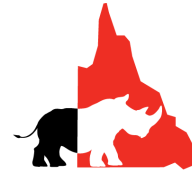


The Qld Law Group's Reconciliation Action Plan



A Message from the Principal



My involvement with an international legal network and Rugby League has taken me around the world but there is no better place to live than Australia.

Australia is a land of great opportunity but, unfortunately, those opportunities are not open to all Australians on the same terms.

We need to work harder in closing the gap between the welfare, education and vocational opportunities open to Indigenous Australians as compared to other Australians.

The Qld Law Group wants to accept the social responsibility of helping promote the values and objectives of Reconciliation Australia.

The Qld Law Group wants to make a meaningful contribution to closing this gap and to do so it has prepared this Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Qld Law Group Would Like to Acknowledge & Pay Respect to the Jagera, Yuggera, Turrbal and Ugarapul Traditional Owners & Caretakers of the Land in Which We Walk Live & Work. As Well As Pay Respect to Elders Both Past & Present.



Our Vision for Reconciliation

The Qld Law Group's vision for reconciliation is to work alongside local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to build relationships that create strong, connected and economically-active communities. The Qld Law Group aims to do this by promoting principles of social justice and equality and contributing to reconciliation by building stronger relationships, demonstrating respect and providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Our Business

The Qld Law Group's exceptionally sharp legal minds have successfully navigated through the uncompromising and complex world of commerce and big business whilst understanding the needs of people. Our firm thrives on being distinctly "Queensland" in character and performance, carrying the Queenslander traits of no-nonsense, straight talking and hard work through all aspects of our legal practice. Our clients receive clear assessments, definite recommendations and honest advice as to their best course of action.

Our firm offers personalised, thoroughly professional legal advice in the most efficient and economical manner. Our client's problem is our problem, and we believe in giving our clients 'value for money'.

Our growth has come from the reality that our commitment lies in our clients' best interests, with a strong focus on achieving the client's desired result. Our strength lies in our ability to communicate with our clients in simple, uncomplicated terms despite the complexities of the law.

We have the expertise to give clients the best legal advice, from small and personal claims to large and complex business matters. Our team approach ensures our clients access the most qualified individual in the field of law appropriate to the case. The Qld Law Group has achieved successful results for our clients across the board, because we blend specialist skills and progressive attitudes with a down to earth, no-nonsense approach to all our cases, large or small.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The Qld Law Group committed to developing a Reconciliation Action Plan in its Statement of Commitment dated 1 July 2011. In early 2011, the Qld Law Group established an RAP Working Group led by the Principal and the Group Practice Manager and assisted by a number of staff volunteers. The RAP Working Group presented its proposal to the firm's executive committee for adoption in July 2011 and resolved to communicate it throughout the firm.

Chaired by the Qld Law Group's Principal, the Qld Law Group's RAP Working Group has consulted with external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder businesses including the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health in developing its RAP. In addition, members of the Qld Law Group's RAP Working Group have had the benefit of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organizations and have considered this experience in RAP discussions.

The RAP has been developed with consideration for mutually beneficial actions and projects to ensure the sustainability of the RAP. This document is the Qld Law Group's inaugural RAP which outlines foundational actions to be built upon in the longer term.



Relationships

Relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians are important to the firm and its core business activities and values because these relationships help the firm better meet the needs of all its clients, access unique opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organizations and conduct our business with integrity and honesty and to be culturally respectful.

Focus area: Developing a network of positive relationships to support our reconciliation objectives.			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Gain a broader organizational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their cultures.			
1 <i>Develop a coordinated and inclusive approach to the Qld Law Group's reconciliation objectives by:</i>			
1.1 forming an RAP Working Group with input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and stakeholders and non-Indigenous staff, and with executive support;	Group Practice Manager and RAP Working Group	March 2011 June 2011 October 2012	RAP Working Group established March 2011. Working draft of the Qld Law Group's RAP completed June 2011. 4 RAP progress meetings per year.
1.2 preparing a list of ideas suitable for office-based activities to support the development of objectives relating to respect and relationships.	RAP Working Group	July 2011	List of ideas produced and provided to the firm's executive committee to consider and approve.
2 <i>Strengthen and extend relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, business and the broader community by hosting an annual event.</i>			
3 <i>Strengthen and extend relationships with Aboriginal communities and elders in and around Brisbane for two-way learning by:</i>			
3.1 hosting events with Aboriginal communities and elders;	Chairman	June 2012	Hosting one event with local Aboriginal people. Feedback sought from communities and elders on the success of the event
3.2 offering financial support to local community initiatives that are aligned with the interests of the Qld Law Group.	Chairman/ Group Practice Manager	January 2012	Contribute financial support to at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community initiatives and evaluate the impact of these initiatives to share experience.



Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and training centres.			
4. <i>Identify and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses when possible.</i>	RAP Working Group	October 2011 December 2012	Request and collect information from the Qld Law Group staff re: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses the firm can engage. Update existing database to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business information. Identify and engage 1 to 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
5. <i>Enter into partnership with Hymba Yumba Community Hub</i>	RAP Working Group	August 2012	Partnership Agreement with Hymba Yumba Community Hub entered into to help promote school retention and increase recruitment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.
6. <i>Enter into partnership with University of Queensland</i>	RAP Working Group	March 2012	Partnership Agreement with University of Queensland entered into to help promote school retention and increase recruitment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.
7. <i>Enter into partnership with Queensland Police Service's Justice Entry Program</i>	Chairman	Existing	Partner the Queensland Police Service to help promote its Justice Entry Program and increase recruitment opportunities into the Queensland Police Force for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.
8. <i>Maintain involvement with the Ipswich Jets</i>	Chairman	Existing	Assist the Ipswich Jets and the Qld Rugby League with their continued opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Rugby League players to close the gap between Indigenous and other Australians for available activities.
9. <i>Maintain involvement with the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health</i>	Chairman	January 2012	Assist the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health with their continued actions to promote Indigenous health issues and to close the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and other Australians.
10. <i>Maintain involvement with the Thaiday Foundation</i>	Chairman	Existing	Assist the Thaiday Foundation with their continued actions to promote Indigenous health issues particularly in the areas of Indigenous deafness and obesity and to close the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and other Australians.





Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their culture is important to the Qld Law Group. By developing a shared vision of trust and respect, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian people will have the confidence to engage the Qld Law Group to provide them with legal services when required. This will help create an environment of mutual respect and reward for the Qld Law Group and its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Focus area: Creating an environment to strengthen respect and relationships.			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Gain a broader organizational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their cultures.			
11. Increase awareness of and display our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by:			
11.1 including our RAP in employee induction material;	Group Practice Manager	February 2012	RAP included in employee induction material
11.2 publish RAP on firm's website;	Group Practice Manager	February 2012	RAP published on website
11.3 maintaining, updating and promoting the collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander publications and materials in our library;	Legal Information Manager	Begin February 2012	Indigenous Law Bulletin and other publications subscribed to and provided in the Qld Law Group office. A selection of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander books, films, documentaries, purchased for the Qld Law Group library. Availability of the collection promoted through the firm's intranet.
11.4 publicise and acknowledge Aboriginal art on display in the office;	Principal	Existing	A collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art on display with appropriate acknowledgement of its sources and given higher profile in the office.
11.5 establish and maintain a reconciliation site on the Qld Law Group intranet;	IT Department	February 2012	Reconciliation site established on the firm's intranet with relevant resources and links to Reconciliation Australia.
11.6 celebrating and promoting National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and Sorry Day.	Group Practice Manager RAP Working Group	May 2012 July 2012	National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week celebrated by displaying posters in the office. Inviting an Aboriginal leader to talk about the significance of NAIDOC, National Reconciliation Week and Sorry day. Local and national activities promoted on the Qld Law Group intranet



Acknowledgement of Country and act respectfully			
12. <i>Foster and demonstrate cultural respect including Acknowledgement of Country by:</i>			
12.1 developing and implementing cultural protocols that include 'Acknowledgement of Country' by the Qld Law Group personnel;	Group Practice Manager and Chairman All Qld Law Group employees	February 2012	Acknowledgement of and Welcome to Country at Qld Law Group external functions where appropriate or practical A Cultural Protocols Guide developed in consultation with local communities, and distributed to all employees
12.2 prominently placing a plaque in the reception Acknowledging the Traditional Owners and their connection to Country;	Group Practice Manager	February 2012	Plaque placed in reception of the Qld Law Group office with approval and participation of Aboriginal Traditional Owners supported by an event to mark this.
12.3 display 'Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners' and their connection to Country on the firm's website.	Marketing Department	February 2012	Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and their connection to Country placed on firm's website with approval of Traditional Owners
Increase understanding of legal issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians			
13. <i>Expand understanding across the Qld Law Group and selected clients of legal issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians through:</i>			
13.1 cultural awareness training;	Group Practice Manager	By July 2012	Cultural awareness training delivery sourced. Cultural awareness training provided to new employees. Present all new employees with a copy of the firm's RAP.
13.2 in house lectures as part of internal and external continuing legal education program from:		By February 2012	At least 2 lecture services arranged.
13.2.1 Land Council;	RAP Working Group	July 2012	Contact made and lecture options discussed. Lecture/Workshop held.
13.2.2 Representative from Aboriginal Legal Service or other appropriate speaker;	RAP Working Group	July 2012	Contact made and lecture options discussed. Lecture/Workshop held.
13.2.3 Qld Police Service.	RAP Working Group	July 2012	Contact made and lecture options discussed. Lecture/Workshop held.





