

Blue Mountains City Council



Aboriginal Cultural Protocols

2010



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Acknowledgements

In developing the Blue Mountains City Council's Aboriginal Cultural Protocols document there were a number of sources that provided valuable information regarding protocols and good examples of the main protocols that should be included. These protocol documents are utilised at a state and local government level with some being in existence for a number of years.

These existing Aboriginal protocols include:

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols' 2005, City of Sydney;

'Protocols – For consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal People' 1999, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development, Queensland Government;

'Engaging with local Aboriginal communities – A resource kit for Local Government in New South Wales' 2007, Department of Local Government NSW and the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW;

'Working with Aboriginal Communities – A Guide to Community Consultation and Protocols' 2001, Board of Studies New South Wales; and

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols' 2007, Oxfam Australia.

All of the above documents provided insight and a guiding framework into ways that organisations conduct business with their respective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Many of the cultural protocols outlined in these communities are similar to cultural protocols that may be observed by the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Community.

The Aboriginal Cultural Protocols document was reviewed by a number of Aboriginal community organisations and Aboriginal community members, who made valued contributions to the document. Blue Mountains City Council would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal community for taking time to review the Aboriginal Cultural Protocols and providing their advice and contributions.

Introduction

Blue Mountains City Council acknowledges that the City of the Blue Mountains is located on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples*.

In addition Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) recognises the unique position Aboriginal people have in the history and culture of the Blue Mountains. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal peoples in the Blue Mountains have strong and ongoing connections to their traditional lands, cultures, heritage and history. Aboriginal people are recognised as the “Traditional Owners of the land” and it is important that this unique position is incorporated into BMCC’s community protocols, official ceremonies and events.

BMCC’s acknowledgement and observance of Aboriginal cultural protocols demonstrates respect and commitment to equal partnerships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

*** Note: Darug and Gundungurra will be referred to alphabetically in this document in official references to both peoples as traditional owners of the Blue Mountains LGA.**

What are Cultural Protocols?

Cultural protocols refer to principles and practices that guide the behaviour of a cultural group. For Aboriginal people these protocols include historic and current customs, practices, traditional lore and codes that are part of Aboriginal cultural observances. Protocols are present in all cultures and are an important part of ensuring people interact and conduct their behaviour in an appropriate manner.

Observations of Aboriginal cultural protocols illustrate the respect for the history, culture and diversity of the Aboriginal community. In addition to this, it demonstrates that the cultural protocols of the Aboriginal community are just as valued and equally valid to any other people’s cultural protocols.

Purpose of Cultural Protocols

This document has been developed to provide guidance to BMCC Councillors and Council Officers by outlining some important cultural protocols of the Aboriginal community. This document only highlights key protocols, Councillors and Council Officers should continue to consult with Aboriginal community representatives to ensure that protocols are used in an appropriate manner. There may also be other appropriate protocols observed by the Aboriginal community not in this document, practiced under certain circumstances. Sensitive consultation should be conducted to find the appropriate protocols if this situation arises.

This protocol document has been created with a particular focus on the Blue Mountains Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community. There may be protocols and practices in this community that are significant to this region. This document simply touches on specific protocols and practices and is only a guide to engaging the local Aboriginal community.

Local Aboriginal History

The Blue Mountains has an important and strong legacy of Aboriginal historical connections to the region, demonstrated by the significant number of Aboriginal sites that have been recorded. There are numerous recorded sites that provide a timeframe of Aboriginal occupation of the Mountains, with one site estimated by archaeologists to be over 22,000 years old. The types of sites in the region are diverse, ranging from scarred trees to rock engravings and rock art sites. In addition there are a large number of places showing evidence of camping areas and tool manufacture sites such as grinding grooves and artefact scatters.

The connections to the region by Aboriginal people run deeper than identified Aboriginal sites. It extends to ancient pathways that traverse the Mountains, important geographic features and an intense respect for flora and fauna of the region. Furthermore there are many recordings of Aboriginal lore from the region that highlight the long-established custodial relationship of Aboriginal people to significant places, plants and animals in the Mountains.

It has been acknowledged by the Council and the Blue Mountains community that the Darug and Gundungurra peoples are the traditional owners of the Blue Mountains region. At the point of first contact between Aboriginal people and colonial European's there were sub-groups or clans of the Darug and Gundungurra people living in various locations within the region. Further research in the future may provide more detailed information on the communities in the area immediately after first contact and onwards. One thing is certain though; the European crossing of the Mountains in 1813 and the subsequent building of Cox's Road (now the Great Western Highway) along with the associated growing settlements had dire impacts on the existing Mountains Aboriginal communities.

Serious documentation of local Aboriginal culture and history by early amateur and professional anthropologists was not undertaken until much later, starting around the 1890's. At this point in time many surviving Aboriginal people from local and surrounding groups were living in fringe camps, properties (owned by non-Aboriginal people), missions and reserves. There were many constraints and barriers during that time which adversely impacted on cultural continuance. Despite these constraints and barriers, levels of traditional knowledge and practices have been carried on.

There is however a considerable amount of research that has been documented on the former settlement known as 'The Gully', which is a short distance from the main centre of Katoomba. 'The Gully' was a place where Gundungurra, Darug and other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people lived as a fringe community from around the 1890's onward over a number of generations. This community continuity was permanently disrupted in the 1950's when a (motor vehicle) racing circuit known as Catalina Park was approved to be built where 'The Gully' Community called home. This act dispossessed the Aboriginal community of their homes (something which occurred in the Mountains since first contact) with families being forcibly evicted, with many resettling in Katoomba's township or further afield.

The racing circuit was short lived with the local weather impacting heavily on the usage of the track, eventually Catalina Park was abandoned. More recently the Aboriginal community, particularly the former residents and descendents of residents from 'The Gully' have reclaimed this important part of their history. In 2002 'The Gully' was declared an Aboriginal Place under the legislation of the National Parks and Wildlife Act. In 2008 BMCC agreed to a co-operative management partnership with The Gully Traditional Owners Incorporated that will ensure that 'The Gully' is acknowledged and preserved as an important Aboriginal place.

In addition to the commitments from the Council in protecting Aboriginal culture and history, state agencies such as the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, have made, or are making co-management agreements with Blue Mountains Aboriginal Traditional Owners.

Aboriginality

The determination of who is Aboriginal and who is not can ONLY be undertaken by Aboriginal people and should never be determined by non-Aboriginal people.

Due to the impacts of colonisation and successive government policies there have been many different ways non-Aboriginal people have identified Aboriginal people. Presently most Aboriginal communities use criterion which was first proposed at a federal level, being subsequently adopted by the states. This definition has been in place since the early 1980's and is as follows;

An Aboriginal person must meet the following three criteria

- To be of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- Identify themselves as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander;
- Be accepted as an Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they currently (or formerly) live.

