



Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

2024-25 Highlights

Westernport Water is deeply committed to reconciliation and to building strong, respectful, and collaborative relationships with First Nations people and organisations. We're proud have worked alongside Traditional Owners and community partners to turn our reconciliation commitments into action and share some highlights from 2024-25.

Action/initiative	
Employees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	3.7%
RAP Working Group strategic engagements	4
Bass Coast Reconciliation Network Strategic meetings and event planning engagements	10
Major events delivered in collaboration with strategic partners	5
Cultural immersion participation	20
Employees trained (Face to Face) on cultural awareness	45
Spend with certified suppliers	\$639,000
Worked with 9 Victorian Aboriginal Businesses and a total of 12 Aboriginal businesses	12
Donations made directly to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations	\$12,500
Pro Bono support hours	40 plus
Formal partnerships	2
Language projects with the Bunurong	2

Implementing our third Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Our Innovate RAP 2023-25, endorsed by Reconciliation Australia is integral to our commitment to reconciliation and fostering a more inclusive and respectful workplace and community.

The implementation of our RAP is governed by a Working Group that comprises: Bunurong Traditional Owners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and employees, General Managers, Senior Leadership and subject matter experts.

Aboriginal Working Group Members include Robert Ogden, Zoe Upton, Jarrod West, Paul Patten, Patrice Mahoney OAM and employee Sam Weston.

Organisations that have help us meet our RAP objectives include Mob Jobs, Tarwin Cultural Services, Jill West - Cultural Awareness, Barrithbarrith and the Bunurong Land Council.



Overall we have completed 91 of 100 Innovate RAP deliverables, seven are in progress and the remaining two will be considered at the end of 2025.

Throughout 2024-25 we completed the following outcomes:



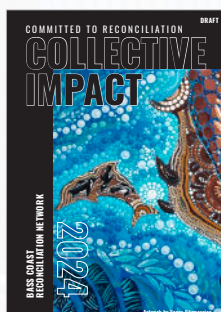
Employment and cultural awareness outcomes

- introduced a dedicated Board Position, appointing an Aboriginal Delegate
- created a project role to look after partnerships and recreational aspects of project delivery with a focus on engagement and cultural values
- offered staff the opportunity to participate in a Cultural Learning Experience, led by Bunurong Elder Rob Ogden as a part of National Reconciliation Week
- recently delivered cultural awareness training to 100% of staff, training was delivered by Jillian West and Alexandra Prouse
- participated in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace Reconciliation Barometer to measure employee perceptions and attitudes about reconciliation and the impact of our RAP.



Relationships and partnerships

- developed an Aboriginal Engagement Plan to enable the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in planning and water management
- we were honoured to share our journey with Reconciliation Australia staff and Board members during their visit to Millowl for their Board Meeting in August 2024
- strengthened the Bass Coast Reconciliation Network's regional approach to Reconciliation, reflecting on our collective impact, delivering five major events



- supported Barrithbarrith in its application to the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Fund to undertake a project to test the feasibility of a Gathering Place for First Nations people
- Participated in the Victorian Water Industry partnership with the Bunurong Land Council to develop a joint statement of commitment to deliver 'Water is Life'.



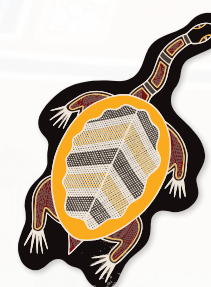
Economic opportunity

- developed and consolidated our Procurement and Social Procurement Strategies and reviewed existing processes to create easier pathways to engage with Victorian Aboriginal businesses
- engaged 12 certified Victorian Aboriginal businesses with a total spend of \$638,880 contributing to economic growth.



Respect and cultural values

- initiated a cultural heritage due diligence assessment for a watermain replacement and a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan process for the King Road Wetland which identified the presence of artefacts
- initiated a site-based project that's exploring cultural values and ways in which we can work together with the Bunurong Land Council
- worked with the Bunurong on exploring opportunities to celebrate Boonwurrung Language with the naming of our training rooms and the investigation into the place name of Candowie Reservoir.



Our achievements throughout 2024-25 were not limited to the actions and initiatives detailed in our Innovate RAP. There were a number of outcomes delivered in addition to the commitments listed in the RAP.

For more information visit westernportwater.com.au

Acknowledgement

Westernport Water acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as First Nations People and that the land, sea and water are of spiritual, cultural and economic importance. We recognise that we provide services on the traditional lands of the Bunurong Peoples of the Kulin Nation. The Bunurong peoples have managed the land and water resources for thousands of years. We acknowledge them and their continued connection to this place, as we go about managing the water resources today.

