

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2019 - June 2021



Table of contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Acknowledgement | 4 |
| Our vision for reconciliation | 5 |
| What is a RAP? | 6 |
| Our reconciliation journey | 7 |
| Case study | 8 |
| About OBE Organic | 9 |
| About our Reconciliation Action Plan | 10 |
| Relationships | 12 |
| Respect | 14 |
| Opportunity | 16 |
| Governance and tracking progress | 18 |
| RAP Working Group | 19 |
| Contact details | 19 |

This Reconciliation Action Plan may contain images or names of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Acknowledgement

We **recognise** that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have cared for this country for tens of thousands of years.

We **acknowledge** the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters where we operate our business.

We **celebrate** the First Australian peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationship to the land, and their rich contribution to Australia.

We pay **respect** to ancestors and Elders past, present and future.



Robert Clancy Snr (Caruso). Source: Amy Brooks
Robert (Caruso) is the grandfather of our RAP Working Group member, Amy Brooks. This photo is of him mustering at Eildsvold Station in Queensland.

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that proudly embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as integral to our national identity. An Australia that does this will instinctively recognise past wrongs and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all aspects of our society.

For OBE Organic to play our role in this vision, we will work to build respect, relationships and opportunity in our business, in our supply chain, and in our industry.

What is a RAP?

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program provides a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement in Australia. Workplaces like OBE Organic can develop one of four types of RAP - Reflect, Innovate, Stretch or Elevate. Reconciliation Australia's RAP Framework provides organisations with a structured approach to advance reconciliation. Each type of RAP is designed to suit an organisation at different stages of their reconciliation journey.

A RAP is a strategic document that supports an organisation's strategic plan. It includes practical actions that will drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which it operates.

The RAP Program contributes to advancing the five dimensions of reconciliation by supporting organisations to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Each of the four RAP types (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, Elevate) set out the minimum elements required from an organisation to build strong relationships, respect and opportunities within its organisations and communities.

In mid-2017, OBE Organic embarked on a journey to develop our own 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan. This plan is referred to by Reconciliation Australia as 'Scoping reconciliation'.

[A Reflect RAP clearly sets out the steps](#) we should take to prepare for reconciliation initiatives in successive RAPs. Committing to a Reflect RAP allows OBE Organic to spend time scoping and developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, deciding on our vision for reconciliation and exploring our sphere of influence, before committing to specific actions or initiatives. This process helps to produce future RAPs that are meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable.

From November 2017 to November 2018, OBE Organic implemented our 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan. This 'Innovate' RAP is designed to cover two years, starting in July 2019.

[An Innovate RAP outlines actions](#) that work towards achieving our unique vision for reconciliation. Commitments within this RAP allow us to be aspirational and innovative in order to help OBE Organic to gain a deeper understanding of its sphere of influence and establish the best approach to advance reconciliation. An Innovate RAP focuses on developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our reconciliation journey

Our first Reflect RAP was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in November 2017. Highlights of the first 12 months of our RAP include:

- Forming a Working Group to oversee our RAP implementation. Membership includes two Aboriginal women who provide invaluable advice and support along our journey, and the two most senior executives at OBE Organic
- Advocating widely for other agribusinesses to adopt a RAP or give more thought to building relationships, respect and opportunities for the First Australians. We recognise that enduring reform and change can only occur when we bring all Australians along.
- Hosting a screening of *Gurrumul* in May 2018 for National Reconciliation Week, and again in November 2018 to coincide with our annual strategic planning days. 60 OBE staff, guests and industry leaders attended the two events
- A media release announcing our RAP led to articles in agriculture and beef industry media
- Making more than 40 social media posts aimed at raising awareness of RAPs and reconciliation in agribusiness
- Developing draft **procurement** and **employment strategies**. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses the opportunity to participate in OBE Organic's procurement spend. This, in turn, supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment as we understand these businesses are more likely to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than non-Indigenous businesses.