Sometimes attempts at confirming identity is a complex and difficult matter, leading to intense discussions. There are occasions where Aboriginal people may not reach consensus about who is an Aboriginal person. However once again these matters are only for Aboriginal people to determine and should not be attempted by non-Aboriginal people.

In addition it is important to acknowledge that it is seen as offensive to question the 'amount' of Aboriginal blood an Aboriginal person may have or to make statements like "you don't look like a real Aboriginal". It is also not appropriate to use old fashion terminology such as "half caste", "quarter caste" or "full blood", which is considered racist and highly offensive.

When referring to Aboriginal people, always use the term "Aboriginal" adjoined to people, community etc... This should be consistently used over "Aborigine", which many Aboriginal people feel has associated negative connotations.

In writing about Aboriginal people avoid using acronyms such as 'ATSI' or 'Abs' etc. These terms must be written in full as a mark of respect and the words Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander must always be capitalised.

The most advisable approach in using terms to describe Aboriginal community members may be to ask individual Aboriginal people how they would like to be described. Their personal description may include the language / clan group or community they identify with, where they originate or have come from.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

It is important to recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are quite distinct from each other ethnically, culturally and historically. Though there are similarities between some cultural protocols, it is important to respect the culture, traditions and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as distinctive and unique.

These protocols are intended to act as a general guide only as there is great diversity amongst and within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This document has been created to cover cultural protocols relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Blue Mountains LGA. Therefore it is always important to clarify queries / issues regarding these protocols through prior consultation with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

There are over 70 different language groups represented in NSW, part of the 250 plus languages that existed across Australia at the time of colonisation. Presently there are many of these languages that are no longer spoken fluently; however many Aboriginal people continue to identify with their ancestral language groups and the 'Country' (traditional areas of the language group) that they originate from.

Due to past government policy, practices and legislation there are many Aboriginal people who have been dispossessed from their lands and forcibly resettled elsewhere. This forced resettlement of people, particularly (but not exclusively) to church missions, government reserves and outstations has been a contributing factor to the diversity in communities. Many Aboriginal people still live on or identify with these designated community settlements, even though most had officially closed by the late 1960's and early 1970's. As a consequence many Aboriginal people identify now with more than one language group 'country' or community area, having a sense of belonging and often family connections to these post-contact places.

Aboriginal people throughout different regions of Australia have some broad terms of reference by which they identify with. As discussed above there are a large number of Aboriginal people living in areas in which is not their original homelands. Even if Aboriginal people live outside their community or interstate they may still use these terms to identify their origins. Some of these terms are;

New South Wales

South East / North East
 North West / Western
 Central West

Queensland

South East
 Western
 Far Nth Qld / Cape York
 Torres Strait Islands

Northern Territory

Nth East Arnhem Land
 Central Australia

Western Australia

South West
 North West

South Australia**Victoria****Tasmania****Koori / Koorie (General term)**

Koori / Goori
 Murri / Murdi
 Koori / Murri

Murri (General term)

Murri
 Murdi
 Bama
 Torres Strait Islanders generally do not identify with any of the above terms.

Yolngu*

Anangu

Many Northern Territory groups use their own language words to describe themselves.

Nyoongah (General term)

Nyoongah
 Yamitji

Nunga**Koorie / Koori****Palawa**

The above terms are used by Aboriginal people when referring to themselves and are generally not appropriate to be used by non-Aboriginal people. Permission and / or acceptance to use these terms by non-Aboriginal people must be attained from the relevant person, group or community. It is however appropriate to use these terms when referring to specific names such as 'Koori Mail', 'Koori Radio' etc.

*The *ŋ* letter represents the Australian (Aboriginal) Languages sound *ng*, not found as a single sound in English. The sound is pronounced similar to the *ng* in the word 'sing'.

The Stolen Generations

The Stolen Generations are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were removed as children from their families, through official government policy from 1909 to 1969. This practice also occurred before the recognised official period and continued afterwards with churches, welfare bodies and governments all taking part.

In 1883 the NSW Government established the Aboriginal Protection Board, APB (later Aboriginal Welfare Board, AWB) but did not obtain legal powers until 1909. The board received control over nearly all aspects of Aboriginal people's lives, including the power to removal Aboriginal children without parental consent or a court order. Under the assimilation and White Australia policies there was strong encouragement for Aboriginal people of mixed ancestry to assimilate into white society. The prevailing though ignorant thoughts at the time were that Aboriginal people were an inferior race that could be genetically bred out and would eventually disappear.

Children were taken and placed in institutions and around the 1940's and 1950's onwards were also placed with white and other non-Aboriginal families. The children were placed in these circumstances with the intention of them being brought up as 'white' while being taught to reject their Aboriginality. Many people believed they had 'good intentions' being guided by those who supported removalist policies, but with little knowledge or respect for Aboriginal people. The general belief at the time, though fundamentally wrong, was that Aboriginal people's lives were poor and Aboriginal parents were bad parents neglectful of their children.

How many children were taken may never be known, as records have been lost or have been deliberately destroyed. Many children and parents never saw each other again, with many families trying to re-connect the pieces. Even today there are many Stolen Generation people who may not know where they come from or who their relatives are.

The Bringing Them Home Report tabled in Federal Parliament on 26th May 1997 outlined the devastating impacts that child removal practices had on the children, their families and even whole communities. The report discusses the all too common appalling treatment inflicted upon the children and the ongoing impacts for not only these children, but their families and subsequent generations. It is estimated that close to 100,000 if not more, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been and continue to be affected in some way by removalist policies.

It is important to acknowledge that for many people the affects of removal policies are ongoing and have impacts on their daily lives, the effects being different between each person and more acute for some. In addition the ongoing anxiety resulting from removal and assimilation policies have left many Aboriginal people feeling suspicious of all levels of government, government facilities and agencies. An example of this at a Local Government level may be some Aboriginal people's hesitation or intimidation in using facilities such as the libraries or the swimming pool.

The Blue Mountains Aboriginal Community

The Blue Mountains Aboriginal Community has a strong diversity being made up of Darug and Gundungurra peoples as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from many language / community groups from all over Australia. There are also many Aboriginal people that currently live in the Blue Mountains LGA that are either Stolen Generation members or have been affected by child removal policies.

According to the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census there were approximately 945 people who identified as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander living in the Blue Mountains Local Government Area. There has been a steady increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Mountains. This can be attributed to a number of factors including, relocation to the area, births, and more Aboriginal people identifying (some for the first time) on the Census. The largest proportion of Aboriginal people residing in the LGA live in the Upper Mountains areas, however there are still quite a number of people and families that reside in the Middle and Lower mountains.

It would appear from the data that more than half of the community is under the age of 24, a common attribute throughout Aboriginal Australia. The overall Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the Blue Mountains LGA is lower in number than some other Western Sydney Local Government Areas. However there is still a higher level of disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal community than the non-Aboriginal community, on average Aboriginal people have:

- Lower incomes;
- Higher unemployment;
- Greater housing disadvantage; and
- Poorer health and social outcomes.

