

# REFLECT

## Reconciliation Action Plan

JAN 2026 - MAY 2027

SOUTH WEST ROCKS  
SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



**Warning**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this document has images of people who have died.

**Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club acknowledges the land of the Thungutti/Dunghutti Nation. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge the role of emerging leaders to continue to guide us in the future. We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the need to change practices to be inclusive. The land always was and always will be Thungutti/Dunghutti land.



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## WELCOME TO COUNTRY - PROVIDED BY ELDER AUNTY CHERYL BLAIR

**Barrung marrung**

*Good morning*

**Miyanggan dhanang**

*How are you all?*

**Dunghutti guthun barri dhitiyn**

*This is Dunghutti country*

**Nyinanhambu bitha, nyinanhambu warru, wa bukul,**

*Our river, our plains and hills*

**Banduunggakayi, mullumun gu.**

*From the mountains, to the coast.*

**Dunghutti guthun, barri dhitiyn**

*This is Dunghutti, country*

**Danang, marrungga barriya dhitiyndhal**

*We wish you well in this country.*

**Marrungbu.**

*Thank you.*



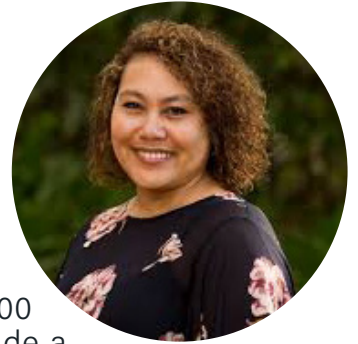
# FIGTREE MOB



Badaar Nippers program learning On Saltwater Country.  
Photo Credit - Nathan Phillips



## FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA



Reconciliation Australia welcomes South West Rocks Surf Life Saving to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

South West Rocks Surf Life Saving joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables South West Rocks Surf Life Saving to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations South West Rocks Surf Life Saving, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

*Karen Mundine*

Chief Executive Officer

**Reconciliation Australia**



South West Rocks Nippers engaging with Cultural activities on the annual Nippers Cultural Day.  
Photo Credit - Brienna Elford



## FROM SOUTH WEST ROCKS SLSC



As President of the South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club, I am proud of the strong and respectful relationship we have built with the Dunghutti people over many years. Our club recognises the deep cultural and spiritual significance this coastline holds for the Traditional Custodians, and we are committed to walking alongside the local Aboriginal community as we care for and protect this special place.

Our connection with the Figtree Mob has been a key part of this journey, allowing us to share in cultural knowledge and strengthen ties through open dialogue, shared events, and mutual respect. We are also proud to have welcomed many Aboriginal members into our club over the years, including Burnum Burnum, whose presence and contributions have enriched our club's culture and community spirit.

Looking ahead, the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan marks an important step in formalising our commitment to reconciliation. It reflects our dedication to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard, respected, and valued in everything we do. We are excited to continue growing these relationships and creating a surf club where everyone feels a strong sense of belonging and pride.

*Rod McDonagh* ESM  
President and Life Governor  
**SWR Surf Life Saving Club**



## NEW SOUTH WALES



## FROM SURF LIFE SAVING NSW

On behalf of Surf Life Saving NSW, I am pleased to introduce the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for South West Rocks SLSC. As we embark on this journey towards reconciliation together, we acknowledge the importance of building respectful and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This RAP signifies South West Rocks SLSC's collective commitment to acknowledging the histories, cultures, and contributions of Australia's First Nations communities. By developing this plan, the club is taking a significant step towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment within their surf life saving community.

I encourage all members of South West Rocks SLSC, as well as the club's partners and stakeholders, to actively participate in the initiatives outlined in this RAP. Together, we can create a more respectful, harmonious, and inclusive future for our surf life saving community and beyond.

*Peter Agnew* AM  
President  
**Surf Life Saving NSW**





## SALTWATER DHUNGHUTTI

*Stories behind the artwork by Freeda Roberts*



Freeda is a saltwater Dunghutti artist from South West Rocks. She grew up on Figtree Reserve and continues to draw her inspiration from stories and memories of growing up on Dunghutti country.

She explores the concepts of family, kin and her connections to the land, the sea and its animals. Being Aboriginal, we have a responsibility to care for the animals, lands, seas and skies. I love incorporating these into my artworks as it is my way of showcasing the importance of looking after our environment. Freeda says.

Freeda is the artist behind Dunghutti Creations where she shares her talents and culture with everyone. She works on commissioned pieces for local organisations, schools and individuals and dabbles in creating digital artworks, web-design, logos, custom tattoos and more!

### DESIGN 1 A - TIDES I



This artwork represent the tides. With the movement of the tides, you can see the swirls of the current in the ocean and freshwater creek. A key role of SWR surf club, is to raise awareness of beach safety. By understanding the risk of fast currents/rips at our beaches and waterways, the surf club are ensuring the safety of the community and visitors at SWR.

