

# Heritage, Environment & Repatriation



## Capability Statement



“ BRINGING MEANINGFUL  
RECONCILIATION OF THE  
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE ”



**RAW**  
GROUP

**RAW** SA



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# Executive Summary

To prosper, the Kurna People who are the original custodians of the Greater Adelaide region first need; economic participation (skills, jobs, business enterprises) in land management, heritage mitigation and repatriation. Economic participation underpins improved health and wellbeing, education, cultural heritage, a sense of connection to country and the passing on of traditional knowledge to future generations.

An Aboriginal person who has a job, has the opportunity to better provide for their family. Their children will be healthier and have the ability to gain a higher education. They in turn, will have a greater opportunity to obtain long term sustainable employment and career progression.

An Aboriginal person who has a job working on country, in heritage or repatriation will:

- Strengthen their connection to country
- Benefit from having traditional knowledge passed on to them by their Elders, and crucially;
- Retain their sense of cultural belonging

Aboriginal land management practices are now being recognised as a crucial element to ensuring ecological sustainability.



### Jeffrey Newchurch

- Kurna Leader // Repatriation Specialist
- Chairperson Kurna Yerta

2021 is the start of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and four key areas of focus have been set in place: healthy soils, our relationship with nature (nature connectedness), Indigenous culture and knowledge and human health.

This presents an opportunity to bring together; partnerships to support Closing the Gap, Aboriginal employment, Aboriginal land management practices, biodiversity and ecological sustainability.

Kurna Land traverses along the coast from Snowtown and bordering Cape Jervis. The biodiversity and ecological restoration of these lands is therefore crucial to the Greater Adelaide area, to the Mt Lofty Ranges and the more agricultural productive regions of the South Australia.



# Who is RAWsa?

RAWsa is a 100% Aboriginal owned and managed South Australian company, created to provide a solution based commercially competitive service that enhances both Aboriginal economic and workforce participation in South Australia.

RAWsa prides itself on being an employer of choice for traditional owner groups, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

RAWsa is a proud member of the RAW Group of Companies, the Group combined provides a national framework of award winning 'best practice' Aboriginal economic and workplace solutions.

“ CHANGING LIVES BY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE IS OUR ETHOS. ”





RAWsa's vision is to provide logical structure, through proven frameworks, that are culturally sensitive yet commercially responsive. RAWsa provides this via private corporate governance that delivers mutually agreed objectives for all our likeminded business partners.

“ SAFETY, EITHER PHYSICAL OR CULTURAL, IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY. ”

RAWsa provides opportunities for likeminded businesses to connect and participate across multiple activity clusters, which are driven by our strategic direction through our Business and Engagement Charters.

“ RAWSA PROVIDES CULTURAL SECURITY, ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND A REAL SENSE OF BELONGING BY ACTIVELY WORKING WITH LIKEMINDED CORPORATE PARTNERS. ”



# Cultural Safety Principles

## Partnerships



Engage in genuine dialogue and authentic relationships.

## Personal Knowledge



Cultural affirmation and identity.

## Positive Purpose



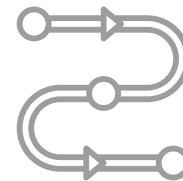
Deliver real and mutual benefits and be accountable.

## Protocols



Both-way learning and apply the FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent) guidelines.

## Processes



Confirm equity and dignity for all and create mechanisms for effective cultural systems

## Cultural Safety Framework Definitions:

- Equity is defined as fairness and independence towards all concerned, based on the principles of mutual respect and cultural security
- It implies giving as much advantage, consideration to one party as it is given to another.
- Responsibility is defined as creating one's own promise or circumstances that one must fulfil, and which has a consequence of behaviour or action.
- Results is defined as outcomes related after a period of time.





Cultural safety is about institutionalising cultural knowledge and managing the dynamics of differences between staff, clients and stakeholder expectations by:

- Committing to continuous improvement and reinforcing processes to strengthen respect for culture, knowledge, experience and obligations.
- Applying cultural respect through emotional intelligence.
- Valuing cultural diversity through appreciating self and others.
- Working with stakeholders on addressing the power imbalance within project and program resources.
- Clearly defining pathways of cultural sensitivity by working with people in a culturally respectful manner.
- Acting in accordance with legislation and policies of anti-racism, non-discrimination, OHSW and cultural protocols.

The Strategy demonstrates cultural safety through the following strategies:

- Staff and partners of the strategy will have a clear stance on cultural respect, anti-racism and non-discrimination, two-way learning and education.
- Our staff conduct will be clear regarding anti-racism and non-discrimination.
- Responding to racist and discriminatory behaviour and act on breaches.
- Applying a cultural safety risk assessment.
- Establish policy procedures and mechanisms for action to address racist, discriminatory and lateral violence behaviours and attitudes.