BMCC acknowledges the local Elders, Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. In addition BMCC has identified key outcomes in supporting local Aboriginal people which is stated below:

'Improved health, increased access to economic opportunities and Aboriginal culture and heritage is more visible, celebrated and preserved.'

Respecting Traditional Protocols

Traditional Owners

The terminology Traditional Owners is used to describe the original identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group who inhabited an area of land at the time of European colonisation. Traditional Owners in a current context refers to the descendents of the identified original inhabitants of the area, having a spiritual and cultural connection to the lands and waters of their ancestors. BMCC acknowledges that the majority of City of the Blue Mountains is located on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra people.

Elders

From a traditional Aboriginal cultural perspective, Elders were members of the community who had been through various levels of initiation, and who had learned levels of sacred knowledge of their people. In addition Elders were the custodians and instructors of their people's traditional knowledge and customs. The Elders held the responsibility to provide guidance on all matters as well as make decisions on the ceremonial and cultural obligations of their people. Furthermore Elders held the knowledge of their people's history, kinship systems, and cultural lore (equating to European Law) that governed their community. The term Elder did not always refer to men and women who are over fifty or sixty years old. Relatively young people (30's and 40's) may have been given the status of Elder due to them having a highly respected position in their community. This recognition was connected to specific skills and knowledge that they may have possessed, in areas which increased their status or position of respect.

The term Elder, in a contemporary cultural sense is used to describe people who have knowledge and wisdom as well as the respect of their local

community. As accepted in the traditional perspective of an Elder, Elders today in many communities are not exclusively older people. An Elder must have the respect and trust of their community and be recognised as a custodian of cultural knowledge. In many communities' older people, particularly Elders are referred to as Aunty or Uncle, though this is not the case with people from all communities. Communities where traditional kinship systems are observed, the terms Aunty and Uncle are not used in the same way, as their system informs members of these communities their specific connections to each other.

Gender Protocols

There are many matters where the Aboriginal community observe some knowledge as sacred or specific to either men or women. Quite often this information is of a sacred nature and is transmitted specifically in the presence of appropriate men or women. This knowledge in a recorded form is frequently restricted and can only be accessed by the appropriate men or women. The terms used to describe these protocols are commonly referred to as 'Men's Business' and 'Women's Business'.

Council Officers need to be mindful that such matters exist and should always seek Aboriginal people's advice regarding when these issues may occur and methods to manage these matters.

Protocols regarding the deceased

There are many Aboriginal communities in Australia, particularly northern Australia where it is taboo or offensive to say the name of or show photographs/ video of a deceased person. This protocol is usually enacted during the mourning period which can be different between communities, some instances lasting from a week to an indefinite period of time. Many agencies and organisations are now using warnings or observing traditional protocols out of respect for the deceased person and their family. An alternate mourning name may be used when referring to the deceased person and this is a protocol that is observed in many communities.

The protocols regarding the deceased may be different in communities from NSW to those in other parts of Australia, particularly northern Australia. It would be advisable that Council Officers check with the local Aboriginal community the appropriate protocols regarding naming or showing images of the deceased in this area. It is also recommended that using the name or image of any deceased Aboriginal person be supported by and agreed upon by the relevant family of that person. It is important to note that during the period of mourning often referred to as 'Sorry Business', heightened awareness around protocols and cultural sensitivity should be observed.

Cultural ownership, copyright and intellectual property rights

Copyright, cultural ownership and intellectual property rights are important issues to have awareness of when working with the Aboriginal community. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are the rightful custodians of their cultures and cultural expressions, and have ownership and control of their cultural heritage. This is highly significant, as in the past many Aboriginal

stories, language, songs, imagery and knowledge have been appropriated by non-Aboriginal people. Historically it was not recognised that knowledge held by Aboriginal people belonged to them, with cases of non-Aboriginal authors financially benefiting and claiming copyright over information that had been shared with them.

For a more detailed overview on cultural and intellectual property rights issues and protection refer to the report: *Our Culture Our Future: Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights 1998* or go to <http://www.frankellawyers.com.au/media/report/culture.pdf>.

It is essential that permission is sought from the appropriate individual or group when accessing or using any Aboriginal cultural information. There are instances where rights to use Aboriginal cultural material can be held by an individual, however the traditional custodians of that information largely hold ownership and rights over cultural knowledge and material.

So what constitutes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and intellectual property rights? In *Our Culture Our Future: Report on Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights 1998*, part 1, Chapter 1 defines Indigenous cultural and intellectual property as:

'Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights' refers to Indigenous Australians' rights to their heritage. Such rights are also known as 'Indigenous Heritage Rights.

Heritage consists of the intangible and tangible aspects of the whole body of cultural practices, resources and knowledge systems developed, nurtured and refined by Indigenous people and passed on by them as part of expressing their cultural identity. Heritage includes:

- Literary, performing and artistic works (including music, dance, song, ceremonies, languages, symbols and designs, narratives and poetry);
- Scientific, agricultural, technical and ecological knowledge (including cultigens, medicines and sustainable use of flora and fauna);
- Spiritual knowledge;
- All items of moveable cultural property including burial artefacts;
- Indigenous ancestral remains;
- Indigenous human genetic material (including DNA and tissues);
- Cultural environment resources (including minerals and species); and
- Immovable cultural property (including Indigenous sites of significance, sacred sites and burials); and
- Documentation of Indigenous peoples' heritage in all forms of media. (Including scientific, ethnographic research reports, papers and books, films, sound recordings).

The heritage of an Indigenous people is a living one and includes items which may be created in the future, based on that heritage.

Any definition of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property should be flexible to reflect the notions of the particular Indigenous group and the fact that this may differ from group to group and may change over time.¹

¹ Janke, T 'Our Culture: Our Future, Proposals for the Recognition and Protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property', (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Discussion Paper) Michael Frankel and Company, Solicitors. 1998.

It would be advisable that a formal agreement be negotiated by the Council with the owner/s of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and intellectual property if a project uses any Aboriginal material. All attempts should be made to formalise this agreement through a written contract with the provision of legal representation afforded to Aboriginal people in this negotiation.

When seeking cultural knowledge / information, where possible aim to consult with a number of community representatives to ensure that a broad understanding of that information is developed. Different groups and individuals may have differing beliefs, traditional lore, values and knowledge about cultural matters, though all should be respectfully received and taken into consideration. It is important to note that even if information from individuals or groups is not used, acknowledgements should be given to community members who have contributed in providing cultural perspectives.

Note: There may be some community members that may not wish to be acknowledged individually, however all cultural knowledge informants should be given the opportunity for recognition.