### DESIGN 1 B - TIDES II

Similar to design 1 (Tides I), this artwork represents the current of SWR tides. It highlights the swirls seen in the water.



### DESIGN 2 A - "SALTWATER COASTLINE"

The below artwork represents the Coastline of South West Rocks. The SWR Surf Club is located on saltwater country of the Dunghutti nation and this artwork highlights that importance. The ocean has always been important to the Dunghutti people. It is interconnected between water, land and all things living.

### DESIGN 2 B - "FRESHWATER MEETS COASTLINE"

SWR Surf Club is located in on the headland. A key spot of SWR to see the fresh water (Front Creek) meet with the saltwater (Main Beach). This artwork incorporates design A ("Coastline") as it highlights the connection of saltwater (below) and the freshwater (the large blue shapes). Above the freshwater is a blue line with white dots. This represents the journey of the fresh water, from the mountains to the sea.



### DESIGN 3 - "WORKING TOGETHER"

This artwork highlights the importance of the surf club and public coming together. SWR Surf Club is a community organisation that aims to spread awareness of beach and surf safety. This artwork highlights that key commitment of volunteers, community and the public coming together to ensure all visitors are safe at South West Rock beaches. This is showcased by the white line that connects the two larger circles. In addition to highlight the importance of coming together, this artwork highlights the continuous journey. The outer lines in this artwork show the continuous journey of innovation, learning and teaching of our club over the years.

### DESIGN 4 - "TOGETHERNESS"

This artwork highlights the community of South West Rocks and surrounding areas working together with the key focus of ensuring the public safety of swimming in the beach and waterways. SWR is a key organisation within the community, a meeting place that brings together a range of people with they key focus of protecting the public.





# ABORIGINAL MEMBERS SURF LIFESAVING

## TRAINING ABORIGINES BOYS AS LIFESAVERS

The South West Rocks Surf Club is carrying out the commendable work of training boys from the Kinchela Boys' Home in surf life saving.

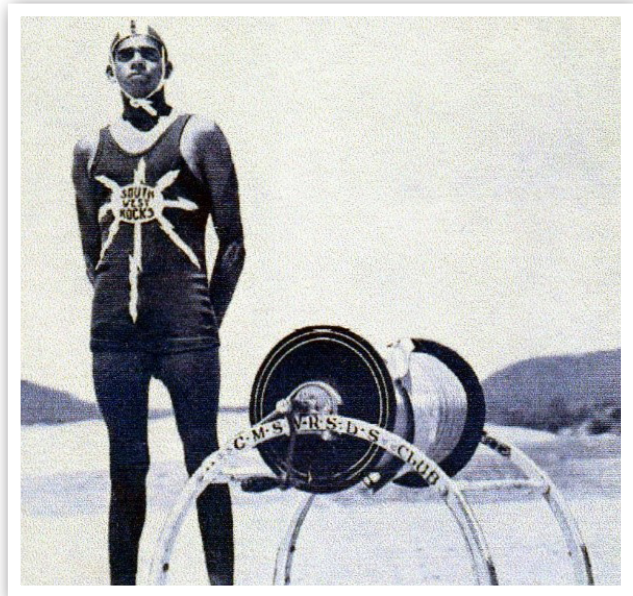
One of the boys, Harry Penrith, who won his bronze medallion last year, was only the second aborigine in Australia to register the achievement.

There is a squad of eight boys training for the various surf awards at the present time—seven for the qualifying certificates and one for the bronze medallion.

Well-known instructor and official Mr. Reg. Saunders has charge of the squad, and it is worth noting that these boys form part of the ordinary beach patrols each Sunday.

Results of the club's events conducted last Sunday were as follows:—

- Surf Race: T. Quinn.
- Wading: G. Lawrence.
- Beach Sprint: J. Curran.
- Musical Flags: A. Cannane.
- Relay: L. Shelley, J. Coleman, G. Ellis, G. Lawrence.
- Wheelbarrow Race: D. Byrnes, A. Cannane.
- Patrols for Sunday: J. Coleman (Capt.), C. Lawrence, K. Carroll, D. McKiernan, J. Smith, C. Field, W. Miles, B. Rees, J. Coulter.



