



INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

April 2022 - April 2024





OUR RAP ARTWORK

‘Inside the Rain’ by Yondee Shane Hansen has taken inspiration from the repetitive motifs typical of many Aboriginal depictions of the country originating from sand drawings that were part of ceremonial life. Like these drawings, this work is painted from an aerial perspective and depicts, among other things, the patterns and soakage’s created on the ground as the rain is falling.

ARTIST: YONDEE SHANE HANSEN

Born: 1964
Country: Dumbleyung, South West of Western Australia
Tribe: Noongar/Nyoongar



Noongar artist Yondee Shane Hansen was born in the south-west of Western Australia in 1964, at Dumbleyung, 270km south of Perth. He grew up around Narrogin and later the Swan River near Guilford on the outskirts of Perth. The story of his early life and his attraction to painting gives a strong idea of how his personal life story feeds into his role as an Aboriginal artist.

Hansen was taught about hunting and shown sand drawings by his father. Around the age of ten, he would travel to visit his aunties on the Swan River and would collect paperbark to help them in their artwork. It was here that he started to learn about art from his older relatives who are known for their painting on paperbark. Yondee Shane Hansen remembers from this time:

“The bark had to be burnt and then soaked. We would float the bark in the river, then the old people would grab it, put it in hessian bags, take it up the hill and dry it out for a couple of days. They would then use flour, water glue and charcoal for paint.”

Talking about his art practices today, Yondee Shane Hansen says: “I make sand paintings, collecting sand from the creeks. You have to wash it to get the salt out, but the sand is different out of the creeks, it’s smoother. When you washed it a few times, sieved it, then mixed it with paint, it’s good to use. When I make sand paintings using black and white, it gives that simple, strong message.”

An experienced and accomplished artist, Yondee Shane Hansen has developed ways of working with sand and ochres to depict the stories and legends of

his people. He also paints detailed figurative works based on mission life, hunting and animals. His works are abstract in their presentation but narrative in their content. As a child, Yondee learnt his grandfather’s ground painting and wishes to continue these, feeling their translation to sand paintings does them justice and brings them to new audiences. The artist’s bush name, Yondee, means Black Goanna.

Yondee Shane Hansen has painted with the Campfire group of Aboriginal artists in Brisbane and exhibited his work galleries in Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, and overseas (USA and Ireland).

A MESSAGE FROM RECONCILITATION AUSTRALIA



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation’s reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Vertech to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Vertech will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program’s framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program’s potential for impact is greater than ever. Vertech is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Vertech’s readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia’s reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Vertech on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR



Tom Brennan
Managing Director
Vertech Group

It was a milestone for Vertech Group and its people when we formally commenced our reconciliation journey in 2018, using our inaugural “Reflect” Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as a framework to enhance our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community partnerships, involvement, and workplace awareness.

It speaks volumes around our people and culture that each step of this new journey was embraced wholeheartedly across the business and that there was a real passion for us to continue making meaningful strides towards reconciliation. The enthusiasm and drive encountered through this journey has seen us take our next steps forward by moving into the “Innovate” phase and our second RAP.

As a proud Australian business, our relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are an important part of both our history and our future.

The cultural learnings carried forward from our reflect RAP have laid the foundations for our new framework which is centred around relationships, respect, opportunity, and governance. This framework will apply a new focus for our team and see us achieving further meaningful results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I know I can speak for all when I say we were excited to continue our reconciliation journey, to see what we can achieve through this period, and we look forward to sharing our progress.

ABOUT THE INNOVATE RAP

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is about organisations from all industries and sectors committing to outcomes that will create sustainable changes towards a reconciled Australia.

This RAP will provide a framework that will guide Vertech Group on the journey to reconciliation through planning, implementation, measuring and learning to create social change and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As Vertech Group enter their Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, our RAP Working Group, along with the entire organisation, are looking to build upon the solid foundation we have created in the Reflect RAP.

With this new set of actions, Vertech Group is looking to embrace the key goals of the Innovate RAP, strengthen our ties with the Aboriginal community and create our new vision for reconciliation.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that values and understands Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and experiences, to foster a united, respectful, and celebratory society for people of all backgrounds.

For Vertech Group, this represents strengthened community and race relations to promote respectful and considered engagement throughout our industry, as well as equal employment opportunity for an inclusive and diverse workplace that is backed through organisational actions and support.

At the conclusion of our Innovate RAP we hope to have created a welcoming environment that is supported through greater social understanding and backed by formalised and actively implemented policies and procedures that build towards reconciliation actions. We will also be conducting a company-wide activity at the conclusion of this RAP cycle. This activity will incorporate a comparative review from the start of the Innovate cycle and at the end of it to assess how Vertech Group have influence the reconciliation movement, and how we can do this more moving forward.