Challenging Stereotypes

'A stereotype is a fixed mental impression. It is based on a pre-conceived notion of how a person will act because of a characteristic of that person, such as their gender, race, sexual preference, gender identity or age.

Stereotyping allows the social perception of individuals in terms of their group membership rather than by their personal attributes. It ignores personal record, and works on assumptions. This leads to unfair discrimination.'²

There are several stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people many of which are perpetuated by the mainstream media and are present in the minds of many non-Aboriginal people. The stereotyping of Aboriginal people often leads to discriminating and racial actions that impair relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

It is important to recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities locally and throughout Australia are highly diverse, consisting of many different cultural groups. The community also has people with different beliefs, opinions, traditions, languages and pre-contact and post-contact histories. There are members of the same families, from the same community that may have different values or beliefs, each one valid in their own right, being no different to the diversity found in any other family or community groups.

Throughout the course of the European colonisation of Australia numerous stereotypes (particularly negative stereotypes) have developed regarding Aboriginal people. All of the stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are based on ignorance and or misinformation that in turn have lead to widespread baseless and unjust generalisations. There are other

² 'Stereotyping', James Cook University, website, accessed 24th February 2009, http://www.jcu.edu.au/eo/discrimination/JCUDEV_018106.html

ongoing stereotypes that related to the perceived ideology of 'traditional Aboriginal people' based in past stereotypical constructs of Aboriginal people. This type of stereotype fails to acknowledge contemporary Aboriginal people, Aboriginal identity and the fact that like all cultures, Aboriginal culture is diverse and evolving and not fixed in some distant and romantic past.

Below are some of the common stereotypes faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which are unfounded and generally cause offense:

- Aboriginal people who are of mixed ancestry or do not fit a common perception held of Aboriginal people are 'not really Aboriginal or are 'only part-Aboriginal';
- Only Aboriginal people who live in remote areas or 'traditional communities or societies' and those who live a perceived 'traditional lifestyle' are 'really Aboriginal';
- All Aboriginal people know of, are related to or have heard of another Aboriginal person;
- All Aboriginal people will know everything about Aboriginal culture and history;
- In contrast to the above point there is also a stereotype that urban based Aboriginal people do not know anything about their culture;
- Aboriginal people do not want to work, or are idle;
- Aboriginal people are only good at sports or doing Aboriginal paintings;
- All Aboriginal people are poor, dependent on welfare or receive extra benefits and handouts;
- All Aboriginal people abuse alcohol or drugs;
- Aboriginal people commit crimes; and
- There is too much money spent on Aboriginal Affairs, or there is an 'Aboriginal Industry'.

When working with the Aboriginal community it is of the highest importance to be aware of this kind of stereotyping, challenging them when ever possible. For non-Aboriginal people to advocate for and support the dismissal of these stereotypes is a significant step towards tangible reconciliation, inclusiveness and acceptance of Aboriginal people's place in contemporary Australia.

Aboriginal Community Consultation

Aboriginal Community Consultation is a process where the Aboriginal community representatives can openly share information about significant matters that may impact on the Aboriginal community, culture, heritage and traditional lore. The community consultation process aids the Council in becoming aware of the views, beliefs and sensitivities of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Achieving satisfactory outcomes from consultation involves forming strong relationships with the Aboriginal community with the fundamental principle of respect and readiness to learn, share and negotiate. Through these relationships Councillors and Council Officers can inform and learn from the Aboriginal community in an accountable and honest way and raise awareness of the Council's business, initiatives or decisions involving the community.

When consulting with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community it is important to utilise appropriate and culturally sensitive consultative approaches. It would be beneficial for Council Officers to seek advice from Aboriginal community representatives and the Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer on the most effective consultative methods. Guidance should also be sought from the most recent Council Community Consultation Matrix to identify appropriate consultative tools and levels of participation.

Generally it is advisable to consult with as many Aboriginal community representatives as possible, especially on matters that are significant or have a high impact on the Aboriginal community. It is also highly advisable to ensure that Traditional Owner stakeholder groups are specifically consulted, as a point of respect and so their perspectives are recognised. Undertaking this method will reduce the potential for missed input from community members during the consultation process, and reduce future criticism from those feeling they should have been consulted.

Note: It is essential that the purpose of the consultation is clearly conveyed to the Aboriginal community.

Why consult the Aboriginal Community?

Historically Aboriginal people were excluded from the opportunity for consultation or to provide input regarding matters that had direct or indirect impacts on their community, heritage and culture. This direct oversight occurred at all levels of government with many decisions being made and activities undertaken that had or do have negative outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, their rights, culture and heritage.

The consultation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people shows the respect and acknowledgement of the community and that their perspectives and involvement is included. Comprehensive and respectful consultation also ensures that mistakes made in the past that have adversely affected the Aboriginal community, culture and heritage are likely to be avoided.

Getting permission

Before work begins on any Council project that has implications for the Aboriginal community or relates to Aboriginal culture and heritage matters it is important to seek appropriate permission. It is important to build strong relationships with local Aboriginal organisations that can be consulted in regard to the correct method in gaining appropriate permission.

Furthermore it is highly important to recognise that Aboriginal people have the right to have ownership of their history and cultural knowledge and will continue to do so into the future. This issue is especially significant as past practices denied Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that sense of ownership of their own histories and cultural knowledge.

There can be occasions where permission to undertake certain work may be refused, however there will often be good reason for this. Refusal of

permission often may particularly relate to specific issues that might be sacred or taboo, men's or women's business or could relate to death customs and beliefs.

To ensure that permission for work is granted, avoid confusion around the request and make sure the purpose of the work is clearly understood and that all work undertaken is appropriately negotiated.

Communication and Language

Whenever undertaking Aboriginal community consultation, always aim to be honest, open and sincere in all aspects of communication. It is important to enter into meetings with the Aboriginal community and conduct discussions with an open mind.

For many Aboriginal people a natural way of communicating information is in an indirect manner. Some Aboriginal people may find the direct communication approach by non-Aboriginal people is confrontational or creates feelings of awkwardness. This may result in ineffective or unsuccessful communication of information when conducting consultation.

The way that language is used in communicating with the Aboriginal community is also highly important. Careful consideration should be taken in using appropriate language and the delivery of that language.

When communicating with the Aboriginal community it is important not to make the assumption that every community member that you talk with will be clear on what you mean. However it is also critical not to assume that community people don't understand what you are talking about. Try to avoid using jargon such as technical terms or acronyms and when using these terms can't be avoided, always give a full explanation of those terms. Some Aboriginal people may have different meanings attached to words than non-Aboriginal people, so it is vital that the context that these words are used in is clear.

The rate of speech when conveying information should also be taken into consideration, for instance do not speak too quickly as people may miss information. It is also important not to speak too slowly as many Aboriginal people will feel patronised if spoken to in a slow manner. When consulting with different groups try to identify an appropriate rate at which to speak and ensure the language used suits the target audience.