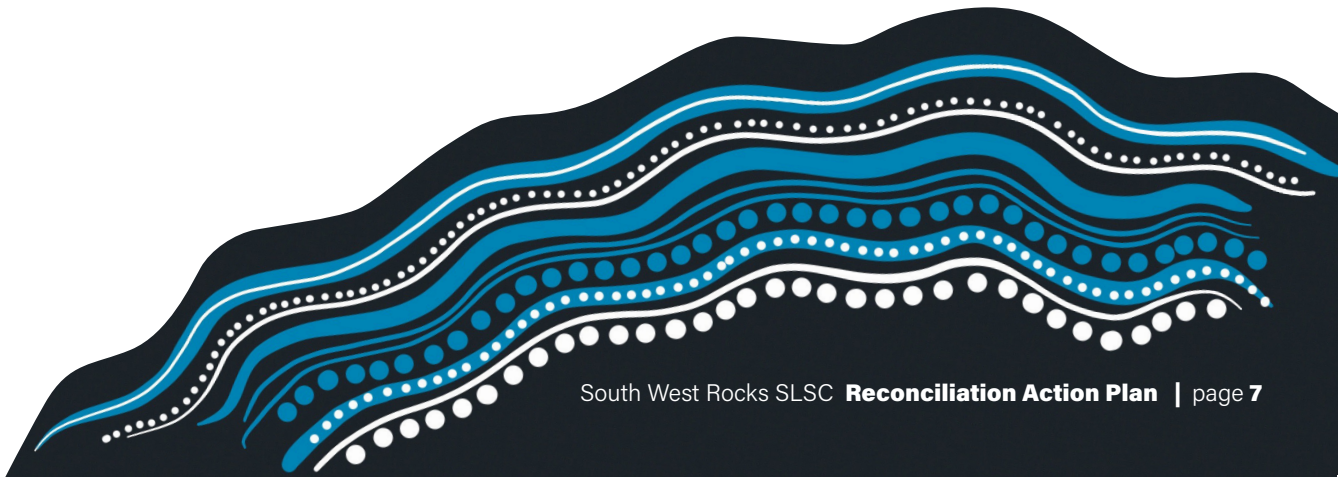
*Burnum Burnum gained his Bronze Medallion with SWRSLSC.*



*Two SWR Nippers (wearing Hat Head caps) at the State Championships in 1967/68*



*During the Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast Branch 'Raising of the Flags' for the 2019/20 season, Aunty Cheryl Blair performed a Welcome to Country in Dunghutti language with Benelong Carol playing the didgeridoo.*





## LOCAL CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club acknowledges the Dunghutti people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and sea on which we patrol. Over the years, we have come to understand and respect the deep cultural significance the coastline holds for the Dunghutti community. By listening and learning from local Elders and knowledge holders, we have gained insight into the enduring connection the Dunghutti people have with Country—both spiritually and practically—and we are committed to honouring this connection through our activities on the beach and in the community.

Our relationship with the Dunghutti people, especially the Figtree Mob, has grown through shared initiatives, cultural events, and ongoing dialogue. We have welcomed opportunities to incorporate traditional knowledge into our programs, including hosting cultural awareness programs for our Nippers and have incorporated Dunghutti representatives in our programs and events.

These efforts have not only reinforced mutual understanding but have also built a sense of unity and respect within our coastal community. A key part of this journey is the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which provides a clear and practical framework for deepening relationships, respecting cultural heritage, and creating meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Through the RAP, we are committed to turning good intentions into measurable actions that support reconciliation and long-term partnership.





South West Rocks Nippers engaging with Cultural activities on the annual Nippers Cultural Day.  
Photo Credit - Renee Smalles





## OUR RAP

We are developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) because we are dedicated to enhancing the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the lifesaving movement. At the same time, we aim to ensure that the cultures and traditions of First Nations peoples are valued, respected, and celebrated throughout surf lifesaving.

The implementation of our RAP will be guided by regular updates and progress reports to the SWRSLSC Board of Directors through the RAP Working Group. We will also ensure that the specific actions and deliverables outlines in the RAP are carried out across the organisation, with oversight from the RAP Working Group.

Our RAP Champion will be the SWRSLSC Director of Lifesaving.

The RAP Working Group (Brienna Elford - SWRSLSC Director of Lifesaving, Aunty Cheryl Blair - Dunghutti Elder, Nancy Patison - Figtree Aboriginal Descendants, Renee Smailes - SWRSLSC Vice-President, Belinda Telford - SWRSLSC Director of Marketing, Kristy Walsh - community member.



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAP

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides a framework and detailed key deliverables that formalise our commitment to our reconciliation journey.

SWRSLSC is committed to building and nurturing strong partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in our local area.

August 5th 2022 - Posted on SWRSLSC Facebook for local community members to be a part of the RAP Working Group.

The South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club is developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). A major part of the process is consultation with community stakeholders. We are hosting a planning session on Thursday 8th September at 6pm at the Surf Club and are inviting interested members of the community to come along and get involved. Please email your RSVP to [lifesaving@swrslsc.com.au](mailto:lifesaving@swrslsc.com.au).

The SWRSLSC already had a strong working relationship with the local Dunghutti Mob.





# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN - JAN 2026 TO MAY 2027

## OUR BUSINESS

The South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club (SWRSLSC) is situated on Dunghutti land on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. Currently we have approximately 200 volunteer members and 20 paid staff.

The business of Surf Life Saving is “zero preventable deaths on our local beaches” and our missions is to “save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.”

Surf Life Saving is a unique not-for-profit community cause that exists through community donations, fundraising, corporate sponsorship and government grants. Since the SWRSLSC Club was established in 1919 there has not been a life lost between the flags.

Surf Life Saving is a movement that brings communities together in healthy, active lifestyles and produces ever lasting friendships.

While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers and members is currently not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this and work towards gaining this data.

## OUR RAP

The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides a framework and detailed key deliverables that formalise our commitment to our reconciliation journey.

SWRSLSC acknowledges the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our communities. By working together, we believe that surf lifesaving can provide opportunities for and connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that empower, recognise and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and traditions.

SWRSLSC is dedicated to developing and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We are developing a RAP to show our commitment to the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the surf lifesaving movement.

A SWRSLSC RAP Working Group has been established to ensure that the deliverables are achieved, implemented and continue to be upheld throughout our ongoing reconciliation journey.

We would like to thank and recognise the members of the SWRSLSC RAP Working Group:

- Brienna Elford (SWRSLSC Director of Lifesaving) – RAP Champion
- Renee Smailes (SWRSLSC Vice-President)
- Belinda Telford-Miller (SWRSLSC Director of Marketing and Communications)
- Aunty Cheryl Blair (Local Dunghutti Elder)
- Nancy Pattison (South West Rocks Figtree Decedents)
- Kristy Walsh (South West Rocks Community Member)

## OUR PARTNERSHIPS/CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The SWRSLSC has a strong relationship with local Aboriginal communities. This has been nurtured over decades to the cohesive and inclusive connection that we have today.

There is a current partnership between the SWRSLSC and various local First Nations groups including the South West Rocks Figtree Aboriginal Decedents. Combined events and activities include:

- Nippers Cultural Day – the Figtree Mob provide a cultural experience including interactive Acknowledgement of Country, storytelling, dancing, language and sand art
- Sky Stories – in conjunction with Kempsey Shire Council, the SWRSLSC and Figtree Mob are involved in an Aboriginal art display which will be open to the public
- Clontarf Academy – students have provided assistance with the set-up of major carnivals and events, the SWRSLSC has offered space and equipment for the Clontarf staff to complete their Surf Rescue Certificate annual proficiencies
- For major events the Figtree Mob are engaged to perform a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony
- Undercover space is offered free of charge to the Figtree Mob during cultural classes if the weather forecast is not favourable for outside activities

# RELATIONSHIPS



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>	August 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work alongside South West Rocks Figtree Dependents Aboriginal Corporation to develop and deliver meaningful and engaging learning experiences for First Nations people.</li> </ul>	July 2026	Vice-President
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our SWRSLSC board, volunteers, staff, members and stakeholders</li> </ul>	May 2026	Director of Administration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group members and SWRSLSC Committee members to participate in an external NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May - 3 June, 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May - 3 June, 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote NRW via SWRSLSC social media platforms and internal newsletter</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Marketing
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff, volunteers and stakeholders.</li> </ul>	December 2026	Director of Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	May 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage SWRSLSC members and staff attendance at significant First Nations events (apology Anniversary, Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week)</li> </ul>	July 2026	Vice-President
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	July 2026	Director of Lifesaving

# RESPECT

5. 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"> <li>Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.</li> </ul>	September 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>	May 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SWRSLSC Board of Directors and staff to undertake Face to Face Cultural Awareness Training</li> </ul>	August 2026	Vice-President
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.</li> </ul>	May 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>	May 2026	Director of Lifesaving
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>	June and July 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.</li> </ul>	First week in July, 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>	First week in July, 2026	Vice-President

# OPPORTUNITIES

8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.</li> </ul>	August 2026	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Lifesaving/ Club Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> </ul>	November 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate Supply Nation membership.</li> </ul>	May 2026	Club Manager

# GOVERNANCE



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	April 2026	Vice-President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.</li> </ul>	November 2026	Director of Administration
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	30 September, annually	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondences</li> </ul>	June annually	Director of Lifesaving
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.</li> </ul>	1 August annually	Director of Lifesaving
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Director of Lifesaving

## CONTACT DETAILS

**NAME:** Brienna Elford

**POSITION:** Director of Lifesaving  
South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club

**PHONE:** 0407 695 696

**EMAIL:** lifesaving@swrslsc.com.au





Age Mangers in their shirts with Traditional Artwork from Dughutti Artist, Freeda Roberts.  
Photo Credit - Brienna Elford



Nippers Badaar (dolphin) artwork in the sand.  
Photo Credit - Brienna Elford



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

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**REFLECT**