In order to achieve these, we will:

- Protect the rights of staff, clients and stakeholders
- Counteract the causes and work to minimise the effects of institutionalised racism in the workplace policies and project procedures
- Respond to prevent lateral violence
- Ensure that everyone in the workplace understands and fulfils their responsibilities to implement a culturally safe environment
- Implementation of Cultural awareness, Cultural respect and sensitivity within the working environments and its effects.



# Heritage Services

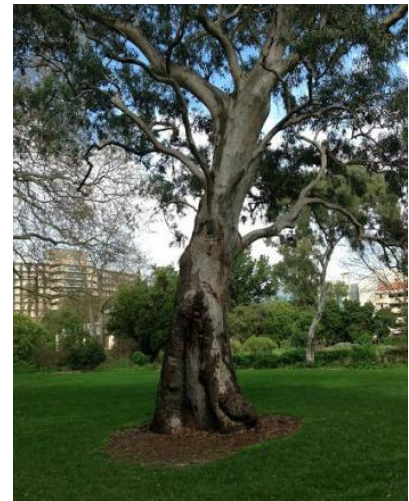
The South Australian Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 (AHA) prescribes for the discovery, protection and preservation of Aboriginal sites, objects and remains. Aboriginal sites are of immense cultural, scientific, educational and historical interest and provide Aboriginal people with a crucial link to their past and present culture.

Cultural heritage refers to evidence preservation of human occupation - (scar trees, artefacts, fireplaces, middens etc) and the manifestation of spiritual ancestors in the landscape.

RAWsa provides integral Heritage Mitigation Services in partnership with the Kurna Nation and Kurna Native Title Peak Bodies. The ability to work in this manner enhances the opportunities to build Kurna Nations capability through strengthened operational and management structures into the future.

By using on ground operational competencies to train and upskill Aboriginal people while learning from their Elders improves cultural knowledge and understanding of country. It also provides the opportunity to utilise and include other agencies involved in Kurna's governance and leadership.





Co-ordination and management of Cultural Heritage Management Plans across local state and federal government departments allowing a more adaptable and accepted model approach for cultural heritage maximising the best tools as an enabler for empowerment, preservation and protection of Aboriginal heritage.

Our Cultural Engagement team is unrivalled in its ability to deal with the complex nature of Aboriginal Heritage Site services in order to achieve results that satisfy all stakeholders, namely, local Aboriginal Heritage Groups and the community.

We achieve this by:

- Negotiating and preparing the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).
- Undertaking Site Inspections including Archaeological and Anthropological.
- Undertaking Cultural Heritage monitoring services.
- Undertaking Repatriation Services.
- Preparing Cultural Awareness strategies.
- Undertaking Compliance and Auditing Heritage services.
- Heritage Land Management and Maintenance services.
- Undertaking Site Signage strategies.
- Reviewing open space management and maintenance of heritage sites including parklands, reserves, bird sanctuaries and public spaces.

# Environment Services

Kurna's environmental teamwork with governments, mainstream industry and research institutions aligns traditional knowledge with current and emerging research and practices. This will deliver improved Kurna land management practices including revegetation and water way management providing biodiversity and ecological restoration adapted for climate change. It also raises a greater community awareness of our connection to country, the preservation of traditional knowledge and continuation of culture that underpins Kurna's wellbeing.

- Civil Works – walkways, retaining walls, land contouring
- Hard landscaping – boardwalks, fencing, park furniture, signage, lighting
- Soft landscaping – topsoil cultivation, planting, hydroseeding
- Biodiversity and ecological revegetation
- Weed management
- Culture based open space development
- Aboriginal employment and enterprise formation with consequential improvements in health, education and wellbeing
- Skilling Aboriginal people in the design and application of emerging technologies connected to land management
- Culturally aware restoration of sensitive and important land and water sites
- Culturally aware development of new land sites and urban developments
- Document how traditional and current knowledge and practices can be integrated
- Greater community appreciation of connection to country and Aboriginal culture and knowledge
- In using this approach of inclusiveness, it allows both Kurna and the broader Aboriginal community to work towards improving processes around trauma and healing





# Repatriation Services

Repatriation of Kurna human remains is a hallmark of a civilised society. Repatriation of soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice at war has been undertaken for many years to 'once and for all' bring an end to grief and loss. Repatriation of Indigenous human remains has been practised in a number of countries for some years.

In Australia, the Commonwealth and some states have enacted legislation and established formal bodies to facilitate Kurna repatriation as is its right. The intent is to help create justice, healing, and reconciliation.

The return to country of Kurna ancestral remains and sacred objects held in museums and other places or unearthed during physical works must be conducted by Kurna people, namely the Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC), who possess the requisite knowledge and have a spiritual connection to their ancestors.

In today's modern times, burial sites of Aboriginal people are still being desecrated, which is disturbing for our community because of harmful approaches to dealing with repatriation of Aboriginal remains.



Reference: Painting of a traditional Kurna warrior named Kadlitpinna.

