Caxton Legal Centre Inc.

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2014 – 2016







ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Caxton Legal Centre Inc. would like to thank Aboriginal artist Jyi Lawton for creating and parting with this beautiful painting, which now adorns the reception area at Caxton Legal Centre. Sections of the painting are displayed throughout this publication.

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.

Jyi only recently started to paint. His first paintings depict stories of creation and the dreaming, drawing direct significance to the Bidjara people of Central Queensland. However, lately, he has begun to portray stories of the struggle and injustice Aboriginal people 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.

Jyi is currently in his final year of a Bachelor of Justice degree with the QUT Faculty of Law and was named QUT Student Leader of the Year 2014.



EMU DREAMING

The coloured dots throughout the painting represent the colours of the rainbow created by the rainbow serpent in his journey creating the sun, fire, gorges, rivers, creeks and mountains that make up Bidjara country. The brown dots separating the coloured dots represent the dreaming tracks of the emu (the totem of the Bidjara people) across the land, which all align with the emu prints found in the middle of the painting. The painting depicts the land created by the rainbow serpent, the dreaming tracks of the Bidjara people which all connect up to the emu prints found in the middle of the painting, illustrating that through the dreaming tracks the spirit of the emu can never be lost. The painting illustrates the spiritual connection between the Bidjara people and emu. The painting shows through the dreaming tracks the spirit of the emu provides guidance and direction for the Bidjara people walking side by side in emu spirit.

Scott McDougall
Director
Caxton Legal Centre Inc.
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ABOUT CAXTON

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 on low income or who are otherwise disadvantaged and 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 First Australian peoples stakeholders in legal organisations such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, the Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland, the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service and the Kummara Association. We look forward to building and strengthening these relationships in coming years.

Our centre currently employs 31 full-time and part-time staff. While none of these employees is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, efforts are being made to encourage applications by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through advertising upcoming positions in various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.

Our vision is to:

- 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.

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 people and communities to achieve social justice. We will play a role in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the legal system, by developing a culturally safe legal practice environment, 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been my considerable privilege to participate in the development of Caxton Legal Centre Inc.'s (Caxton) first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

At the heart of Caxton's objects is a commitment to ensuring all Australians can stand before the law on an equal footing. The Caxton Management Committee recognises that many obstacles lie in the path of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples seeking access to justice, including the residual impact of injustices tracing back to the colonisation of Australia.

Caxton has over the years assisted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in some important cases such as to recover 'stolen wages'. Yet, we have come to realise the need for an overarching plan to increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as professional colleagues, students, members of the community and clients.

The process of establishing this RAP has provided impetus to develop and improve our relationship with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and to acknowledge their considerable successes and achievements. It is my hope that our RAP will provide us with practical steps to help clear a path toward justice for our First Australian clients.

Mark Thomas
President
Caxton Legal Centre Inc.

MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia would like to congratulate Caxton Legal Centre on the release of their first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Caxton Legal Centre Inc. has been instrumental in developing the valuable services of community legal centres in Queensland. They are actively developing a culturally safe legal practice environment and addressing the social injustice and lack of access to justice by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This RAP will provide a valuable framework for the centre to be able to deliver real results, stay focused and make a difference. Reconciliation Australia is looking forward to Caxton setting new benchmarks and contributing to Australia's reconciliation journey.

Leah Armstrong Chief Executive Officer Reconciliation Australia

OUR RAP

Caxton is committed to building a just and inclusive Australian society. A just society demands recognition, understanding and respect for the richness and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the diverse effects resulting from the colonisation of Australia. We are committed to relationship building through taking advice, respectful listening and talking with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. By improving the means of communication, we will ultimately pave the way for better access to social justice.

A just society also requires the creation of a justice system that operates fairly for all of its members. To achieve this goal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be able to have equitable access to the resources and mechanisms that determine how justice is delivered. This requires a range of strategies to be adopted across the spectrum of the system. Through our RAP, Caxton Legal Centre will continue to provide support and access to justice for First Australian peoples in a number of practical ways by:

- establishing a position for an Aboriginal or 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 competency, 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 First Australian peoples
- adopting a formal policy for the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and observance of Welcome to Country protocols
- · actively encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for all Caxton Legal Centre staff vacancies
- developing a program of support for tertiary law students to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lawyers to enter the legal profession.

