

# FIRST NATIONS ACTION PLAN

2021-2023

Approved by Law Society Council 31 March 2021

[lawsocietywa.asn.au](http://lawsocietywa.asn.au)

## Chief Executive Officer Message

The Law Society of Western Australia (the Law Society) is the peak professional association for lawyers in Western Australia. Established in 1927, the Law Society is a not-for-profit association dedicated to the representation of its members and the enhancement of the legal profession through being a respected leader and advocate on law reform, access to justice and the rule of law.

The Law Society is widely acknowledged by the legal profession, the community and the Government as the 'voice' of the legal profession in Western Australia.

The Law Society is privileged to have taken part in Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program. The Society had a *Reflect* RAP in place between 2015 - 2016 and a *Innovate* RAP in place from 2017 - 2019.

That journey has been an edifying and valuable learning experience for the Law Society. We have made and maintained relationships, which has enabled the Law Society to undertake more informed work in indigenous legal issues.

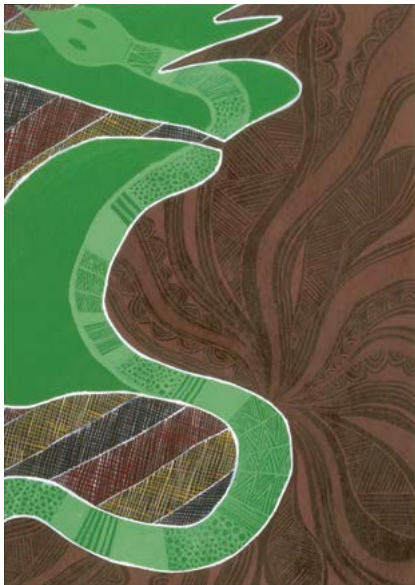
Going forward the opportunity to affect change through raising awareness of our commitment to reconciliation across the organisation will now be guided by this First Nations Action Plan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the letters 'DL' followed by a period and a flourish underneath.

David Price  
Chief Executive Officer  
April 2021

Strategy	Deliverables	Deliverables	Timeline
Indigenous Legal Issues Committee	Hold bi-monthly committee meetings.	Advocacy and Professional Development	Ongoing bi-monthly
	Identify and pursue priority areas (access to justice, incarceration rates, domestic and family and violence, cultural heritage) for proactive advocacy effort.	Advocacy and Professional Development	Ongoing
Reconciliation Networking and Events	Organise at least one internal event for National Reconciliation Week each year.	Marketing, Business Development and Community Engagement	Annually
Cultural Awareness Training	Provide face-to-face cultural competency and awareness training, as required for all Law Society staff and the members of the Law Society Council to undertake.	Advocacy and Professional Development	Ongoing
Mentoring	Continue to offer, subject to funding, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Law Student Mentoring Programme.	Advocacy and Professional Development	Ongoing
Cultural Calendar	Cultural calendar of key cultural dates communicated internally and throughout the legal profession	Working Group	Annually
Promotion of First Nations solicitors and First Nations Legal students	First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Students articles and profiles are published through publications and events	Corporate Services and Marketing, Business Development and Community Engagement	Ongoing

## ARTIST MESSAGE



### *Wagyl of the Derbarl Yerrigan*

*(Serpent of the Swan River)*

Marlia Miyalan Fatnowna  
Acrylic on museum quality paper

*The Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) is an extremely significant area in Perth. This painting depicts an aerial view of the river which embodies the presence of the Wagyl (the Dreaming serpent). It is known in Noongar creation stories that the Wagyl made the rivers, swamps, lakes and waterholes. The cross hatching patterns (raak) is a painting style from Arnhem Land which is representative of the artists identity within the work. Green in the Derbarl Yerrigan depicts new beginnings like that of new life in our flora and fauna during Djilba (spring time) as is this RAP for the Law Society of WA.*

**\*\*** The artist acknowledges they are not of ancestry to Wadjuk Noongar country and people and has therefore respectfully used their own ancestral painting styles as to not appropriate Noongar culture. The Derbarl Yerrigan and Wagyl have been used to symbolise Wadjuk Noongar country in Western Australia and the significance they hold in being included in the Law Society of Western Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan.

### About the Artist

*"I have grown up all over Australia. My ancestral country is in Far North Queensland, Kooki-mini and Kooki-langi country between Laura and Cooktown and have family connections in North East Arnhem Land, Yolngu country. I am also of Scottish and Solomon Islander ancestry. Growing up I did my schooling and lived in Perth, Arnhem Land and on the mid north coast of New South Wales. Moving around was fantastic, it taught me a lot about myself and my identity. In Perth, I studied a bachelor of arts majoring in communications and media and literature, and then went on to teach in the Indigenous Ways of Knowing major at UWA. Art is in my blood, it is a way I can express how I feel about growing up in two completely different worlds as a young Aboriginal person of today. I also just love the aesthetics of painting. I like to bring together many different painting styles that I have learnt throughout my life, challenging notions of what it means to be an 'Aboriginal artist'."*

**\*\***Reconciliation Action Plans are a step in acknowledging that everyone needs to make change in order to see change. Aboriginal people need to be acknowledged within every industry/area of society, especially in our legal systems in regard to fair and equal representation. I am honoured to be part of this project.



For more information about this  
FNAP please call (08) 9324 8600 or  
visit [lawsocietywa.asn.au](http://lawsocietywa.asn.au)

The Law  Society®  
— OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA —  
The voice of the legal profession in Western Australia