Our key learnings in our journey to date are:

- **People are interested in more than the quality of our organic beef.** We work hard to ensure our organic beef is produced sustainably and our animals are raised humanely, but our customers and stakeholders are also asking us to demonstrate more about how we interact with and care for our people both up and down our supply chain. They want us to be more transparent.
- **Assume we can do better.** Our reconciliation journey is evolving. There is room for lots of different pathways, strategies and solutions to reconciliation.
- **Be prepared to learn.** We know our knowledge is not as high as it should be, but our intent is positive, and we want to improve and make a genuine contribution to reconciliation. We need to recognise we are on a journey, we may make (inadvertent) mistakes, and we have much to learn.
- **Have patient teachers.** We are blessed to have Joyleen Booth and Amy Brooks on our Working Group. Joyleen and Amy are forgiving of our mistakes, but firmly correct us when we are wrong. It's a difficult balance to strike, and they do it extremely well with patience and grace.
- **Trying to lead without with-out seeing if anyone is following.** A major objective of our RAP is to encourage other agribusiness to consider how they can contribute to reconciliation. But nobody likes being preached to. We found events like the "Gurrumul" screenings we hosted made it safe, easy and compelling for industry leaders to consider what they can do.

Case study

“True leadership.”

“Another great example of OBE leading the Australian red meat industry.”

These were some of the comments from industry leaders who attended screenings of *Gurrumul* we hosted in 2018 as part of our Reconciliation Action Plan.



Gurrumul is a powerful award-winning film that tells the story of late, iconic Australian musician Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu. It was released in mid-2018, and we thought it would be a perfect National Reconciliation Week event for us. We loved *Gurrumul* so much held a second screening in October as part of our AGM week when far-flung Directors were in town.

These screenings were held in part to meet our RAP commitments to host an NRW event.

But more importantly, they were held to give RAPs and reconciliation more prominence in our industry. Many agribusinesses are doing outstanding unsung work to support reconciliation, and some – like us – can do more. Our hope is that social gatherings like this provide a comfortable place for people to think about reconciliation and think about what they can do to contribute.

OBE Organic is not going to change the world, but if we can make some ripples we have achieved a level of success. That’s why comments like this from one guest who attended are so inspiring:

“Thank you for including us all at the showing of the Gurrumul movie last night. We absolutely loved the story and the beautiful music he produced. What a voice! The take home message for me was when the whitefella used the analogy of Aboriginal traditions to the tiles on the opera house – one by one we are losing them and no one is doing anything about it. The history, the culture, the fabric that makes us Australian today. Dalene, you and OBE are to be congratulated for your RAP initiative, because this whitefella went home last night and started thinking what I can do to help keep the tiles from falling. Thank you.”

About OBE Organic

OBE Organic is Australia's oldest organic beef marketing supply chain, selling beef to North America, Asia, the Middle East, and domestically. We were founded in the early 1990s by outback Australian grazing families with the foresight to have their vast, naturally organic properties certified by independent auditors as being organic.

We are still farmer-owned and run on cooperative principles to maximise returns to producers. We are based in Brisbane where we employ ten people; as at 30 June 2018 we have no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

OBE Organic is a small business, but our sphere of influence extends from cattle producers across outback Australia, to key transport and processing partners in our beef supply chain, to the broader beef and agriculture industry through our work to give back to our industry: for the year ending 30 June 2018 we participated in 21 Boards, committees, partnerships and memberships.

From our Brisbane office, we buy cattle from certified organic cattle producers, predominantly in the Lake Eyre Basin in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia. These producers run tens of thousands of cattle across millions of hectares of certified organic grasslands.

Our mission is to help people live better, healthier lives.

