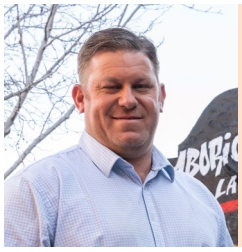
Building on Country

Our journey working together for communities



A MESSAGE FROM OUR
Head of Indigenous Affairs

Welcome to the second edition of Building on Country.

As we recognise Indigenous Business Month and this year's theme, Local & Connected, it's a timely opportunity to reflect on what connection looks like in practice across Laing O'Rourke: through the businesses we engage, the relationships we build, the experiences our people participate in and the work happening across our projects and communities.

Throughout this edition, we share some of those stories. We recognise the activities our people and projects have been involved in, celebrate individuals and teams receiving recognition for their contributions, and highlight the partnerships helping us create meaningful opportunities and stronger connections with First Nations businesses and communities.

Indigenous procurement continues to be an important part of this work. In FY26, Laing O'Rourke invested more than $91.9 million with 119 Indigenous businesses, including $68.5 million with 91 Supply Nation Registered or Certified suppliers.

These figures are significant, but their real value is in the stories that sit behind them. Every opportunity to engage an Indigenous business can help strengthen capability, support economic participation and create employment and development opportunities within communities. Importantly, these outcomes are built through relationships, collaboration and a commitment to creating value beyond the life of any one project.

That is what makes the 'Local & Connected' theme particularly relevant. Meaningful progress happens when we take the time to build genuine relationships locally, connect businesses and people with opportunities, listen and learn from one another, and continue those relationships long term.

As I reflected in our first edition, reconciliation is a shared responsibility. The stories in this edition demonstrate the different ways that responsibility can come to life, from procurement and employment to learning, cultural engagement and stronger partnerships.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the work and relationships behind these stories. I hope they encourage us all to keep listening, learning and looking for ways to create meaningful and lasting impact together.

Mark Beetson (Kabi Kabi/Wiradjuri)
Head of Indigenous Affairs
Laing O'Rourke

Laing O'Rourke acknowledges and understands that no matter where we are across this nation, we are living and working on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

We value and respect the rich traditions, storytelling, diverse culture and the deep connections they have to Country. The local knowledge held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is critical to the sustainability and health of the land, and we are committed to building a brighter future together.

A partnership built on a shared commitment to growth and safety

When Countryman launched in 2019 with just five core customers, Laing O'Rourke became its first Tier 1 customer. What began as an early supplier relationship has since grown into a strong national partnership, built on trust, continuous improvement and a shared commitment to keeping people safe.

Beginning around the challenges of COVID-19, Countryman adapted quickly to changing workplace and safety requirements. Through continued opportunities with Laing O'Rourke, the business has grown alongside us, developing a deeper understanding of our projects and evolving its products and services to support the needs of our people.

From Perth metropolitan projects to supporting projects nationally, Countryman has continued to build its capability across construction, rail and mining. As our requirements have evolved, so too has Countryman, adapting its offering to meet different project, state and compliance needs while keeping its commitment to safety, culture, and client service at the centre of its business.

Their success is also reflected in their growth from operating out of a shipping container to managing a warehouse of stock, with new branding and a website on the horizon.

To date, Laing O'Rourke has spent $1.9 million with Countryman across 34 projects nationally. More than a procurement achievement, it celebrates a partnership that has grown with our business, strengthened Aboriginal business capability and continues to support better, safer outcomes for our people.

Countryman Managing Director, Lawrence Hillary has shared, "*Business relationships like all relationships, thrive when everyone in those relationships feels valued, we certainly value Laing O'Rourke as a customer and even more so feel valued, they have consistently put faith in our ability to service their safety requirements over numerous projects over a number of years*".