How did our RAP develop?

In 2010, Caxton Legal Centre moved office from New Farm to Manning Street, South Brisbane, a short distance from Musgrave Park, a place of great significance to Queensland's Murri community. The move allowed us to reflect on how we could assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and organisations to better meet the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. In particular, we asked ourselves what changes we needed to make to ensure that our organisation would be trusted as a culturally safe place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can access legal and social work assistance.

Whilst we have worked on building informal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, stakeholders and organisations, in 2013, the Caxton Management Committee committed to the preparation of an overarching plan to help guide our efforts. This RAP provides the structure for implementing our ideas and engaging with the First Australian peoples and communities.

To develop our RAP, we established a voluntary RAP working group comprising a number of talented and emerging leaders of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, the centre's President Mark Thomas and staff. The RAP Working Group has met on a regular basis in recent months to identify, evaluate and refine the strategies outlined in this RAP. A number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students from the Queensland University of Technology also played a critical role in the development of this RAP as part of a project undertaken in their clinical legal education placement. Many of the practical strategies identified in this RAP originated from the inspired work of these students, and the centre is enormously grateful for their infectious enthusiasm for this initiative.

OUR RAP WORKING GROUP

Alf Davies



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 and Kummara. After a few years in academia, Alf is now again working for Kummara in the community sector.

Bianca Hill



Born of the Kabi and Wakka peoples and mother of one, Bianca has been working in the higher education sector for over six years. Bianca is a QUT law graduate and works at the QUT Faculty of Law supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through their degrees. 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 Station Client Service Officer for the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and is also studying Bachelor of Laws (Graduate) at QUT. Candice previously worked as a sworn member of the QPS and has a particular interest in access to justice and social services by disadvantaged groups, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Candice currently volunteers at Caxton and is looking forward to continuing working with amazing people to achieve our RAP goals.

Larissa Fewquandie



Larissa acknowledges and appreciates the strengths and tribulations of her ancestors and Elders past and present. For that reason her affiliation with social justice has been evident throughout her life's journey. Larissa has recently completed a Bachelor of Social Work, and her vision is to advocate for her people and all vulnerable individuals and communities within society. She feels privileged to be a part of Caxton Legal Centre's Reconciliation Action Plan working group and looks forward to being a part of a strong, connected community.

Lena Lundell



Lena Lundell was born in Stockholm, Sweden, and has lived in Australia for over 30 years. After completing her degree in social work at Griffith University in 2010, Lena gathered extensive and valuable experience in the field by working as a case manager at Roma House Crises Accommodation before taking on the role of social worker at Caxton Legal Centre. She is currently studying for a Master of Counselling at QUT. Lena has a strong interest in social justice and she feels privileged to be contributing to Caxton's Reconciliation Action Plan.

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. (since 2010) and is a founding member of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex 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.

Michelle Rabbidge



Michelle Rabbidge is a law student at QUT with a background in the performing arts. She has an interest in 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 longheld interest in the representation of disadvantaged litigants, and has conducted a wide variety of cases in the Queensland and Commonwealth jurisdictions. In 2006, Scott was commissioned to prepare the Palm Island Future Directions report and assist the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council in their negotiations with the Queensland Government.

RELATIONSHIPS

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

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
1.1 Caxton RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development,	RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	September 2014 Director
including implementations of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	
	Provide copy of RAP to Reconciliation Australia for official registration and uploading to public website.	
1.2 Identify and establish working partnerships to strengthen existing relationships with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and stakeholders in legal and other organisations.	Establish a list and maintain a database of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and stakeholders in legal and other organisations.	September 2014 Director and Caxton staff
	Investigate and become a member of the Legal Profession Reconciliation Network (Legal RING) to assist in collaborating on reconciliation initiatives.	October 2014 Director
	Invite key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to events and functions hosted by Caxton.	October 2014 Director
	Engage with and encourage collaboration with legal service providers on relevant issues to improve communication in providing better support for law reform, community legal education and legal service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	October 2014 Director
	Promote and participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community functions or presentations in legal forums.	October 2014 Director
	Engage with the Aboriginal Learning Centre at the Queensland State Library and invite stakeholders to Caxton events such as Cherbourg (Winifred Fisher Knowledge Centre).	October 2014 Social Worker

RELATIONSHIPS cont.

