ACTCOSS Statement of Commitment

Our Journey thus Far
ACTCOSS acknowledges the traditional owners of the land, and respectfully continues to recognise their contribution to society in all staff meetings, forums, training opportunities and seminars.

We believe that in order to provide culturally appropriate services, community organisations must develop their ability to be inclusive, recruit and sustain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and participate in networks which reach out into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

We employ two Aboriginal workers within our staff team who deliver the ACTCOSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sector Development Project, and support their work colleagues to improve cultural knowledge and understanding in our work within the community sector.

We continue to be a reconciliation partner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ACTCOSS has undertaken work with the community sector on issues of reconciliation and cultural understanding.

We have a long and active commitment to social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including:

- enabling access to alcohol and drug services in the 1980's for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- writing submissions;
- organising and facilitating forums and a conference on the importance of reconciliation in the 1990's;
- amending our constitution in 1996 to reflect our commitment to reconciliation; and
- drafting a seven point "Pledge for Reconciliation" in 2002 which was renewed in 2005 and 2009.

The development of our Reconciliation Action Plan will affirm our existing reconciliation practices and provide a process for reviewing how we can further add value to reconciliation. We feel this is another positive step in our journey towards true reconciliation, as we recognise the need to continue to support and participate in reconciliation within our community and across the ACT.

Statement of Commitment
ACTCOSS pledges to work and advocate for recognition of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures including land-rights and

language, and to press for this recognition and respect to be a fundamental part of wider ACT society. Having regard to its special expertise and role, ACTCOSS also pledges to work and advocate for the elimination of disadvantage, poverty and discrimination faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the ACT.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) will assist in the strengthening of a more inclusive and culturally enriched society, benefitting the well-being of our members, stakeholders and the community.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan
ACTCOSS commits to developing a RAP by mid May 2010.

Areas for Action will include:

- A cultural self-assessment of ACTCOSS;
- Evaluate and review organisational policies and procedures to ensure they appropriately support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and stakeholders;
- Facilitate and encourage greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership and engagement;
- Strengthen collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs;
- Increase opportunities for ACTCOSS to work more closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- Formalise the integration of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program with the work of the organisation; and
- Any other actions determined by the RAP working group.

Signed

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Roslyn Dundas
Director

Dated
13/10/2009