The goal being that we can reflect on the improvements that we have made as an organisation, and the wider contributions that we will have also made to our industry, community and First Nations people. These changes will be felt through all levels of business, led by our senior leaders, and with impacts to our greater business network and stakeholders.

OUR BUSINESS

Vertech are a specialist access, inspection, maintenance, and integrity engineering services company. We pride ourselves on our quality with an emphasis on supplying high value, innovative and quality services to achieve excellence in all the projects we execute.

We currently employ 206 staff members with two staff members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Vertech Group is internationally focused using our core Australian workforce and infrastructure located in Western Australia, Queensland, and the Northern Territory, to deliver projects both nationally, as well as regions including West Africa and the Asia Pacific. We offer services to the defense, marine, and a full range of energy industry sectors.

Our Head Office is based in Perth, Western Australia and we have regional offices in Karratha, WA, Roma, QLD, and Darwin, NT. We also have operations in New Plymouth in New Zealand, Houston in USA, Kuala Belait in Brunei, and Luanda in Angola.

As an organisation we recognise our current greatest sphere of influence includes our internal stakeholders and staff as well as stakeholder organisations and those operating within our industry. As we continue to extend our commitments to reconciliation, we are looking to broaden our activities to engage further with the wider community and utilise our resources and position to increase this scope. Moving forward in our reconciliation planning we are excited to use this position of influence to contribute to real actions within the greater community, with a specific focus on promoting equality and equity, race relations, and contributing to improving institutional integrity.



OUR RAP

At Vertech, the core value we place above all others is our care for each other, our clients, and the environment. We believe developing a RAP enables us to ensure that we are engaging with organisations and people to continue to strengthen our commitment to this core value, and contribute to a reconciled Australia that promotes understanding, equality, and unity.

Previously completing a Reflect RAP, our business and people have gained a deeper understanding and acknowledgement of the experiences and cultures of First Nations peoples, as well as the importance of reconciliation movements within business and national culture as a whole. Across our organisation we have seen increased awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories as well as an increase in our understanding and involvement in significant events including National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week.

This was also a vital learning experience allowing us to identify key challenges for our business which we will focus on throughout our planning. These challenges include issues in the retention of First Nations staff throughout our industry, as well as difficulties in creating meaningful and engaged relationships with likeminded businesses. We have also faced issues of retaining our RAP Working Group members due to staff leaving the business which has had an impact on the continuity of our planning.



Vertech Group Staff with Shane Hanson (far left)



Our Reflect RAP has been key in scoping our capacity for reconciliation commitments, as well as already seeing outcomes in real organisational changes that are building our community engagement, cultural understanding, and internal awareness of reconciliation efforts. Our RAP journey so far has instilled not only the value of cultural and community engagement but allowed us to recognise our ability as an organisation and as individuals, to contribute to, influence and build upon movements towards a reconciled Australia.

As we build through this Innovate RAP we are excited to continue to strengthen our efforts in supporting reconciliation through deeper commitment and integration within our business and to see further tangible business and social outcomes. Through the development and implementation of this plan we will ensure RAP progress is reported regularly and shared among the organisation to ensure all members of the business have a greater understanding of the value and effects of our RAP.

We intend to continue to engage with and consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to seek guidance in our planning and ensure our actions will have tangible social benefits. In line with our top-down approach, we understand the importance of having supportive senior management who lead through exemplary actions involved in our RAP planning, as well as ensuring members from each business area are involved for fully integrated change across all departments and levels.

RAP WORKING GROUP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group comprises of individuals from a broad range of departments, demographics, and experience levels. We have previously had First Nations representation from within Vertech within the Working Group, however they have since departed the company. As Vertech understands that First Nations representation is not only a requirement of the Innovate RAP but is also an important step towards reconciliation, we have therefore reached out and invited an external First Nations representative to the team to act as a RAP consultant.

RAP CHAMPION

Paul Lavender – Business Services Manager

RAP WORKING GROUP

Evan Smith – Marketing Coordinator

Kate Bell – HSEQ Advisor

Kathryn Meeks – Business Services Coordinator

Liam Rajanayagam – Project Estimation & Costings Officer

Rick Langley – Project Estimation & Costings Officer

Scott McMullen – Supply Chain Manager

Jason Bastaja – Workshop Supervisor

Jayden Harp – Graduate Engineer

Emily Bennett – Project Administrator

Laurence Riley – External RAP consultant – First Nations Representative



Vertech Group Staff with Shane Hanson (far left)



