufort Council Offices and scope ability to fly at other Council venues. 	Aug 2019	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners on Council website, Council email signatures and public documents (e.g. Community Newsletter and Annual Report). 	Dec 2019	Communications Officer
9. Investigate opportunities to create a more culturally safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display of Aboriginal artwork at Beaufort Council Offices, Beaufort Community Resource Centre and Avoca Information Centre. 	Aug 2019	Library and Resource Centre Coordinator Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Uniform policy to ensure all customer service wear Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag pin at all times. 	Dec 2019	Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors

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Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	Mar 2020	Manager People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities. 	Mar 2020	Manager People and Culture
11. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	Mar 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. Incorporate into the review of Council's Procurement policy. 	Mar 2020	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope potential to purchase artwork from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to display at Council sites. 	Dec 2019	Executive Assistant to the CEO and Councillors
12. Promote and support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a minimum of \$1000 awarded through Council's community grants programs to groups or projects that support reconciliation. 	Oct 2019	Manager Community Wellbeing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for regional collaboration to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. 	Mar 2019	Manager Economic Development and Tourism

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Governance and Tracking Progress

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation. 	Jun 2020	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. 	Jun 2020	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 Sep 2019	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance
14. Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. 	Dec 2019	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review. 	Jan 2020	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement. 	Jan 2020	Manager Governance Risk and Compliance

Contact details

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Cover Art: Created by Pyrenees Shire Council staff with permission from artist

Artwork: Produced by Ralph Rogers - Bushka

Story: MY TOTEM BREWARRINA

The painting represents me that is one of my family totems and I'm on a journey look for the rest of my family, and when you are given a totem you grow up and learn about what he eat were he drinks cause these things, we all eat , I can't eat my totem but I can give it some one that didn't belong to the totem so he will give me his totem to eat , this is my dreaming this is my story.

R.J.ROGERS - BUSHKA

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