Opportunities

Creating opportunities that benefit both our business and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, organizations and communities will be a critical part of realising the Qld Law Group's vision for strong, connected and economically-active communities.

Creating employment and training opportunities that are mutually beneficial for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians will help to build a strong, dynamic and diverse workforce that represents and reflects the community and enables the Qld Law Group to improve development opportunities in our community.

Focus area: Creating work and other opportunities.			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Offer employment and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students and graduates and other students.			
14 <i>Develop a strategy to support the retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including:</i>			
14.1 mentoring;	Group Practice Manager RAP Working Group	By June 2012	Mentoring programs established and participation in appropriate programs organized for at least 2 students
14.2 providing legal research training.	Legal Information Manager	By November 2012	A legal research training course presented at the Qld Law Group office to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
15 <i>Develop a strategy to employ and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and organisations, with advice from:</i>			
15.1 Queensland Police Service;	Group Practice Manager RAP Working Group	November 2012	Contact made and employment options discussed.
15.2 Stronger, Smarter Leadership Program;	Group Practice Manager RAP Working Group	March 2011	Provide work placements for students tutored under the Program



15.3 Recruitment and Retention;	Group Practice Manager RAP Working Group	June 2012	Develop a recruitment and retention strategy with a view to employing 1 to 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the organisation in any of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal positions; • Legal clerkships and trainee programs; • Casual law clerks; • Administrative roles (on a permanent or traineeship basis); • IT roles; • Catering roles; • Secretarial roles; • Marketing; and • Library
15.4 Ways to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to apply for employment in legal roles and a wide range of support functions.	Group Practice Manager	June 2012	All job advertisements include "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are encouraged to apply". Recruiting those positions, jobs advertised in the National Indigenous Times and Queensland Indigenous media.
Seek ways in which the firm can contribute further to reconciliation goals through pro bono and related activities.			
16. <i>Appointment of internal pro bono committee</i>	Executive Committee	March 2011	Committee to consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interests where appropriate
17. <i>Undertake pro bono work for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including work relating to:</i>			
17.1 claims for compensation for members of the Stolen Generation on instructions from Aboriginal Legal Service	Qld Law Group Litigation Section	December 2012	Pursue Stolen Generation claims in Queensland
17.2 non-profit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations	Group Practice Manager	June 2012	The Qld Law Group accepts referrals of certain types of legal matters from non-profit Indigenous corporations, and acts as their legal advisor on a pro bono basis. Referrals accepted as resources allow.
18. <i>In-kind support and provision of facilities in remote communities</i>	RAP Working Group	December 2012	Relationships developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which enables the provision of support services, including access to meeting space, library and technology services. Provision of public resource facilities, such as play equipment and shade cover to selected remote communities.



Tracking progress and reporting

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Draft RAP	Completed by RAP Working Group	June 2011	Document Prepared
RAP presented to Partners	Chairman and Group Practice Manager	July 2011	RAP approved
RAP Approved by Reconciliation Australia	Group Practice Manager	November 2011	RAP Approved with Reconciliation Australia and published on their website.
RAP Launch and Staff Presentation	Chairman	January 2012	RAP launched and celebrated and presented to all staff.
Monitor RAP Progress	RAP Working Group	December 2012	Four meetings of working group held each year
RAP Annual Report and Refresh	Group Practice Manager	December 2012	RAP Reported on and published on Reconciliation Australia website.
	RAP Working Group		RAP Refreshed and approved by Reconciliation Australian and Partners and published on Reconciliation Australia website.