Kurna has commenced its repatriation journey by coming together with Government, local councils, private sector and community groups, to form a strengthened foundation that allows Kurna to present opportunities as an enabler for Aboriginal people to participate in decision making and self-directed controls.

In principle, Kurna using this foundation will be an equal player in decision making.

Repatriation requires considerable planning and preparation including, identification of remains, transport, agreements with land holders and Government agencies. Cultural practices and ceremonies are required before and after the burial and the ongoing care of the burial sites. This must all be attended to under the direction of Traditional Owners to ensure all ancestral remains are at rest and spiritual healing of community trauma is achieved.

- Facilitate repatriation processes in collaboration with traditional owners, State Government and other bodies
- Carry out funded physical works required as a part of the repatriation process
- Advocate for ongoing funding required to complete repatriations
- Advocate for any legislative and policy changes to embed Indigenous repatriation in the practice of governments
- Manage the making of historical records of all repatriations carried out.
- Manage the placement of stories and historical records at repatriation sites for wider community access
- Cultural Heritage Monitoring of projects that involve land disturbance to identify human remains or other objects
- Implementation of formal protocols for identification of remains and re-burials
- Manage the conduct of related ceremonies and other practices

# Solutions Driven Services

RAWsa has proven best practice in the protection, preservation and mitigation strategies of heritage, environment and repatriation services.

RAWsa has experience in the management of over 100 Cultural Heritage Management Plans across local, state and federal government agencies, providing culturally sensitive yet commercially sound solutions including monitoring, internal/external training and advisory services across Heritage, Environment and Repatriation.

Acting primarily as a Secretariat service for Traditional Owner groups provides the community corporate governance around strategies to engage and participate in projects undertaken on their Land. This Secretariat service also mitigates the project risks around unforeseen occurrences. RAWsa's pro-active solution-based approach has provided outstanding results for our likeminded clients.

Having such established partnerships plays a critical role in enabling sustainable work placements that provide life changing impacts not only for individuals but in households across the state.

RAWsa prides itself on its services and commitment to, and for, increased workforce participation for Aboriginal jobseekers, through providing:

- Opportunities for long-term economic independence for both Aboriginal people and their communities
- Effective and culturally aware employment and training within the workplace
- Best practice project management and service delivery equipping RAWsa to be an employer of choice
- Transparency in its decision-making with partners, clients, staff and the broader community







# Case Studies

## ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL BIRD SANCTUARY NATIONAL PARK - WINAITYINAITYI PANGKARA

*(Kurna language meaning Country belonging to all birds) – a great example of partnerships, traditional owners, industry, government, and community generally working towards Aboriginal employment equality.*

The Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary is a natural sanctuary that stretches across an impressive 60km of Adelaide's northern coastline. Mangrove-lined coast, unique samphire and saltmarsh plant communities, coastal dune systems and artificially made salt ponds create a mosaic of habitats that support resident and migratory shorebirds, bush birds and several other species of fauna and flora. The Bird Sanctuary is a known wildlife haven, in particular, for migratory shorebirds. A diverse range of land uses such as traditional land practices, and other uses such as salt production, horticulture, farming, recreation, and manufacturing have co-existed alongside conservation in the landscape for many years.

Jeffrey Newchurch, Kurna and Narrunga Elder, recognised this stating:

“In the past our ancestors lived on this Country, knowing the storyline, song and the dance that has been handed down from generation to generation. You'll see and know the formation of the land, trees, creeks, it's all got connections that is all spiritually important to the Aboriginal people, tradition and customs.”



Through the collaborative work undertaken, there are benefits for all. In particular, benefits for the Kurna people have included:

- Direct employment opportunities working on country
- Opportunities for empowerment of the Kurna people to build cultural capacity through employment, training, youth leadership programs, mentoring and cultural exchange programs
- Establishment of a site for use as a 'place of belonging' within the park creating a Kurna traditional zone that facilitates the continuation of traditional practices and activities
- Systematic review of interpretive park information, including signage, thereby providing ongoing employment opportunities

## PROJECTS DELIVERED

- Bucklands Park Burial Site
- Gepps Cross Burial Site
- Southern Expressway Burial Project
- Persic St Burial Project
- Chrisities Creek Burial Project
- Lochiel Park Burial Project
- RAAF Edinburgh Burial Project
- Mawson Lakes Burial Project
- Williamstown Burial Project
- Greenfields Burial Project
- Yankalilla Burial Project
- Kingbourne Rd Burial Project
- Symmes Rd Burial Project
- International Bird Sanctuary
- CHMP for AGL Battery Install
- Willunga Fault line Survey
- WM Hunt Reserve Survey
- CHMP for Birkenhead Naval reserve, Largs North Reserve, Agnes Street Detention Basin and Dover Street Reserve
- CHMP for Riverlea Park
- CHMP for Marion Coastal Walk Upgrade
- CHMP for Port Wakefield Highway Duplication
- CHMP for Park Lands Stormwater Management Works





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