

GeelongPort 2024 Reconciliation Action Plan

Highlights, Challenges and Learnings

GeelongPort's vision for Reconciliation is a unified Australia that deeply understands, values and appreciates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and connection to country.

We know that through our role as a key global business embedded in the Geelong community, we have a significant voice to lead, advocate, and engage our teams, customers and the broader community about the importance of reconciliation.

In 2024 we proudly advanced our commitment to reconciliation by delivering key initiatives as outlined in the GeelongPort Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Some of the key highlights include:

- Engagement of Dr. David Rowe to undertake cultural research on places of significance. This work is integral to highlighting the importance of truth telling in acknowledging the past, building understanding and promoting healing.
- Strong and continued support from leadership for our Reconciliation Action Plan. This leadership commitment fosters a culture of respect and collaboration, empowering the Reconciliation Working Group to implement initiatives that drive progress toward our reconciliation goals.

- Proudly joining as a sponsor of the inaugural Geelong Aboriginal Employment Expo. This initiative fosters connections with our local community and aligns with our goal of providing employment opportunities and pathways to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Commemorating Reconciliation week as an organisation. Staff across GeelongPort attended the Journey on Wadawurrung Country exhibition in Torquay curated by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- Celebrating the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during NAIDOC week by arranging an exclusive showing of Wadawurrung artist Dr Deanne Gilson's artwork at the National Wool Museum for all GeelongPort staff, and by renaming ourselves as DjilangPort for the week, honouring the traditional Wadawurrung name of our city.
- Sponsorship of the Pilk Purriyn truth telling event on January 26. Truth-telling plays a pivotal role in the journey toward healing and reconciliation. It provides an opportunity to acknowledge and understand the stories of the past, fostering deeper respect and connection within our communities.

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- Commissioning a mural on the GeelongPort security hut at Corio Quay North by Aboriginal Artist Nikki McKenzie. The artwork tells the story of the beautiful Corio Bay and its surrounds, and was custom-designed and created by Nikki specifically for GeelongPort.
- Became members of the Geelong Ministerial Taskforce for Aboriginal Employment. The taskforce brings together senior Aboriginal, community, public and private sector leaders to drive positive change in the Geelong region.

These achievements reflect our dedication to fostering stronger relationships, respect and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

While 2024 saw many significant achievements under our Reconciliation Action Plan, the journey was not without its challenges. These challenges provided valuable opportunities for reflection and growth, helping us identify areas for improvement.

By listening to feedback and learning from experience, these insights will guide us as we continue on the path to reconciliation and will drive the direction of future GeelongPort Reconciliation Action Plans.

Some of the learnings we have identified are:

- We set an ambitious goal with a significant number of RAP actions to deliver within a 24 month timeframe. When developing our Innovate RAP in 2023, we were unaware that actions could be distributed across multiple RAPs.

- Limited understanding of the due diligence assessment process undertaken by Traditional Owners for large-scale projects (such as precinct renaming) has led to delays in our proposed timings.
- Engaging frontline workers in NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week events proved challenging due to rotating rosters and shift work. To address this, we have planned multiple events to commemorate these weeks in 2025, ensuring wider participation.
- Upon reflection, while we clearly identified and articulated our Reconciliation objectives, there's an exciting opportunity to focus more thoroughly on how these can be achieved.

The final Reconciliation Working Group workshop for 2024 was a reflective session led by Marsha Uphill of Arranyinha, an Aboriginal owned and operated organisation that focuses on strategic planning and systems change.

This workshop established a clear set of priorities for the second year of our Innovate RAP in 2025, leaving all Reconciliation Working Group Members inspired and motivated to drive meaningful actions and initiatives in the year ahead.