It would be advisable to be conversant in appropriate terminology when engaging and consulting with the Aboriginal community. It would be erroneous to use terms such as Aboriginal Land Council* to describe Traditional Owner* groups as these terms often refer to different groups with differing community status. Another example is the concepts of Native Title* and Land Rights*; both refer to matters regarding land, but are two very different legislations from two levels of government.

*** For more information on these terms please refer to concepts and definitions**

Do not use Aboriginal language words or Aboriginal community words (if you are not Aboriginal) in any formal consultation, the meaning of words may

mean different things to different people or may be used by you out of context. Do not alter your style of speech, especially mimicking or copying Aboriginal ways of speaking or accents, this will be taken as offensive and paternalistic.

Cultural understanding, sensitivity and confidentiality

During community consultation or formal and in-formal interactions with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community it is important to be aware of cultural differences. There are many subtle and some obvious differences between the way Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people interact and communicate during consultations and other interactions.

One of the basic differences to recognise is an introductory protocol, which is significant when meeting for the first time. In many cases you may have to provide some background information about yourself, this is part of establishing who you are and comes before the purpose of why you are consulting. The introduction is the first step towards building rapport with the community, building relationships is the most important part of connecting with the Aboriginal community in a meaningful and ongoing way. It may take several meetings to establish a good level of rapport and the building of your credibility in dealing with the community, to be most effective in consultation.

For many Aboriginal communities ideas around time may be perceived in different ways to the non-Aboriginal communities' perception of time. This is particularly the case when it comes to making important decisions around significant matters or issues that may have long term impacts. Often there is a process where groups will discuss matters with community leaders as well as community members and families considering the outcomes of particular decisions. Therefore the time and deadlines that may be placed upon a decision from a mainstream viewpoint will need flexibility to include time for Aboriginal community decision making.

When interacting with the community particularly in sharing information, it is important to recognise the use of silence by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Initial silence from community members should not be misinterpreted as Aboriginal people not understanding the discussion, often Aboriginal people employ silence when they are listening and thinking about the unfolding discussion. Silence can also mean that those community members may not wish to give an opinion at the time, preferring to contribute after further consideration. In some instances Aboriginal people may use silence as a form of cultural politeness or quiet protest when they do not agree with a discussion or particular information presented.

For Aboriginal people from some communities, particularly Northern Australia it is inappropriate and considered offensive to make direct eye contact, especially with an 'Elder'. However this is not the case in all communities and with all Aboriginal people. If possible try to gauge interactions with community members and identify if eye contact avoidance is appropriate or not. There are some Aboriginal people who feel that not making direct eye contact implies (particularly from authority figures) that they are being disrespectfully avoided or not taken seriously.

In keeping with the principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Intellectual Property rights it is imperative that confidentiality be used in relation to information shared during consultation. Confidentiality and secrecy should also be exercised if discussing secret or sacred information or materials through consultation or Council supported community projects. Examples of secret or sacred information may be the location of special sites such as a men's initiation site/ area or a burial place. Confidential information includes knowledge regarding rites, cultural practices and customary laws that should not be shared publicly, being privileged to the recipients of this information. Secrecy and sacredness also extends to materials with privacy and confidentiality attached to them such as materials having specific gender associations or imbedded community knowledge. It is strongly advised to determine with the group being consulted what is and what is not confidential or secret information, as well as being clear on what can be discussed with other parties.

Lastly do not put Aboriginal people on the spot regarding any matter especially making an unannounced request, with many Aboriginal people saying yes to matters even though they may actually mean no. This circumstance arises from cultural politeness, and may make many Aboriginal people uncomfortable. This is similar to the concept of 'Shame' by which many Aboriginal people do not like being put in the spotlight creating feelings of embarrassment or ridicule. It is important to recognise that not every Aboriginal person will want to speak publicly about Aboriginal culture, history, family, or issues impacting the community, again people can feel in the spotlight or under public scrutiny.

Who do you speak with?

When undertaking consultation or providing information to the Aboriginal community the appropriate protocol is to approach Traditional Owner groups, Aboriginal community based organisations and community representatives as a first point of call. The community organisations often will disseminate information to their membership regarding issues or matters resulting from the consultation. Individual community organisations can not represent the interests of the whole community; therefore it is an appropriate protocol to consult with as many local organisations as possible.

However there will also be occasions particularly on significant issues when the broadest consultation process will be the most appropriate. Not all Aboriginal community members are part of organisations but should have the opportunity where appropriate to be consulted. Aboriginal community members who may not be represented by Aboriginal community organisations could also have valuable input into important issues. In this case it may be necessary to conduct community information sessions regarding these issues, with follow-up individual or small group consultations for those community members who indicated their interest in the matter.

It is important to recognise that a non-response from an invitation to be involved in consultation may not mean disinterest by Aboriginal community members. It may mean that there could be an issue or something distressing associated with the consultation and the Council will need to review the invitation or consultation purpose.

In some communities particularly in the South East women have become increasingly involved in making decisions in and on behalf of the community. It is important for male Council Officers to note that generally it is not appropriate to discuss matters which are specifically women's business for example child birth and women's child rearing practices. It may be more appropriate for a female Council Officer to undertake consultation regarding such matters. However this may not always be the case; it is advisable to clarify gender related consultation issues with the Councils Aboriginal Community Development Officer and Aboriginal community representatives.

Doing business

When undertaking face to face or phone consultation you will need to be aware when it is the appropriate time to discuss the reason for the consultation. Discussion on other matters which may or may not be related to the consultation will occur first, this is often a part of the rapport and trust building process used by community members. Remember that in some instances matters of importance should not be approached too directly or too swiftly, approaches in this manner may inhibit effective communication.

Quite often people in the community will relate to what you have done in the community (your track record) more than what you say or who you are or the position you hold. Always be open, honest and down to earth, never make promises that you know may be unachievable. Where ever practical work towards stepping stones that are achievable and may eventuate in higher level or longer term outcomes. This will not only provide deliverables to the community but strengthen your community rapport and your track record as a person who delivers outcomes.

Formal meetings

When organising a meeting as a form of consultation it should not be expected that agreements on matters will be reached at the meeting. Meetings should be viewed as an opportunity to provide information to the Aboriginal community on a matter or to demonstrate that an agreement on a matter has been reached.

The timing in holding meetings should be convenient for those who are to attend, not when the meeting time is convenient for you. It should be taken into consideration that community members often undertake many roles and responsibilities on a family and community level, having many meetings to attend. It should also be considered that along with these commitments certain days may not be appropriate meeting times for community members. It is important to recognise again that ideas around time may be different for some Aboriginal people, for some people the pressures of time are culturally very different, often referred to as 'Koori time'. In mainstream cultures 'Koori time' could be perceived as lateness or tardiness, though it is important to remember this is only one cultural perspective.