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
1.3 Leverage existing working partnerships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS) and Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland (ILAQ) to increase greater service delivery and access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Caxton.	Invite representatives of ATSILS and ILAQ to functions hosted by Caxton. Organise at least two meetings per year with ATSILS and ILAQ. Continue to work collaboratively with ATSILS and ILAQ to deliver community legal education. Work collaboratively with ATSILS and ILAQ on law and policy reforms and delivery of community legal education sessions to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-determination. Encourage Caxton employees' attendance and promote community functions or presentations hosted by ATSILS and ILAQ. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ATSILS and ILAQ.	September 2015 Director and Caxton staff September 2015 Director September 2015 Director and CLE Coordinator September 2015 Director and CLE Coordinator September 2015 Social Worker September 2016 Director
1.4 Caxton to promote and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Participate in at least one community NRW event to mark Caxton's commitment to reconciliation. Organise at least one internal event each year to celebrate NRW. Register Caxton's NRW event on Reconciliation Australia website.	27 May to 3 June 2015 and 2016 Director and Caxton staff
1.5 Raise internal awareness within Caxton to improve internal communications and access to resources regarding the RAP and important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cultural community events/dates.	Present and promote the RAP to all Caxton employees to ensure that they gain a greater understanding of how they can contribute to reconciliation. Publish the RAP on Caxton's website. Develop a quarterly RAP newsletter, distribute quarterly minutes of the RWG and share highlights at staff meetings to keep Caxton employees informed about the progress of the RWG. Develop a calendar of important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community dates/events and distribute to employees.	September 2014 Director and Board Members September 2014 Publications Officer September 2015 Social Worker September 2015 Social Worker

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 enhancing our respectful and competent service delivery. We seek to complete this through cultural competency training, respecting Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols, and participating in NAIDOC week activities.

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
2.1 Provide cultural awareness training and development for Caxton employees to increase their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples culture, history and achievements.	Develop and pilot a cultural awareness training strategy for Caxton. In particular, provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP champions, HR managers and other key leadership to participate in training.	March 2015 Director and Caxton staff
	Identify and apply principles of cultural safety to the workplace and practices with attention to culturally appropriate intake and referral processes.	June 2015 Director and Caxton staff
	Develop, implement and communicate an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Referral Guide to ensure culturally appropriate service delivery when providing information and referrals for First Australian peoples.	June 2015 Director and Caxton staff
	Develop and implement a plan to include RAP information and RAP induction programs for new employees.	June 2015 Director and Caxton staff
2.2 Engage employees in Acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land and establish culturally safe	Seek, obtain and develop a list of official information and contacts regarding the Traditional Owners of the areas in which Caxton operates.	September 2014 Social Worker
communication within Caxton.	Organise and install a sign in the main entrance of the Caxton building acknowledging Traditional Owners of the land.	September 2014 Board Members
	Ensure an Acknowledgement of Country is included as a standard on all outgoing communication such as email signature and public website.	October 2014 Board Members
	Develop, communicate and implement a suitable Acknowledgment to Country statement for Caxton.	March 2015 Director
	Develop, communicate and implement a protocol document outlining when and how the Traditional Owners of the land are to be acknowledged and when a Welcome to Country will be provided.	March 2015 Director
	Draft a policy around ensuring a local Traditional Owner Elder is invited to provide a Welcome to Country at significant Caxton events.	March 2015 Director

RESPECT cont.

