

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols and Practice Policy for Meetings and Events	1.0.3	November 2024
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
15 February 2023	6386	Revised

Purpose

Council has resolved to adopt a protocol that observes respect for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at official meetings and events. This policy outlines Council's position with regard to the protocol.

Council recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique position in the history and culture of NSW. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the original owners of the land and it is important that this special position is recognised and incorporated into official protocol.

By incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices into official meetings and events, Council is able to:

- recognise and pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and heritage.
- communicate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices to the broader community to promote respect and understanding.
- demonstrate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are living through maintenance and practice of ceremonies and protocols.
- demonstrate recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique position which can assist in building relationships and partnerships.

Scope

The policy applies to all formal Council meetings and all special events where Council has the lead organisational role, e.g. citizenship ceremonies and Australia Day events.

Definitions

Acknowledgement of Country

This is a short statement (as follows) read by the chairperson of the meeting, master of ceremonies or speaker at commencement. Adopted wording for the Acknowledgment of Country is:

"I begin today by acknowledging the Wiradjuri people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather/meet today, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today."

Policy Content

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing awareness of and respect for the traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owners of the land on which a meeting or event is being held, and of recognising the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to their Country.

An Acknowledgement of Country can be informal or formal and involves visitors acknowledging the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owners of the land as well as the long and continuing relationship between Indigenous peoples and their Country.

At a speech or formal occasion the Chairperson or speaker begins the proceedings by offering an Acknowledgement of Country. Unlike a Welcome to Country, it can be performed by a non-Indigenous person.

At a formal meeting of Council, the Acknowledgement of Country shall immediately follow the prayer.

Links to Policy

Nil

Links to Procedure

Code of Meeting Practice

Links to Forms

Nil

References

Reconciliation Australia Acknowledgement Of Country and Welcome To Country -
<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/acknowledgement-of-country-and-welcome-to-country>.

Responsibility

General Manager

Document Author

Executive Assistant – Communication, Tourism, Promotions

Relevant Legislation

Nil

Associated Records

Nil