Again community meetings should not be used to make decisions or extract information from the community. The following points will give you an indication of other things you should not do at the meeting, including:

- Do not scrutinise any community members about their opinions;
- Do not publicly ask people about the source of their information;
- Try not to be blunt if a situation arises where you need to correct what another person has said;
- Do not use references or personal names regarding matters (for example 'such and such likes this idea' or 'I heard the community support this idea')
- Do not directly criticise anyone; and
- Try not to cause anyone to lose personal dignity.

When organising or attending community meetings be aware that items on the agenda may not always flow in a sequential manner, with items of special interest often taking the forefront. On some occasions it may seem like no-one is guiding the meeting (i.e. the Chair). However it is important to remember that the outcome is the focus of the meeting.

Aboriginal community conduct at meetings may appear different to that of non-Aboriginal people. An example of this is on specific matters, where some people may work towards giving their opinion by talking about other matters or stories. Another key example is how at many Aboriginal community meetings there are more people quietly talking or moving around, in comparison to a non-Aboriginal meeting. This does not necessarily mean that people are not paying attention or are being disrespectful, again there are different cultural perspectives associated with meetings. Be aware that there may not be too many questions from the community as in many Aboriginal communities it is considered bad manners to be too inquisitive or curious. In turn many Aboriginal people will resist answering too many inquisitive or intrusive questions, there are many Aboriginal people that feel this imposes on their privacy.

Lastly always avoid posing hypothetical questions. Many Aboriginal people prefer to work in real and practical matters.

Appropriate Ceremonies

BMCC recognises Aboriginal cultural ceremonies are an important part of official and other significant events. Through the inclusion of Aboriginal cultural ceremonies the Council can:

- Acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and heritage;
- Convey the importance of Aboriginal culture and heritage to all residents and visitors in addition to fostering understanding and a shared respect;
- Demonstrate the continuation of local Aboriginal culture, through providing opportunities for personal experiences, witnessing ongoing cultural practices; and
- Increase and enhance relationships between the Council and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the Blue Mountains.

It is important that all levels of the Council observe the appropriate protocols recognising Aboriginal people at official events or events where the Council is a major partner.

Welcome to Country

Welcome to Country ceremonies are an important acknowledgement and demonstration of respect for the Traditional Owners of the land. It is strongly advised that a Welcome to Country ceremony is included at the beginning of any Council Civic event or significant event where the Council is a major partner. For information on what types of events require a Welcome to Country or for details on appropriate contacts please refer to Appendix 1 - BMCC's Demonstration of Respect.

A Welcome to Country is a cultural practice where Traditional Owners formally welcome people to their land. This practice has a high level of significance and is taken very seriously by Traditional Owners throughout Australia. In addition this ceremony may have specific customs and protocols associated with the welcome and may differ between each Traditional Owner group. The Welcome to Country is performed with great pride, often as a speech by one or more Elder(s) and / or representatives from the Traditional Owner groups.

Traditional Owners are often happy to welcome people to their country gaining respect and acknowledgment for their role as custodians of their lands. It is very important for people being welcomed to country to recognise this significant gesture by paying due respect to the Elders performing the ceremony.

Welcome to Country ceremonies should be conducted by Elders recognised as local Traditional Owners or their delegated representatives.

There may be no exact wording for Welcoming to Country with the potential for negotiating the welcome content between the Council and the provider(s), with a focus on the nature of the event. It must be noted that this will depend on the comfort of the Elder(s) or representative(s) to negotiate the content matter, being mindful not to dictate the direction of the welcoming. Providers may often discuss local Aboriginal history and cultural information as part of the content in officially welcoming people to their 'country'. There may also be occasions where an event has a gender specific focus; therefore it may be appropriate for the Elder(s) or representative(s) to reflect that gender.

The Council representatives organising Welcome to Country ceremonies should negotiate with the recognised local Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal community to ensure the appropriate Elders are invited to perform the ceremony. In the Blue Mountains it is important to note that the Council recognises the Darug and Gundungurra peoples jointly as the Traditional Owners of the area. Therefore all Welcome to Country ceremonies conducted by the Council should be performed by the appropriate Elder(s) or representative(s) from the Darug and Gundungurra peoples. When organising a Welcome to Country or contacting Traditional Owner groups it is advisable to notify via email the Council's Aboriginal Cultural Development Officer or if unavailable a representative in the Community Outcomes Branch.

If the meeting is not recognised as a Council Civic event or significant meeting it is advised that an Acknowledgement of Country should at least be performed by the most senior representative in the meeting.

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgment of Country is a symbol of respect for the ongoing relationship of Traditional Owners with the land, delivered by non-Aboriginal people and where appropriate non-Traditional Owners. The gesture has added significance as it demonstrates the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage in addition to cultural continuation. All Council convened public meetings should begin with an Acknowledgement of Country, even if following a Welcome to Country by the Traditional Owners. For further information on what types of events require an Acknowledgement of Country or for details on the process please refer to Appendix 1 - BMCC's Demonstration of Respect.

The meeting normally begins with the Chair or Speaker acknowledging that the meeting is being held in the Traditional Owners 'Country'. Occasionally in the region there may be contention about whose 'Country' the meeting may be held on. The general rule is that the Council recognises the Darug and Gundungurra people jointly as the Traditional Owners of the area, irrespective of the exact location of the meeting.

The Acknowledgement of Country statement for BMCC could be appropriately worded:

"I would like to acknowledge that we are here today on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples. The Blue Mountains City Council acknowledges that this meeting is being held on Aboriginal land and recognises the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal people in this region."

It is important to note this acknowledgement recognises Traditional Owners but also includes the presence of Aboriginal people with origins from other parts of Australia now living in the Blue Mountains area.

Acknowledgement of Elders

Acknowledging Elders is an important mark of respect in recognition of the Elders of the Aboriginal community including but not exclusive to Traditional Owners. This acknowledgement can follow the Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country with the speaker paying respect to Elders past and present.

The Acknowledgement of Elders statement for the Council could be appropriately worded:

"I would like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present of the Blue Mountains and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who are present"

Acknowledging significant Aboriginal sites

An Acknowledgement of significant Aboriginal sites is performed when an event is held close to a significant Aboriginal site or place. A local example is 'The Gully' which has been declared an Aboriginal Place. This acknowledgment if deemed appropriate should be used following any

Acknowledgment of Country from the Chair or Speaker. If the acknowledgement is not part of the Welcome to Country the Chair or Speaker may also perform this acknowledgement if agreed upon by the Traditional Owners.

Please note that it may be preferred by Traditional Owners that some sites are kept confidential.

Other ceremonies

There may be other ceremonies undertaken which may be specific to this area in addition to the ceremonies identified above. Representatives of BMCC should consult with the Aboriginal community to determine any other significant ceremonies that may be associated with an event.

