



**Desert Blue Connect**

# **Reconciliation Action Plan**

**Reflect RAP  
July 2018 - July 2019**



**RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN**

**REFLECT**

# This painting is dedicated to finding oneself in oneself

The central golden circle is a representation of Desert Blue Connect.

The golden dots emanating from the centre represent the healing thoughts of clients and employees.

The butterflies remind us that life is fragile. They also represent the employees at Desert Blue Connect.

Communities of accent colours, creed and belief are represented by the smaller circles. It tells of our connection to each other.

The smaller golden circles represent individuals and agencies who work in this world, to help other, to help themselves.

The splashes of colours speak of a vibrant and beautiful world in which all life is based upon.

It represents the microcosm and macrocosm of life. The air, earth, water, fire and ether.

**Leslie Lee**



# A message from the Desert Blue Connect Board of Management

We are pleased to present the first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for Desert Blue Connect. This Reflect RAP is an important step as we demonstrate our commitment to create a more inclusive and culturally secure organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and nurture meaningful, respectful relationships with determination to reconcile past and present injustices.

Desert Blue Connect has a purpose to enrich and empower the community. Our focus is to provide an inclusive, safe and comfortable environment for the holistic health and wellbeing of our community. We cannot achieve these goals without meaningful engagement in reconciliation.

Our Reflect RAP is the beginning of our long-term commitment to building internal respect and relationships with Aboriginal people in our community. The RAP will guide our work with Aboriginal people to better understand and respond to their needs and ambitions. It will also underpin collaboration with organisations that support Aboriginal people.

## Our business

Desert Blue Connect is a regional organisation that provides holistic services for women, men and children in the core areas of women's health, family violence response, crisis accommodation for women and children, rural support services and primary prevention of family violence. The organisation is a regional leader in family violence prevention and response and has a strong women's health agenda with a suite of services. It has recently included services for men, focusing on providing health and family violence prevention and interventions across primary, secondary and tertiary streams.

The organisation employs 35 persons in casual, permanent part-time and full-time roles. There are 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff currently employed at Desert Blue Connect.

The organisations geographical reach is the Midwest Gascoyne region. The main office and Chrysalis House Women's Refuge are located in Geraldton and Desert Blue Connect also have an office in Morawa.

## Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Desert Blue Connect have recently developed their Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023 and our Reflect RAP will support the strategies within this plan which reaffirms Aboriginal stakeholder engagement and co-design for improved service provision. The Reflect RAP takes a holistic approach to create meaningful and respectful relationships and promotes sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The first step in the development of Desert Blue Connects RAP was to establish an internal Reflect RAP working group, which comprised of two executive members, the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Aboriginal Staff and two non-Aboriginal staff members. Following the development of the first draft, consultation with government, non-government agencies and Aboriginal organisations took place to obtain feedback on the draft. This consultation with the wider community has assisted in developing the Reflect RAP for Desert Blue Connect.



## Our partnerships and current activities

- We have current partnerships with government and non-government agencies including Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, Geraldton Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation, After Hours Welfare Care (previously Yamatji Patrol), Aboriginal Family Law Service, and the Geraldton Court. We work collaboratively to provide culturally appropriate and safe services for Aboriginal people in our community. Additionally, we regularly participate in community engagement activities with these Aboriginal agencies.
- Desert Blue Connect has a social worker who works in the Barndimalgu Family Violence Intervention Program. Aboriginal women who experience family violence are supported in a culturally sensitive manner and present information to the Court as required.
- We work in partnership with Greenough Regional Prison to provide culturally sensitive educational programs to Aboriginal women who are incarcerated in prison in relation to health and family violence and promote safe pathways back into community.
- Desert Blue Connect have developed an Aboriginal Stakeholder Engagement Plan which sets out our regular approach to stakeholder engagement. We have an ongoing commitment to working in partnerships with stakeholders.
- Aboriginal Elders are invited to participate in Desert Blue Connect's major events and officiate Welcome to Country and other significant ceremonies.
- Desert Blue Connect participate in ceremonies and activities which recognise NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day and other Aboriginal events.
- A Cultural Awareness Induction Program is currently in place for all staff.
- We identify and utilise culturally appropriate resources to provide education programs to Aboriginal youth, adults and the wider community.
- Desert Blue Connect have Policies, Procedures and an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement in place which are inclusive and culturally appropriate.



# Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Maintain a RAP Working Group and consult with the Aboriginal community.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain an internal RAP Working Group that implement RAP actions and continually consult and seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, our Board and staff from across our organisation.</li> </ul>	July 2018	EMO CEO (Lead) ALO
<b>2. Build internal and external relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.</li> <li>Develop, maintain and strengthen new and existing partnerships through regular stakeholder contact and participation in activities and events as per Aboriginal Liaison Officer Engagement plan.</li> <li>Aboriginal staff members to have the opportunity to engage and build networks within the wider community to meet cultural needs both personally and professionally.</li> </ul>	July 2018  July 2018  August 2018  September 2018	ALO (Lead)
<b>3. Raise internal awareness of our RAP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all Board and staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments.</li> <li>Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.</li> </ul>	July 2018  August 2018	EMO CEO (Lead) ALO
<b>4. Celebrate National reconciliation Week</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage Desert Blue Connect Board and staff to attend Reconciliation week events.</li> <li>Desert Blue Connect as an organisation participates in an event(s) during Reconciliation Week.</li> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia resources to Desert Blue Connect Board, staff and stakeholders.</li> </ul>	May 2019  May 2019  May 2019	ALO (Lead)
<b>5. Investigate barriers and practices that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from engaging in Desert Blue Connect services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather data and information from clients who are seeking assistance and access to Desert Blue Connect</li> <li>Review current practices and procedures from data collected which will assist Desert Blue Connect in providing a complete service to clients</li> </ul>	July 2018	ALO (Lead)



# Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>6. Raise internal understanding of protocols.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalise Acknowledgement to Country and Welcome to Country.</li> <li>Disseminate appropriate use of protocols to Desert Blue Connect Board and staff</li> </ul>	July 2018 August 2018	EMO CEO Lead) ALO
<b>7. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capture data and measure our Board and staff's level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.</li> <li>Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation for the Board and staff members.</li> <li>Develop a plan to maintain cultural competency in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation.</li> </ul>	August 2018  September 2018  October 2018	EMO CEO (Lead) ALO
<b>8. Participate in NAIDOC Week and other significant Aboriginal events.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst Desert Blue Connect Board and staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.</li> <li>Introduce Desert Blue Connect Board and staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.</li> <li>Ensure Desert Blue Connect as an organisation participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> <li>Hold an Event in Chrysalis House Women's Refuge during NAIDOC Week.</li> <li>Ensure Board and staff are aware of the 2018 and onwards NAIDOC Theme</li> </ul>	July 2018  July 2018  July 2018  July 2018	ALO (Lead) & All Team  ALO & Community team  CHWR & ALO  ALO (Lead)

# Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>9. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and careers pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships).</li> <li>Involve current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members in future employment and development opportunities.</li> </ul>	November 2018	EMO CEO (Lead)
<b>10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses and opportunities for procurement.</li> </ul>	November 2018	EMO CEO (Lead)



# Governance and Tracking Progress

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>11. Build support for the RAP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate funds to progress RAP actions.</li> <li>• Define evaluation measures to track, measure and report on RAP activities.</li> <li>• Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	30 September 2018 July 2018 September 2018	CEO (Lead) EMO(Lead) CEO/ALO CEO (Lead) /EMO
<b>12. Review and Refresh RAP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.</li> <li>• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review</li> <li>• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.</li> </ul>	April 2019	CEO (Lead) EMO ALO

## Contact details

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Leslie 2018