



Caxton Legal Centre

Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2018 – March 2020



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

caxton
legal centre inc



Foreword

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the oldest continuing culture and civilisation on earth. Before colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society was characterised by complex lore and kinship obligations, by intimate and intricate relationships with the land resulting in spiritual and physical sustenance, and by an overarching sense of equity and belonging of all those within it.

Since colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have survived massacres, disease, dislocation, exploitation, and political and social marginalisation. The law has often been both beneficial and oppressive in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Many of the great gains for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been the result of advocating for and challenging legal reforms in areas such as land rights, native title and the removal of unequal pay rates, and of highlighting injustices in areas such as child protection, juvenile justice, imprisonment and policing.

Our new Reconciliation Action Plan 2018–20 formalises Caxton Legal Centre's commitment to engage the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, provide culturally appropriate legal services and promote reconciliation in the broader community. It is a living document—one that is constantly evolving—to ensure it is always meaningful and truly engaging.

Alf Davis

Chair RAP Working Group

Our vision for reconciliation

Caxton Legal Centre Inc. seeks to actively contribute to Australia's reconciliation journey by working in unity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to achieve social justice. We will play a role in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the legal system, by developing a culturally safe legal practice environment, developing meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and educational and professional development opportunities.

We acknowledge and respect the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and recognise that true and lasting reconciliation will bring a cultural richness to all Australians.



Our business

Caxton Legal Centre Inc. is Queensland's oldest, non-profit, community-based legal service. Established in 1976, the centre's objects are to provide legal and social welfare services to people in Queensland who are on a low income or otherwise disadvantaged and who are in need of relief from poverty, distress, misfortune, destitution and helplessness, and to educate such people in legal, social welfare and related matters. To achieve these objects, we operate free legal advice and information services, specialist legal casework services, clinical legal education programs and social work support services.

To get our work done, Caxton Legal Centre relies on various partnerships, both formal and informal, with numerous organisations, universities and more broadly the legal profession. We have enjoyed close working relationships at individual and organisational levels with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in legal organisations such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, the Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland and the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service. We look forward to building and strengthening these relationships in coming years.

Our centre currently employs 40 full-time and part-time staff, two of whom identify as Aboriginal. Caxton continues to encourage applications by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through advertising upcoming positions in various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.

Our vision is to: <https://queenslandlawhandbook.org.au/factsheets-and-self-help-kits/police-powers-your-rights/>

- build a just and inclusive society that values difference and diversity, and the rights of all people and their communities to the social and economic resources they need to exercise their human rights
- influence the development of law to recognise the needs of people who are socially or economically disadvantaged
- assist people, who would otherwise be denied access to justice due to social or economic disadvantage, to exercise their legal rights.

Our goals are to:

- promote access to justice
- provide free legal advice and information
- empower people to address their legal problems
- increase community awareness of the law
- produce clear easy-to-read publications
- work to change unfair laws.

The pillars of Caxton's 2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan include:

- integrated services for clients
- advocacy and law reform
- partnerships
- people and culture.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

We are proud of our achievements under our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the years 2014 to 2016, which included:

- establishing an identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander position on Caxton's management committee
- providing all staff with training and Indigenous culture immersion opportunities, including cultural awareness training with Mel Brown, and visits to the Cherbourg Ration Shed
- actively encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for all staff vacancies, which resulted in the employment of two Indigenous staff
- sponsoring an academic prize for an Indigenous student studying at the Queensland University of Technology Faculty of Law
- hosting the Justice in Focus Series *Smart Money: Investing in Alternatives to Indigenous Imprisonment* public forum in October 2015 at the Queensland Supreme Court in partnership with ATSILS
- hosting the *Without Unnecessary Violence* public forum at Queensland Parliament House in August 2016
- increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients obtaining assistance from Caxton Legal Centre
- supporting the Indigenous Literacy Day event at Avid Reader Bookshop
- celebrating NAIDOC Week with a stall on Family Fun Day at Musgrave Park in 2015 and 2016.

Caxton will continue to provide support and access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a number of practical ways by:

- maintaining an identified position for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person on the management committee
- ensuring our staff have the opportunity to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning to increase cultural awareness, safety and sensitivity
- improving intake procedures and quality of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- forming and continuing working partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations to help improve the range of support services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- actively encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for all Caxton Legal Centre staff vacancies
- developing a program of support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students to encourage their transition into the legal profession.

How Our RAP Was Developed

In 2013, the management committee of Caxton Legal Centre Inc. committed to the preparation of an overarching plan to develop a RAP to provide structure for implementing ideas and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Caxton's RAP Working Group developed the centre's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2014 – 2016 with the guidance and support from the management committee in conjunction with community consultation. Caxton has strived to achieve the measurable targets developed in this plan.