Fee for service

In the provision of cultural services such as Welcome to Country, artistic activities / performances and ceremonies Aboriginal people are utilising their cultural knowledge and intellectual property. BMCC recognises that providers of these cultural services should be appropriately remunerated.

BMCC will negotiate with the cultural service provider remuneration and/or assistance, with the consideration of:

- Travel to and from the event; and
- The Public profile associated with the event.

BMCC maintains a fee for service guide which sets minimum fees for a range of Aboriginal cultural services. It is important to note that the schedule is only a guide and the stated minimum fees are current as per the relevant certified agreement.

Cultural Practice	Certified Agreement	Minimum Fee
Welcome to Country	nil	\$150.00
Smoking Ceremony	Performers Certified Agreement 2003-2005	\$530.00
Didgeridoo performance	Musicians Certified Agreement 2003-2005	\$360.00
Dancer category 1 (inexperienced)	Performers Certified Agreement 2003-2005	\$430.00
Dancer category 2 (experienced)	Performers Certified Agreement 2003-2005	\$450.00
Basic Lecture (based on 2 hours preparation and 1 hour delivery)	Based on University of Western Sydney Academic Staff Agreement 2006 - 2008	\$141.40

BMCC's Aboriginal Cultural services fee guide. This fee guide is subject to annual review.

Some of the fees detailed above are in line with the current NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs Cultural Practices and Performances Fee Schedule.

The Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags

The Australian Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag are recognised as national flags of Australia being proclaimed as such in July 1995, under section 5 of the Flags Act 1953.

The Australian Aboriginal Flag

First flown in Adelaide on National Aborigines' Day July 12th 1971, the Australian Aboriginal Flag was designed by Harold Thomas, a Luritja man from Central Australia. The Flag was subsequently used at the 'Tent Embassy' that was established in Canberra in 1972.

Since that time the Australian Aboriginal flag has been recognised and adopted throughout Aboriginal Australia. The flag is also seen as a symbol of identity and unity, with the colours being used by many Aboriginal people as an extension of this statement.

The flag is highly symbolic with important meaning incorporated into the black over red equal halves and the central yellow circle design. The black represents Aboriginal Australians; the yellow circle is the sun, protector and giver of life. The red is representative of the red earth, especially Aboriginal people's spiritual connections to the land and red ochre used by Aboriginal people in ceremonies.

The Australian Aboriginal flag is protected by copyright, and may only be reproduced with the permission of Mr Harold Thomas and in accordance with the 1968 Copyright Act.

Note: permission is not required when flying the Australian Aboriginal Flag

The Torres Strait Islander Flag

The Torres Strait Islander flag was adopted in 1992 and was designed by the late Bernard Namok of Thursday Island as a symbol of identity and unity for Torres Strait Islanders. The flag was the winning entry in a design competition held by the Island Coordinating Council, a Queensland agency that represents the island communities' in the Torres Strait.

Recognised in the same year by the then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) the flag was given equal status with the Australian Aboriginal Flag.

The flag is divided into three horizontal panels, being thinner green panels at the top and bottom and a thicker blue panel in between. The panels are separated by two thin black lines with the white star and headdress in the centre. The flag is imbedded with strong meaning within the colours, symbolising; black, the indigenous people of the Torres Strait, white being peace, green the land and blue the sea.

The headdress is known as a *Dhari* and is used in dance ceremonies by Islander people from certain communities, with headdresses similar to this common throughout many of the islands. The white star has five points representing the major island groups within the Torres Strait as well as being an important navigation symbol for this seafaring people.

The Torres Strait Islander flag is also protected by copyright, and may only be reproduced with the permission of the Island Coordinating Council.

Note: permission is not required when flying the Torres Strait Islander Flag

Flying the flags

On the 9th July 2002 The Council of the City of the Blue Mountains resolved;

“That Council, as part of its NAIDOC Week celebrations, permanently install the Aboriginal Flag on the roof of the Council alongside the Australian Flag.”

(Minute no. 286)

This motion demonstrates the Councils ongoing commitment to recognising the Aboriginal community of the Blue Mountains and the acknowledgment of Traditional Owners in the local government area.

In addition the Council consistently flies the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on the flagpoles outside the Council in Civic Place during NAIDOC Week and other significant Aboriginal community events. Over recent years the Council has also flown banners, similar in design to the flags, in Katoomba’s main street during NAIDOC Week and other major events.

Flag protocols

If flying the Australian flag with the Australian Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag there are rules of precedence that should be observed. The Australian Flag should never be in an inferior position or smaller than any other flag, and should be followed by the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.

It is highly important that both of the flags are hung, reproduced and depicted in the correct manner and orientation. Permission must be sought if either flag is to be reproduced for business use such as reports or brochures. Refer in writing to the appropriate copyright holders to seek the permission to reproduce the flags or flag depictions. Mr Harold Thomas has also awarded the copyright license and manufacture of the Aboriginal Flag to Carroll and Richardson Flags. Permission to reproduce the Aboriginal flag or depictions can be sought from:

Mr Harold Thomas
PO Box 41807
CASUARINA NT 0810

Or

Carroll and Richardson Flagworld
188 Whitehorse Road
BALWYN VIC 3103

Permission to reproduce or depict the Torres Strait Islander Flag should be addressed to:

The Secretary
Island Coordinating Council
PO Box 501
THURSDAY ISLAND QLD 4875

Important dates for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

January 26th	Australia Day / Survival Day
March 21st	Harmony Day
May 26th	National Sorry Day
May 27th	Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum (altering the Australian Constitution in relation to Aboriginal people)
May / June	National Reconciliation Week
June 3rd	Mabo Day
July 1st	Coming of the Light Festival
Early July	NAIDOC Week
August 4th	National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day
August 9th	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
December 10th	Human Rights Day

Survival Day / Australia Day

Australia Day for most Australians is a day that celebrates the disembarking of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove and the subsequent settlement that would be the colony of NSW and eventually Australia. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, this day represents the start of a history of invasion, dispossession, removals, cultural destruction and loss of sovereign rights. For the above reasons and more, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people refer to Australia day as Invasion Day.

Many Aboriginal people recognise the resilience shown by Aboriginal Australia in persevering through all that has occurred since 1788 referring to the 26th January as Survival Day. In 1988 it is estimated that a significant number of Aboriginal people from as far away as Arnhem Land, marched from Redfern Park to a rally at Hyde Park then onto Sydney Harbour. This march was in protest at the marking of the 200th anniversary of invasion, which later developed into the concept of 'Survival Day'. The day also symbolised the fact that Aboriginal people have survived despite being expected to 'die out'. From 1992 onwards Survival Day concerts have been held in Sydney and have spread throughout Australia's major cities, providing a day for the Aboriginal community to mark this event from an Aboriginal perspective.

