

# Launch of the Society's Reconciliation Action Plan



This month saw the launch of the Society's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The event at the Old Court House Law Museum was opened by Reverend Sealin Garlett. Reverend Garlett provided a Welcome to Country, before Society President, Matthew Keogh and Krista McMeeken, Convenor of the Society's Aboriginal Lawyers Committee, outlined the origins and vision of the Society's RAP.

Pete Dawson, Youth Campaign Co-ordinator for Recognise, provided an update on the campaign for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The event formalities were concluded with a song from Dr Richard Walley OAM, one of Australia's leading Aboriginal performers and writers, before attendees made their way to the foyer of the Supreme Court building for a reception.

The RAP concept has been developed by Reconciliation Australia, a non-government, not-for-profit foundation.

The aim of a RAP is to build respectful relationships and create sustainable opportunities for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. RAPs have been established by a wide range of community, corporate and government organisations. The Society joins the Law Council of Australia and its constituent bodies in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory in developing a RAP.

The Society's RAP Working Group has met monthly or bi-monthly over the past year to work on the RAP. Throughout this process, the RAP Working Group has consulted with the Society's Aboriginal Lawyers Committee for Aboriginal stakeholder engagement, a key aspect of developing a RAP. The Aboriginal Lawyers Committee has reviewed and made comments on drafts of the RAP as it was being developed. Reconciliation Australia has also provided guidance and assistance throughout the process. The Society's RAP has achieved endorsement

by, and registration with, Reconciliation Australia.

The RAP outlines the actions the Society will undertake to achieve its vision of a profession where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students, graduates and practitioners feel valued and respected. The RAP will also promote a community in which members understand and show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, through building relationships and laying the foundation for increased opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

A copy of the Society's RAP can be viewed on the Society's website or at the Reconciliation Australia website, where you can also find out more about how your firm or organisation can establish its own RAP.



## CAUGHT ON THE NIGHT:

1. Dr Richard Walley OAM; Matthew Keogh, President of the Society; Reverend Sealin Garlett; The Honourable Wayne Martin AC, Chief Justice of Western Australia; Krista McMeeken, Convenor of the Society's Aboriginal Lawyers Committee; and Hon Peter Collier; Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Electoral Affairs.
2. Reverend Sealin Garlett.

3. Attendees at the Society's Launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.
4. The Hon Justice Antony Siopis, Federal Court of Australia, and Raelene Webb QC, President, National Native Title Tribunal.
5. Adam Ebell; Craig Slater; and Greg McIntyre SC.
6. Dr Richard Walley OAM.
7. Mel Thomas and Joanna Blackley.