

# COUNTRY ROAD GROUP

COUNTRY ROAD MIMCO POLITIX TRENER Y WITCHERY

## Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2022 – December 2023 (18 months)



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT





## Acknowledgement of Country

Country Road Group acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which our Support Centre, distribution centres and stores are located, Australia's First Nations people. We acknowledge the rights of First Nations people to their traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, and commit to working collaboratively and ethically to increase First Nations inclusion in our business and the Australian fashion and lifestyle industry.







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# Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes the Country Road Group to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

The Country Road Group joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables the Country Road Group to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Country Road Group, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**

Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# Our business

Country Road Group is one of Australia's largest specialty fashion retailers with a market leading position in the mid to upper tier of the segment. Comprising five iconic brands - Country Road, Mimco, Trenery, Witchery and Politix - be it modern Australian designs, urban sophistication or accessories with a quirk, each brand has its own inspiring story to tell.

The Group began in 1974 as a single brand - Country Road - a niche women's shirting business that has grown into Australia's first lifestyle brand renowned for stylish, high-quality apparel, accessories, and homeware. Woolworth Holdings Limited (South Africa) (WHL) secured a controlling interest in Country Road in 1998 and 6 years on Country Road was re-launched with a fresh modern identity.

In 2009, Trenery was founded for women and men who appreciate the beauty of simple, sophisticated collections that are modern in approach and classic in style. Three years later, Country Road acquired the Witchery Group, including the Witchery and Mimco retail brands with the strategic rationale of creating a large-scale specialty fashion group of complementary brands - and the Country Road Group was formed.

In September 2014, WHL acquired all the remaining shares in the Country Road Group and in 2016 Politix was added to the group portfolio.

The Country Road Group (CRG) is a subsidiary of WHL, which is headquartered in South Africa and listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. WHL also owns and operates David Jones (DJs), with some functions such as the People Function servicing both DJs and CRG.

The CRG operates 542 retail stores, as well as online sites, for five brands across Australia, New Zealand and South Africa: Country Road (CR), Mimco (MI), Politix (PO), Trenery (TR) and Witchery (WI). In addition, there are head office operations and the Omni Fulfilment Centre are located on First Nations lands, with additional 40 stores on the lands of the Maori peoples of New Zealand and 71 Stores in South Africa.

The CRG employs approximately 5,350 people, including 24 employees who identified as First Nations people in our 'Shape our Culture' employee engagement survey in 2022.





# Our RAP

## Why is your workplace developing a RAP?

As a group of iconic Australian brands, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the lands on which our stores are located, Australia's First Nations people. We recognise and embrace the role we play in working towards reconciliation and to influence the narrative with our employees, customers and communities. We acknowledge the right of First Nations people to their traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, and we commit to working collaboratively and ethically to increase First Nations inclusion in our business and the Australian fashion and lifestyle industry.

At CRG, our purpose is to bring the spirit of the Australian Lifestyle to every day and we see the opportunity for us to learn from First Nations peoples and grow as individuals and brands as a result. We recognise the potential benefits – to our business, customers and community – in bringing the richness of First Nations cultures, stories, designs and histories into focus.

CRG is in a unique position to contribute to reconciliation by connecting with people and communities through fashion, textiles and lifestyle. In particular, partnering with relevant community and educational organisations, industry bodies, artists and designers.

The CRG RAP will also form part of the business' sustainability strategy, the Good Business Journey (GBJ), and we are committed to building a better future. The GBJ2025 strategy includes a pillar 'Inclusive' and the RAP will be included as a key priority of the broader Inclusion strategy.





## How do you intend to approach implementing your RAP?

A RAP Working Group will be established to include representatives of the CRG brands, as well as relevant shared service roles. The Working Group will provide operational support for the implementation of the RAP across our businesses and will assist with the development and ongoing relationships with individuals and communities, leveraging our David Jones' (DJs) stakeholders and relationships as required. A member of the CRG Executive Committee will act as the program sponsor, providing guidance and support on the implementation on the RAP, as well as updates on business strategy developments that could impact RAP deliverables.

We will establish a First Nations Reference Group to provide guidance and leadership to our Working Group.

RAP deliverables will be incorporated into the GBJ2025 'Inclusive' roadmap for CRG, which will be measured and reported on, on a quarterly and yearly basis through the GBJ scorecard.

We will leverage the power of our brands and standing in the community to raise awareness about reconciliation and will connect our customers and employees with First Nations cultures, peoples and communities in a culturally sensitive manner.