Our values

- Culture of innovation, continuous improvement & change – we acknowledge there is always a better way of doing things & we welcome change. We embrace the benefits of new technology
- Continuing professional development – we support lifelong learning & striving to be the best you can be
- Confidence - we cultivate an environment that allows us to showcase our talents and expertise
- Communicating openly – we talk regularly, openly and honestly to our colleagues & our clients. We listen carefully too!
- Caring & trust - we care for each other by encouraging a healthy work-life balance

Our behaviours

- Friendly
- Responsive
- Open
- Nurturing
- Truthful



About our Reconciliation Action Plan

We have developed a RAP because we think we can effect social change through our initiatives, and because we think a more deliberate focus on building relationships and respect will make us more aware of opportunities that can mutually benefit our business and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our RAP is also consistent with our values and strategic priorities.

Social justice and diversity have long been OBE values. Developing a RAP to increase understanding and respect of First Australians is a natural extension of how we live these values.

Our FLOURISH sustainability program identifies and manages many strategic priorities, including diversity. We know embracing diversity makes us a better and more thoughtful company to work with and for. This RAP helps us to capture that opportunity. And by aligning our RAP to national and international goals as well, we are more likely to play our part in achieving real change.

This alignment to values and strategy is critical to the success of our RAP.

To achieve our mission...

... we need to deliver strategies

... and if everything we do is aligned, we are more likely to achieve our mission

... and contribute to something bigger at the same time.



We aim to leverage our strengths to make the biggest impact

Our RAP work is focused on the operations of OBE Organic, and aims to make a genuine contribution to Closing the Gap. The Closing the Gap framework was established in 2008 to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

As a small business with limited resources but a relatively large sphere of influence, we think the Closing the Gap area we can make the largest initial impact is; Celebrating Indigenous Cultures. This RAP shows how we aim to do that by:

- Raising our employee's cultural awareness to increase respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pride in their culture
- Building relationships with other organisations to share our RAP experiences and ideas
- Leveraging our communication platforms to show others outside our company the journey we are taking.

In time, we hope to make a meaningful contribution to two other Closing the Gap areas that are relevant to our core business: Employment, and Economic Development. This RAP includes actions to investigate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and procurement.

Implementing our RAP

The OBE Organic RAP Working Group supports the implementation of our RAP. It meets quarterly to review progress, and is comprised of:

- Joyleen Booth (a Wangkangurru woman and an OBE Organic producer from Murnpeowie Station in north east South Australia)
- [Amy Brooks](#) (a Wulli Wulli woman who has over ten years' experience in the Australian beef and food industry)
- [Dalene Wray](#) (OBE Organic Managing Director)
- [Andrew Blinco](#) (OBE Organic Operations Manager)
- [Chris Cosgrove](#) (Sustainability Specialist).

Relationships

| Alignment to our strategic plan: | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Pillar: Customers</i> | | | |
| <i>Strategy: Exceed community expectations</i> | | | |
| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
| 1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial 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. | Oct 2019 | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | Oct 2019 | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a database of RAP organisations, like-minded organisations, and 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 | Review August annually | Sustainability Specialist |
| 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 27 May – 3 June. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. | By mid-May annually | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. | 27 May-3 June, 2019, 2020 | Working Group |
| | <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, 2019, 2020 | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise at least one NRW event each year. | Confirm 1 month before NRW | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. | 2 weeks before NRW | Sustainability Specialist |
| 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue our strategy to include & document a 'cultural awareness' discussion during our weekly staff meetings. | Review August annually | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly – <i>via social media and our website</i>. | Review August annually | Managing Director, Operations Manager |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue our work to explore opportunities to positively influence the beef and agricultural industries to consider how they can contribute to reconciliation. | Review August annually | Managing Director, Operations Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate how to align our work with, or amplify the content of, relevant regional frameworks such as The Outback Alliance Policy Pathways fit for the Outback. | Sept 2019 | Sustainability Adviser |
| 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. | February 2020 | Administration Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation. | February 2020 | Administration Manager, Operations Manager |
| | <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. | February 2020 | Operations Manager, Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate all employees on the effects of racism. | June 2020 | Operations Manager |
| 5. Choose one advocacy / issue to support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a partnership to support an organisation that is relevant to our business and sphere of influence. | Nov 2019 | Sustainability Specialist |