Creating clear pathways

In case you missed it…

Behind every successful industry partnership are people committed to working together to create opportunities and shared outcomes. Earlier this year, Supply Nation shared the story of our partnership with Kany Bidi, highlighting how collaboration is supporting employment, capability development and positive long-term outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

Thank you to Supply Nation for sharing the story and to Kany Bidi for their ongoing partnership.

Read the full article here.

Coming together for National Reconciliation Week at RAAF Darwin



As part of National Reconciliation Week, the RAAF Darwin MTR project team participated in a Saltwater Welcome to Country, coordinated by RAAF Darwin Indigenous Liaison Officer, Wilhelm Lauenstein. The Saltwater Welcome is a traditional Larrakia ceremony that welcomes visitors onto Country, strengthens connections to place, and provides cultural protection and safe passage.

Held at East Point, the event brought together RAAF personnel and project team members for a morning of connection, learning, and reflection. The ceremony, led by local Larrakia man Trent Lee, included a demonstration of traditional spear throwing on the beach.

The team also joined the weekly RAAF Darwin 5km run/walk, with a coffee van providing a welcome refreshment after the morning's activities. The event was a valuable opportunity to celebrate National Reconciliation Week, deepen cultural understanding, and strengthen relationships.

Through experiences like this, we continue to build meaningful connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities while advancing our reconciliation journey.

Supporting First Nations Business – Sunshine Coast First Nations Business Forum



As part of Indigenous Business Month, Beerwah Coast Connect proudly represented by Paula Lawrence, Communications and Community Relations Leader at Laing O'Rourke at the 2026 Sunshine Coast First Nations Business Showcase on Kabi Kabi Country.

Bringing together around 300 attendees and more than 40 First Nations businesses, the showcase highlighted the strength, diversity and capability of First Nations businesses across the Sunshine Coast and created valuable connections between businesses, industry and future buyers.

For us, Indigenous procurement is about more than meeting targets. It is about building genuine relationships, creating pathways into our supply chain and supporting businesses to grow alongside the projects we deliver.

Through Beerwah Coast Connect, we will continue engaging early with First Nations businesses and looking for practical opportunities to turn those relationships into meaningful participation and lasting economic outcomes.

Building on Country is not just about what we build. It is about who we build with and the legacy we leave behind.

Learning through story, Country and creativity

During National Reconciliation Week, the Beerwah Coast Connect team were joined by artists from Munimba-ja Arts Centre at Laing O'Rourke's Brisbane office for a print making workshop.

Held in story by Munimba-ja artist Bianca Bond, an emerging Kabi Kabi artist and cultural practitioner whose work is grounded in her ancestral connection to the Da'la peoples, the gathering created space for listening, learning and connection to the stories, histories and cultural significance of Kabi Kabi Country. Bianca's practice draws on traditional weaving, plant knowledge and storytelling, honouring cultural lineage while exploring contemporary expressions of identity.

The day included a Gel Plate Printing workshop facilitated by Lexie Abel and Brenda Mau. Lexie traces her ancestry to Wiradjuri Country through her McCarthy family, while Brenda is a Mandubarra woman who also identifies through her mother's lineage as a Torres Strait Islander woman of Waiben.

Together, the artists created opportunities for the Beerwah Coast Connect team to celebrate National Reconciliation Week while engaging with Kabi Kabi Country through story, conversation and creative practice, fostering deeper understanding of local histories, cultural knowledge and connection to Country.

Almost forty staff created artworks using leaves, soil, rocks and other materials source from the Beerwah area.

The BCC team's beautiful creations are displayed along the rear corridor of the BCC office. If you are in Brisbane, drop by to view the gallery.

The Beerwah Coast Connect team are committed to learning more deeply about the places they work and embedding Country-Centred Design principles into the project.



GET IN TOUCH

We're keen to connect and collaborate as we continue our reconciliation journey. For updates, follow our social channels – LinkedIn and Instagram - or visit the Indigenous Affairs page on our website. If you haven't already done so, please register your interest in working with us via the Supply Chain Partner page on our website.