We will ensure we reduce any barriers to First Nations peoples, customers, suppliers, designers, artisans working with our brands.





## Our partnerships/current activities

CRG has an ongoing relationship with Cox Inall Ridgeway who provide guidance and support on retainer. In addition, CR also has a direct relationship with the consulting group and often engages with Yatu Widders-Hunt through website features and via social media.

CR has partnered with DAAFF since 2020, supporting the Country to Couture runway and NIFAs. The winner of the NIFA fashion award is the recipient of a tailored 12 month mentoring program with the brand, which was Julie Shaw from MAARA Collective in 2020 and Denni Francisco from Ngali in 2021.

The CRG Non-Trade Procurement team has an ongoing relationship and membership with Supply Nation and has drafted a 'Supplier Diversity Policy which will be launched in 2022.

Plans are underway for National Reconciliation Week for employees to participant in a workshop hosted by Acknowledge This! to develop a personal Acknowledgement of Country, with further activities planned for an in-person event at head office Botanicca to celebrate NAIDOC Week.

CR will once again partner with DAAFF to support the Country to Couture runway and NIFAs in August this year.

The Country Road Group (CRG) is a subsidiary of WHL, which is headquartered in South Africa and listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. WHL also owns and operates David Jones (DJs), with some functions such as the People Function servicing both DJs and CRG.



# About the artwork

## Road back to Country

The symbology in the art speaks to our cultural connections to Country; which keeps us strong, sustained and maintained; Spiritually, Mentally, Emotionally and Physically.

Celebrating and honouring the landscape is much more than mother earth that we live, work, and play on; it is understanding the seasons, the sky, the stars, the sun, the moon, the airways, and the waterways. The environments that we find ourselves are a part of a bigger eco-system and it is imperative that we all know our role in caring for ourselves, community and Country.

The form of the art acknowledges our songlines; which informed our ceremonies, how we moved with the seasons, it informed our trade economy and shaped our languages and marriage unions and our songlines informed our walking tracks; which are now modern highways and roads across Australia. These patterns honour the ancient and new songlines and acknowledge the diverse tribal communities, clans and nations; each Country having their own knowledge-base, lore, history, connection, protocols and dreaming from that unique place.

The interwoven patterns also honours that we are part of a richer tapestry of human history and acknowledges that our connections extend beyond this place; our songlines now extend worldwide.

No matter where life take us, and what we encounter along the way;  
I hope that we can stay connected and grounded, and we can all take  
the road back to Country to connect, ground ourselves, heal and listen.

# About the artist

Dixon Patten (Bitja) is a proud Gunnai, Yorta Yorta, Gunditjmarra, Dhudhuroa man with bloodlines from Wemba Wemba, Barapa Barapa, Djab Wurrung, Wiradjuri, Yuin, Wodi Wodi, Wolgal, Monaro.

As an artist, designer, mentor, influencer and a strong community advocate, Dixon's artistic practice is informed through a strong cultural value that his family and community have imprinted into his mind, heart, and spirit.

His approach to his engagements is much bigger than an artistic visual; it is about the gifts and the influential shifts that creativity brings. Dixon's narratives often delve deep into familial history, often in celebration and exploration of culture and connection and his willingness to share and learn are informed by the art of Deep Listening, or in his native Yorta Yorta language 'Gulpa Ngawul'.

This practice has guided many of Dixon's expressions by uncovering the layers, exploring trauma, exploring grief, reclaiming culture, bridging gaps, being accountable, learning to understand and also challenge systems, influencing spaces and learning to celebrate self.

He takes his role as a storyteller seriously and feels humbled to continue this strong aspect of Aboriginal culture.





# Relationships

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Action 1.1</b> Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1.11	Establish new Indigenous Advisory Group to provide guidance and leadership to our Working Group.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.12	Strengthen existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relationships; Supply Nation, DAAFF, Cox Inall Ridgeway.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.13	Develop a list of key First Nations peoples, communities and organisations within our local areas or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.	By Jul 2023	Head of Sustainability
<b>Action 1.2</b> Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	1.21	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023	Communications Manager, CRG
	1.22	Continue to invite employees to participate in opportunities at Botanica (Head office) and through Workplace (online platform) for National Reconciliation Week.	May / Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.23	Host Internal National Reconciliation Week event.	May / Jun 2023	Communications Manager, CRG
	1.24	RAP Working Group and Allyship members to participate in an external NRW event and encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May / Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.25	RAP Working Group to work with Allyship group to find in store/regional champions to promote NRW Activities.	By Apr 2023	GM, Learning and Organisational Development