The development of Caxton's Innovate RAP 2018–20 by the RAP Working Group is again supported by Caxton's management committee, senior management and staff. Development of the new RAP is based on learnings and experiences from implementing our previous RAP, and is also the result of invaluable contributions and meaningful discussions with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Caxton's RAP is championed by an internal team tasked with monitoring and implementing our RAP. The internal team consists of: Scott McDougall (Director), Anne-Maree Elliott (Business Manager), Georgia May (Lawyer), Nastassja Milevskiy (Lawyer) and Keryn Ruska (Lawyer). Caxton's legal, social work and administration services strive to achieve the vision of our RAP. Caxton's RAP is supported by all staff who strive to accomplish our measurable targets.

Our RAP Working Group comprises members both internal and external to the organisation. The Chair of the RAP Working Group is Alf Davis (management committee member). Other RAP Working Group members are Bianca Hill-Jarro, Mark Thomas (management committee member), Michelle Eatock-Rabbidge, Candice Hughes and Allison Boland.



Relationships

Caxton Legal Centre strongly believes it is important to build lasting relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and stakeholders to improve access to justice.

Focus Area: ... aligns with Caxton's strategic Partnerships pillar and focuses on developing strategic partnerships to deliver organisational goals.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
1. RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. 	Review in April 2018	Chair RWG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the RWG. 	Review in April 2018	Chair RWG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet at least three times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation. 	April, June and October 2018 and 2019	Chair RWG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint an internal RAP champion(s) from the senior management including Chair of Reconciliation Action Plan Implementation Group (RIG). 	Complete by April 2018	Director
2. Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) to strengthen and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise one internal NRW event each year. 	27 May – 3 June, annually	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register our NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's website. 	Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	Review in April 2018	Director

Relationships cont.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Maintain and leverage mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. Meet with two local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement and explore potential for establishing formal two-way partnerships to build capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and/or communities relevant to our sphere of influence. Invite representatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and/or communities to functions hosted by Caxton. Encourage Caxton Management Committee and staff attendance at functions hosted by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations/community events. Review and maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples <i>Contacts and Referrals Guide</i> and policies. 	Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG
		Complete by June 2018	Director
		Review in October 2018	Chair RWG
		Review in April 2018	Director
		Review in April 2018	Director and Team Leaders
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders and social media. Publish the Innovate RAP on Caxton's website. Publish a Innovate RAP snapshot in hardcopy. Present and promote the RAP to all Caxton employees to ensure that they gain a greater understanding of how they can contribute to reconciliation. 	Review in April 2018	Business Manager
		Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG
		Review in June 2018	Communications and Community Engagement Officer
		Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG and Director
		Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG and Director

Respect

We believe it is important to improve Caxton's staff awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, cultures and achievements in order to enhance our respectful and competent service delivery. We seek to achieve this through cultural awareness and competency training, respecting Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols, and participating in NAIDOC Week activities.

Focus area: ... aligns with Caxton's strategic People and Culture pillar and focuses on creating a flexible and supportive work environment that allows staff and volunteers to grow and thrive.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and review a cultural awareness training strategy for our staff that defines continuous cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face-to-face, workshops or cultural immersion). Engage at least 75% of staff in face-to-face or online cultural workshops or cultural immersion learning activities. Engage all RWG members in cultural learning activities. Engage all senior executive in cultural learning activities. Modify volunteer and student induction packages to include information about our RAP, including a copy of the RAP snapshot. 	Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG
		Review in June 2018	Chair RIG
		Review in October 2018	Chair RIG
		Review in October 2018	Director
		Complete by April 2018	Volunteer Coordinator
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities by embedding cultural protocols as part of the way our organisation functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain staff awareness of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country policy and procedure. Maintain and review a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country. 	Review in June 2018	Chair RIG
		Review in April 2018	Chair RIG

Respect cont.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
6. continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all future Caxton publications maintain appropriate typography when making reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples such as capitalising Indigenous, Traditional Owners, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	Complete by June 2018	Publications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country in email signature and on the website. 	Complete by April 2018	Business Manager
7. Celebrate NAIDOC Week and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with culture and community during NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events in the local community. 	First week of July, annually	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, hold an internal or public NAIDOC Week event. 	Review preparations in April 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support an external NAIDOC Week community event by hosting a stall at the annual NAIDOC celebrations at the Family Fun Day in Musgrave Park, South Brisbane. 	Review preparations in April 2018	Chair RIG
8. Take a strong stance against racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the Australian Human Rights Commission's RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME campaign. 	Complete by April 2018	Chair RIG

Opportunities

We believe it is important to provide opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation amongst our staff, volunteers and students through employment and supplier diversity. This will increase our ability to effectively contribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' achievements and economic prosperity.