Respect

| Alignment to our strategic plan: | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>Pillar: People</i> | | | |
| <i>Relevant strategy: Corporate Culture</i> | | | |
| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
| 6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. | November, annually | Administration Manager, Sustainability Specialist, as part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan ["Laying the Foundation" strategy]. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how we might include 'cultural awareness' education as part of our induction processes for new team members. | Aug 2019 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy. | February 2020 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff. | June 2020 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning. | June 2020 | |
| 7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. | Review November annually | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refine our cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. | Review November, annually | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <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. | Ongoing, as per protocol | All |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. | Ongoing, as per protocol | All |
| 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 participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. | First week in July, 2019-2020 | Working Group |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. | June 2020 | Administration Manager, Operations Manager |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. | First week in July, 2019-2020 | Managing Director |
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Opportunities

| Alignment to our strategic plan: <i>Pillar: People.</i> <i>Relevant strategy: Lead visibly – Be a catalyst for positive change.</i> <i>Relevant strategy: Corporate culture.</i> | | | |
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| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
| 9. 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 to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | Review May, annually | Operations Manager, Administration Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan to drive recruitment, retention and professional development. | | |
| | <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. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our goal of seeking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for every position we advertise and providing a culturally appropriate and inclusive workplace. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | Ongoing, as per our Employment Plan | Operations Manager |
| 10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy. | Review May, annually | Operations Manager, Financial Controller |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. | November 2019 | Financial Controller |
| | <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. | November 2019 | Managing Director |
| | <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 | Review May, annually | Operations Manager, |

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| | businesses as per our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy. | | Financial Controller |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. | Review May, annually | Managing Director, Operations Manager, Financial Controller |
| 11. Investigate opportunities to collaborate with an education provider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an appropriate organisation, and identify practical ways to support the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | July 2020 | Sustainability Specialist, Managing Director |

Governance and Tracking Progress

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and review annually Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | February, annually | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the application of our Terms of Reference for the RWG. | February, annually | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. | Quarterly | Working Group |
| 13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. | Review every February | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments. | Review every February | Managing Director |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | Review every February | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. | By March 2020 | Managing Director to appoint |
| 14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | 30 September, annually | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders <i>and Board</i> quarterly. | Quarterly | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. | September, annually | Sustainability Specialist |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | March 2020 | Sustainability Specialist |
| 15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | September 2020 | Sustainability Specialist |

RAP Working Group terms of reference

The OBE Organic RAP Working Group supports the implementation of our RAP.

The following activities will be carried out by the RAP Working Group:

1. Develop an Innovate RAP within the context of our organisation's core business and in-line with over-arching strategic, corporate and business plans
2. Establish a collaborative/consultative process for engaging staff across the organisation so that they can provide:
 - Ongoing ideas for our Innovate RAP and future RAPs
 - Comment on draft documents.
3. Design, launch and begin implementing our Innovate RAP, including consultation with Reconciliation Australia at regular intervals.
4. Regularly liaise with relevant business units and key stakeholders to review progress of our Innovate RAP actions and:
 - Report Innovate RAP progress to Reconciliation Australia annually
 - Report Innovate RAP progress internally as per organisational requirements
 - Report Innovate RAP progress to relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders
 - Reflect on key learnings in the development of new RAPs.
5. Consider Innovate RAP implementation issues and consult with relevant business units to find solutions.
6. Liaise with internal or external designers to finalise the RAP document and register it on Reconciliation Australia's website.
7. Consider welcoming new members to the RAP working group from time-to-time. This is an important opportunity for employees and non-employees alike to gain professional experience in the development & maintenance of RAPs.
8. Develop a new RAP when the current plan expires.

Contact details for enquiries about our Reconciliation Action Plan

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