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
2.3 Continue shared appreciation, respect and acknowledgement of the unique position Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have in our nation.	Purchase and display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in reception area of Caxton building. Organise and display appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imagery such as posters and artwork including artist acknowledgment and story of artwork.	December 2014 Board Members December 2014 Social Worker
	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 First Australians.	September 2015 Director and Caxton staff
2.4 Celebrate and participate in NAIDOC week events.	Host a stall at the annual NAIDOC celebrations in Musgrave Park, South Brisbane. Encourage employees to attend and participate in community NAIDOC week events such as the NAIDOC Family Fun Day. Identify and engage with at least one local NAIDOC committee to form a relationship with.	1st and 2nd Sunday of July 2015 Social Worker and Caxton staff

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 First Australian Peoples achievements and economic prosperity.

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
3.1 Ensure that management of induction processes and subsequent interviews conducted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are culturally appropriate and flexible.	Incorporate appropriate measures into policies and procedures to ensure cultural considerations are met. Review current interview procedures with consideration of lengths, appointment schedules, gender specific assistance and involvement of support persons. Implement and demonstrate cultural safety and competence guidelines from standards and	September 2015 Director, Business Manager and Caxton staff September 2015 Director, Business Manager and Caxton staff
3.2 Investigate opportunities within Caxton to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities.	performance pathways. Scope and develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within Caxton. Review HR procedures and policies to ensure barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are able to be addressed. Scope, develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy and volunteer program within Caxton. Investigate and host a stall at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment exhibitions such as FOGS. Advertise vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media such as Koori Mail, National Indigenous Times and ILAQ.	September 2015 Director and Board Members September 2015 Director, Board Members and Social Worker September 2015 Director September 2015 Social Worker September 2015 Business Manager
3.3 Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity within Caxton.	Scope and develop a business case, policies and processes to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within Caxton. Develop and implement a plan to establish procurement policies and processes. Develop and publish a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contacts of services that can be procured relevant to Caxton's referral and support services. Develop a plan for Caxton to publically promote available business opportunities through engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development organisations such as Black Business Finder, South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and Supply Nation.	September 2015 Board Members September 2015 Board Members September 2015 Social Worker September 2015 Board Members and Social Worker

Opportunities cont.

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
3.4 Investigate increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Law Student Placement (clinics and/or PLT and/or internship) within Caxton.	Encourage attendance, promote and participate in QUT pre-orientation program for law and justice students.	September 2015 Director and Caxton staff
	Encourage attendance, support and participate in the Indigenous Law and Justice Dinner hosted by QUT. Scope and develop a plan to engage high schools	September 2015 Director and Caxton staff
	within Caxton's sphere of influence or local area to support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students interested in law and justice.	September 2015 Director
	Identify suitable mentors within the community through continuous networking, and link Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law and justice students and social work students to appropriate mentors.	September 2015 Social Worker
	Scope and develop a plan to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentoring program for students studying law and in high school.	September 2015 Social Worker
	Scope and develop a business case to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadetship program within Caxton.	September 2015 Director and Social Worker

PROGRESS AND REPORTING

Action	Measurable Target/Deliverable	Timeline and Responsibility
4.1 Publicly share Caxton's Reconciliation Action Plan.	Distribute PDF copy of RAP to partner organisations, stakeholders and funding bodies.	September 2014
Neconciliation Action Flam.	State Holder's and randing socies.	Director and Caxton staff
4.2 Review, update and refresh the	Assess progress and report to the Management	September 2015
Caxton RAP.	Committee annually.	Director
	Start to refresh and draft new Caxton RAP based	August 2016
	on learnings, achievements and challenges from	Director and
	previous RAP and send to Reconciliation Australia for	Social Worker
	review.	
4.3 Report achievements, challenges	Provide a RAP report to Management Committee	August 2015
and matters learned to Reconciliation	for review before final submission to Reconciliation	Director
Australia for inclusion in the RAP	Australia.	
Impact Measurement Report.	Complete and submit RAP Impact Measurement	September 2015 and
	Report to Reconciliation Australia annually.	2016
		Director

RAP CONTACT

Scott McDougall Director

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RAP CHAMPIONS

Championed by all RAP Working Group members:

Alf Davies

Bianca Hill

Candice Hughes

Larissa Fewquandie

Lena Lundell

Mark Thomas

Michelle Rabbidge

Scott McDougall