

## Reconciliation Action Plan

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group Terms of Reference

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February 2019

#### Background

In 2018, the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW was proud to add its voice to reconciliation through the publication of our Reconciliation Action Plan.

While we have had strong and enduring connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for many decades, we believe it is time to progress that connection through new means of conversation and cooperation. Under our Reconciliation Action Plan, the Society committed to listening to the guidance of Aboriginal people and communities on the best means to advance reconciliation in our organisation and the communities we serve. The establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory group is part of this commitment.

#### Purpose of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

The role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee is to support the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW to work well with Aboriginal people, communities and organisations towards a just and equitable society. The purpose of the Advisory Group is to:

- Provide strategic advice on matters relating to the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW's work towards reconciliation including guidance on ensuring:
  - An inclusive and respectful environment for staff, members and volunteers.
  - Our services are culturally appropriate.
  - The perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are embedded in our policy and advocacy work.
- Oversee our engagement activities and strategies.
- Inform the Society on matters of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Provide a source of cultural support and guidance for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

#### Reporting

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group will provide reports to the State Council via the Social Justice Advisory Committee.

#### Membership

The group will comprise up to seven members, and will include at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members. At least two members will be from regional and rural NSW, and at least three members will be women.

Membership of the Group is through invitation by the CEO, based on advice from the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, following selection from applicants who have submitted an Expression of Interest.

The usual term of membership will be two years. Each year following the initial two year period, half of the group will resign and Expressions of Interest advertised to find suitable replacements.

New members may be co-opted where a member resigns outside the usual term of service and/or where specific expertise is required.

### **Chair**

A Chair and Deputy Chair will be elected by members of the Advisory Group at its inaugural meeting, and each year following.

### **Meetings**

Meetings will be held at least 4 times per year and may be face-to-face and/or conducted electronically.

### **Guiding principles**

Members are to agree to:

- a) Work in a spirit of partnership towards the shared objective of a just and equitable society.
- b) Declare any conflicts of interest as they arise.
- c) Maintain confidentiality in relation to all information or data considered by the Group unless otherwise agreed.
- d) Refrain from making public comment on behalf of the Group unless asked to do so by the CEO or a delegate.

### **Review**

The Terms of Reference and membership of the Advisory Group will be reviewed annually.

### **Secretariat**

The Executive Secretariat will provide the Advisory Group's secretariat support.