Focus area: ... aligns with Caxton's strategic People and Culture pillar and focuses on creating a flexible and supportive work environment that allows staff and volunteers to grow and thrive, ensuring human resources are optimised for effective delivery of our services.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding to employ an Indigenous law clerk. 	Review in June 2018	Director and Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development and retention strategies. 	Review in June 2018	Director and Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to advertise all job vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media. 	Review in June 2018	Business Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student placements (clinics, PLT and social work placements). 	Review in April 2018	Team Leaders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities 	Review in April 2018	Business Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment retention strategy. 	Review in April 2018	Business Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace. 	Review in April 2018	Business Manager
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. 	Complete by October 2018	Chair RIG

Opportunities cont.

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
10. continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	Complete by October 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services. 	Complete by October 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business. 	Complete by October 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	Complete by October 2018	Chair RIG
11. Support educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a school visiting program to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students to consider higher education. 	Review in April 2018	Chair RIG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the Caxton Legal Centre Law Prize as a part of QUT Faculty of Law's Prize Ceremony. 	Review in April 2018	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage requests to provide support to university orientation programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students. 	Review in April 2018	Chair RIG

Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Target	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the RAP Impact Measurement Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. Investigate participation in the RAP Barometer. Develop and implement systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. 	September annually May 2018 September annually	Chair RIG
14. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings. 	October annually	Director and Chair RIG
15. Review, refresh and update RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop the next RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement. 	Complete June 2019 October 2019	Director and Chair RIG Chair RIG
16. Maintain a watching brief on RAP progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver quarterly progress reports to management committee. 	March, June, September, December	Chair RIG

Our RAP Working Group

Alf Davis



Alf Davis was born in Eidsvold, Queensland, and has Aboriginal and South Sea Islander heritage. The Davis family has strong historical linkages to Hervey Bay. After completing his Bachelor of Social Work at the University of Queensland in 1996, Alf has worked in juvenile justice, clinical mental health and child safety for government and non-government services. He has also contributed his services to Gallang Place, Brisbane Aboriginal Health Service, Kummara Goodna and Griffith University Logan. Alf currently works at the Murri School Brisbane as Family Support Coordinator.

Allison Boland



Allison is a proud Mardigan and Kooma woman from South West Queensland. She is currently completing her final year of a Bachelor of Justice/Laws at the Queensland University of Technology. Allison is passionate about social justice and access to justice. She is also passionate about seeing more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people go onto tertiary education.

Bianca Hill-Jarro



Born of the Kabi Kabi and Wakka Wakka peoples and a mother of one, Bianca has been working in the higher education sector for over nine years. Bianca is a QUT law graduate and works at the QUT Faculty of Law. In her role as an Indigenous Project Officer, Bianca provides student support services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Prior to joining the higher education sector, Bianca worked in a variety of positions with the Queensland Government.

Candice Hughes



Candice is a proud Kamilaroi woman, mother and wife. She is employed as a solicitor at Bayside Community Legal Service and has a particular interest in access to justice and social services by disadvantaged groups, in particular, our First Nations peoples.

Mark Thomas



Mark Thomas is a senior lecturer at the QUT School of Law, where he teaches professional ethics, administrative law and legal theory. Mark has extensive experience in the community legal sector, having served on the Management Committee of Caxton Legal Centre Inc. since 1999, as Secretary (2000–2004) and as President since 2005. He also serves on the Management Committee of Prisoners' Legal Service Inc. and is a founding member of the LGBTI Legal Service Inc. (2009).

Mark is co-author of *Professional Responsibility and Legal Ethics in Queensland* (2004, 2nd edn) and *Legal Theories: Contexts and Practices* (2014, 2nd edn). He is admitted as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia, and holds a current practising certificate from the Bar Association of Queensland.



Our RAP Working Group cont.

Michelle Eatock-Rabbidge



Michelle is a Kabi Kabi and Gayiri woman, and a final-year law student at the Queensland University of Technology. She has an interest in criminal law, social justice, human rights and social enterprise.

Scott McDougall



Scott McDougall is the Director and Principal Solicitor of Caxton Legal Centre in Brisbane. Prior to assuming this role in 2002, Scott worked in the areas of native title, discrimination and criminal law. Scott has a long-held interest in empowering Indigenous people, families and communities to participate in society on their own terms.

Artwork Acknowledgement

Caxton Legal Centre acknowledges Jyi Lawton, who created the beautiful artwork used on the cover and throughout this document. The painting is currently proudly displayed in our reception area.

Jyi Lawton is a proud descendant of the Bidjara people of Central Queensland through his father's line, and Ghungalu through his grandmother's line. He was born and raised in Mackay, Queensland.

Through his paintings, Jyi often portrays stories of the struggle and injustice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have experienced. He hopes that through his artwork he can educate and inform the citizens of Australia and work towards achieving social justice and acknowledgement for his people on a national and international scale.

RAP Contact

For further information or questions about Caxton's RAP, please contact:

Scott McDougall
Director

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