RELATIONSHIPS

As a core business value, Vertech Group believes in the importance of strengthening people and community relationships, and the value that holds. Building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is a vital commitment for the development of meaningful stakeholder engagements and partnerships as well as encouraging connections and the sharing of experiences.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
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.	June, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	July, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop relationships with external committees and advisors to support Vertech Group in identifying and establishing ongoing and engaged relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	August, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Resource Centre and develop a plan to extend our commitments to support the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	January, 2023	HSEQ Advisor
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	May 2022, 2023	Marketing Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	May 27 – June 3 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	<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.	May 27 – June 3 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May 27 – June 3 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore sponsorship opportunities to support local indigenous community groups or sporting teams.	April, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.	May, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	June, 2022	Project Administrator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	August, 2022	Project Administrator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	April, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with Reconciliation WA's RAP Reconciliation Industry Network Groups (RINGS) to form collaborative relationships and learning opportunities from other organisations committed to advancing reconciliation.	October, 2022	Project & Estimtion Costing Officer
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilise our social media platforms to share our commitment to reconciliation and encourage reconciliation actions to our network.	April, 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	January, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<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, 2023	Workshop Supervisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	April, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	May, 2023	HSEQ Advisor

RESPECT

Vertech Group values respect and the importance of building respectful relationships in all our business activities and partnerships. It is important this encapsulates respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and knowledge, to build both an understanding of First Nations peoples experiences, and to support equality and unity throughout our business and external activities. In our organisation, this built respect will contribute to the creation of a positive and productive workplace environment for staff of all backgrounds as well as supporting the retention of First Nations staff. These efforts will also be vital in equipping our staff with the understanding and confidence to engage with First Nations stakeholders and clients respectfully, to generate greater outcomes for diversity in our business activities.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
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.	April, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<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. External person comes in to help us focus.	July, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	September, 2023	HSEQ Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide opportunities for RAP Team members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	July, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop cultural learning and engagement opportunities for our regional offices, including Darwin and Karratha, to ensure reconciliation actions are consistent and effective throughout Australia, with a specific focus on the remote Aboriginal communities in those areas.	January, 2023	HSEQ Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Investigate local cultural immersion opportunities for staff.	March, 2023	HSEQ Advisor



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
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	May, 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	June, 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	<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.	July, 2022	Graduate Engineer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	April, 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feature First Nations artwork and artist details in office reception to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork and artist.	April 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design and update email signature to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and our commitment to reconciliation	April 2022	Marketing Coordinator
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.	July, 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	June, 2022, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July, 2022, 2023	Project Estimation & Costings Officer

OPPORTUNITIES

Vertech Group believe supporting opportunities for people of all cultures including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is vital to creating a diverse and inclusive organisation where culture is understood, valued, and supported. Building these opportunities can contribute to greater staff retention allowing us to see benefits of long-term working relationships, as well as greater diversity in the perspectives and skills of our workforce. Backed through recruitment, development opportunities, and procurement diversity, Vertech Group are committed to improving opportunities within and around our business activities to support economic and social outcomes.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
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.	April, 2022	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	May, 2022	Supply Chain Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June, 2022	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advertise job vacancies to reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders effectively.	July, 2022	Business Services Coordinator
	<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.	October, 2022	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce	February, 2023	Business Services Coordinator



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	June, 2022	Supply Chain Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Investigate Supply Nation membership.	April, 2022	Supply Chain Manager
	<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.	October, 2022	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and service from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July, 2022	Supply Chain Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	April, 2023	Supply Chain Manager
Develop an Indigenous Trainee Program to provide a pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop within our industry and organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on the development and implementation of a First Nations Trainee Program.	June, 2022	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement a First Nations Trainee Program within the business.	January, 2023	Business Services Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Liaise with relevant schools and First Nations employment bodies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples interested in the program.	January, 2023	Business Services Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitor and review program twice per year after its implementation.	June 2023 January 2024	Business Services Manager

GOVERNANCE



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	April, 2023	Marketing Coordinator
	• Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February, 2022	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	• Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	April 2022, 2023, 2024 July 2022, 2023 October 2022, 2023 January 2023, 2024	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	April, 2022 January 2023, 2024	Marketing Coordinator
	• Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	January, 2022, 2023, 2024	Business Services Coordinator
	• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Janaury, 2022, 2023, 2024	Project Estimation & Costings Officer
	• Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	April, 2023	Business Services Coordinator

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	May, 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	• Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	June, 2022, 2023 September 2022, 2023 December 2022, 2023 March 2023, 2024	Marketing Coordinator
	• Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	December, 2022, 2023	Graduate Engineer
	• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's Biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2022	Marketing Coordinator
	• 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 correspondence.	June 2022, 2023	Marketing Coordinator
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2022, 2023	Marketing Coordinator
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP	April 2024	Marketing Coordinator
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	• Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	October, 2023	Marketing Coordinator



For public enquiries about our RAP, please contact:

Paul Lavender

Business Services Manager

P: +61 (8) 6168 7600

E: Paul.Lavender@vertechgroup.com.au