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Action 1.3</b> Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	1.31	Announce and celebrate our commitment to reconciliation with our employees, potentially through a launch event.	By Jul 2023	CRG CEO
	1.32	Develop and implement a communications plan to engage and inform key stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	By Dec 2022	Communications Manager, CRG
	1.33	Highlight RAP implementation in internal communication channels discussing actions achieved and deliverables for that quarter.	From Aug 2022	Communications Manager, CRG
	1.34	Continue to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart through our communications.	By Dec 2023	CRG CEO
	1.35	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	By Sep 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.36	Working Group to undertake review to map stakeholders and identify new opportunities to partner with individuals (ie Elders) and community organisations.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.37	Develop an external stakeholder engagement plan of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.	By Jul 2023	Head of Sustainability
<b>Action 1.4</b> Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	1.41	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	By Aug 2023	Head of Sustainability
	1.42	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	By Aug 2023	GM, People





# Respect

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Action 2.1</b> Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	2.11	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	By Jul 2023	Head of Sustainability
	2.12	Provide cultural awareness training for all CRG EXCO, with further training to be provided brands teams and shared services.	By Mar 2023	GM, Learning and Organisational Development
	2.13	Provide training on Guidelines for Working with Aboriginal Artists for relevant teams.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	2.14	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	By Dec 2023	GM, Learning and Organisational Development
<b>Action 2.2</b> Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	2.21	Identify Land Councils and other organisations that represent First Nations communities where are stores and offices are located.	By Dec 2023	Head of Sustainability
	2.22	Engage with First Nations employees and community groups to compile a list of key contacts in First Nations bodies.	By Dec 2023	Head of Sustainability
	2.23	Meet with First Nations stakeholders to develop guiding principles for engagement.	By Dec 2023	GM Learning and Organisational Development
	2.24	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	By Dec 2023	Head of Sustainability

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
	2.26	Incorporate Acknowledgement of Country in email signatures, website acknowledgement, in social media strategies, in store informally or in formal ways such as plaques.	From Jul 2022	Communications Manager, CRG
	2.27	Display an Acknowledgment of Country and artwork in Botanicca head office.	From Jul 2022	Head of Sustainability
<b>Action 2.3</b> Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	2.31	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	Jul 2022, 2023	Communications Manager, CRG
	2.32	Integrate NAIDOC week into internal communications calendar that promotes events of cultural significance.	Jul 2022, 2023	Communications Manager, CRG
	2.33	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	Jul 2022, 2023	Head of Sustainability
	2.34	RAP Working Group and Allyship to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Jul 2022, 2023	Head of Sustainability



# Opportunities

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Action 3.1</b> Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	3.11	Develop a business case for First Nations employment approach within our organisation.	By Dec 2023	GM Learning and Organisational Development
	3.12	Build understanding of First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	By Dec 2023	GM Learning and Organisational Development
	3.13	Build Relationships with First Nations recruitment agencies.	By Dec 2023	GM Learning and Organisational Development
<b>Action 3.2</b> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	3.21	Finalise and rollout Non-Trade Procurement Supplier Diversity Policy.	By May 2023	Head of NTP
	3.22	Continue Supply Nation membership.	By May 2023	Head of NTP
	3.23	Explore opportunities to expand existing CRG community partners that may have programs focussed on First Nations peoples, eg Landcare, Australian Red Cross etc.	From Feb 2023	Head of Sustainability





# Governance

Action	Deliverables		Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Action 4.1</b> Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	4.11	Formalise the RWG to govern RAP implementation.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	4.12	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	By Jun 2023	Head of Sustainability
	4.13	Establish First Nations representation on the RWG, or links to proposed First Nations Reference Group.	By Jul 2023	Head of Sustainability
<b>Action 4.2</b> Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	4.21	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	By Mar 2023	Head of Sustainability
	4.22	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	From Aug 2022	CRG CEO
	4.23	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	From Feb 2023	Head of Sustainability
	4.24	RAP commitments (KPIs) to be built into the CRG GBJ scorecard, to embed accountability and measure and report on progress.	30 Sep 2022 & 2023	CRG CEO
<b>Action 4.3</b> Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	4.31	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep 2022 & 2023	Head of Sustainability
	4.32	Report progress of RAP initiatives as part of CRG's annual and GBJ reporting.	30 Sep 2022 & 2023	Head of Sustainability
<b>Action 4.4</b> Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	4.41	Review our RAP achievements and register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	By Sep 2023	Head of Sustainability

### Contact details

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