The Day of Mourning anniversary recognises "A Day of Mourning and Protest" held on the 26th January 1938 in and outside the Australia Hall, Elizabeth Street Sydney. The meeting organised by William Ferguson, William Cooper and Margaret Tucker was one of the first Aboriginal civil rights events, laying the foundation towards addressing wrongs committed against Aboriginal people. The event attracted over 1000 Aboriginal people and was an important step forward for the recognition of Aboriginal people's rights in Australia.

Harmony Day

Harmony Day is an initiative started in 1999 by the Australian Government aimed at creating and promoting community harmony, embracing cultural diversity and addressing racism. Harmony Day focuses on building relationships between people and is primarily a community based education program intended to increase our understanding and appreciation for the community we live in. Furthermore, Harmony Day which is held on March 21st is also the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The City of the Blue Mountains has been celebrating Harmony Day for a number of years through a variety of events, activities and workshops. The local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are regularly involved in representation and participation at local Harmony Day initiatives.

National Sorry Day

National Sorry Day was established by the National Sorry Day Committee on the 26th of May 1998, a year after the '*Bringing them Home Report*' was tabled in Federal Parliament. The report was produced by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families. There were 54 recommendations made in the report on a range of issues including establishing the community based National Sorry Day Committee.

The primary aim of Sorry Day is to acknowledge at a national level the hurt and distress felt by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a result of removal policies and practices. There are often events held in the Blue Mountains to mark 'Sorry Day' with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members coming together to observe this occasion.

Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum

A day that may not have significant celebrations, the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum on 27th May marks an important historical event that initiated meaningful changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The 1967 Referendum saw two important changes to the Australian constitution which were;

- to give the Federal Government powers to make uniform laws for Aboriginal* people (rather than states making their own laws); and
- the inclusion of Aboriginal people on the national population census

The 'yes' vote was overwhelming with more than 90% of eligible voters agreeing to the changes; it was also the highest 'yes' vote ever recorded at a referendum. This constitutional change did not give Aboriginal people the right to vote as popularly believed, that right occurred in 1962 with all states providing this right by 1965. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people see the 1967 constitutional change as a monumental step towards the greater recognition of Indigenous people's inherent rights in Australia.

* Torres Strait Islander people were also considered as Aboriginal people at the time of the 1967 Referendum.

National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation week is held each year beginning on 26th May and ending on 3rd June being established in 1996. The main aim of Reconciliation Week is to acknowledge and celebrate the rich history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The week also provides opportunities for all Australians to discuss reconciliation and to consider ways to address disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Reconciliation week is organised by Reconciliation Australia which was established in 2000 by the former federally appointed Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

The Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community of the Blue Mountains regularly hold events and activities in recognition of Reconciliation Week. These events and activities have historically been organised by the Blue Mountains ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation) in collaboration with the Aboriginal community. Information regarding events is generally advertised in the lead up to Reconciliation Week.

Mabo Day

Mabo Day is the day that marks the anniversary of the historic Native Title case on the 3rd June 1992 when the High Court recognised Native Title existed for the Meriam Mir People of Murray Island in the Torres Strait. This judgement was significant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the judgement legally dismissed the idea of "Terra Nullius*". The case also recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights to claiming Crown Lands and potentially pastoral leases as Traditional Owners. There was also recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have traditional laws and customs that assert rights over lands and waters which have continued after colonisation and can be recognised by the common law.

This day is held in commemoration of Koiki (Eddie) Mabo, and others representing the Meriam Mir people that kept up a ten year legal battle which eventually resulted in the High Court ruling.

* Terra Nullius – 'land belonging to no-one', the ownership of which in international law can therefore be claimed by another nation.³

Coming of the Light Festival

A significant day for many Torres Strait Islander people, the Coming of the Light Festival celebrates the day (1st July 1878) that the London Missionary Society arrived in the Torres Strait (Erub / Darnley Island).

³ Moore, B (ed.) 1987 'The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary' 4th edn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne

Many Torres Strait Islanders are of the Christian faith stemming from the arrival of these British missionaries and their South Sea Islander* teachers. Each year Torres Strait Islander people celebrate the Coming of the Light throughout the Torres Strait and mainland Australia with a variety of religious and cultural ceremonies.

*South Sea Islander in this case refers to the people who originate from New Caledonia, specifically Lifou Island.

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC week is held in early July (usually the first full week) each year marked by celebrations that highlight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's culture, history and achievements. In addition the week provides opportunities for all Australians to participate in celebrating Aboriginal communities along with promoting a better understanding of Aboriginal people. NAIDOC stands for the National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration being originally focused on one day, being NAIDOC Day, though the acronym is now used to describe the week.

The history of NAIDOC Week stems from the 1938 'Day of Mourning' held on Australia Day and from 1940 the Sunday before Australia Day became the regular 'Day of Mourning' later being known as Aborigines Day. In 1955 the day was moved from January to the first Sunday in July being promoted as a day to celebrate Aboriginal culture. Two years later the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NADOC) was formed being supported by major Aboriginal organisations, churches as well as the Federal and State governments. By 1991 NADOC was amended to NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) which included the recognition of Torres Strait Islander communities, culture and heritage. At this time the celebration also expanded from a day to an entire week, giving greater recognition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, histories and cultures.

Throughout Australia local community celebrations take place during the week that have been organised by community groups or organisations, government agencies, local councils, schools and workplaces. In the Blue Mountains the local NAIDOC organising committee consists of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations and BMCC. A range of events are held by the organisations and the Council over the NAIDOC period to celebrate the local Aboriginal community, culture and history. For more information regarding NAIDOC celebrations contact the Aboriginal Cultural Development Officer at the Council or the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre.

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day

Held annually from the 4th of August 1998 this day was established by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), a non-government Indigenous children's advocacy body. The aim of the day is to highlight the important place children have in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as well as promoting the needs of Indigenous children.

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

The International Day of the World's Indigenous People has been celebrated every August 9th since the declaration of this day by the United Nations General Assembly in 1994. The intention of the day is to highlight the contributions and achievements made by Indigenous peoples throughout the world. The day also provides a platform to acknowledge many of the issues that affect Indigenous people's internationally such as health, education, community development and human rights matters.

Human Rights Day

December 10th is the date of celebration for Human Rights Day which marks the anniversary of adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. To date the declaration has been translated into 360 languages and is fundamentally important for people around the world, particularly Indigenous people's in asserting their rights and freedoms.

Aboriginal community organisations covering the local area

Below is a list of the Aboriginal community organisations that cover the local area and provide support for the local community or provide cultural services. It is important to acknowledge that local land, culture and heritage matters, as a point of respect, should be brought to the attention of Traditional Owner groups. Contacts for Darug and Gundungurra Traditional Owner representative bodies are identified below with the term Traditional Owner below the organisations title in brackets.

Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre

14 Oak Street, Katoomba, NSW 2780
P.O. Box 334, Katoomba NSW 2780
Ph: 02 4782 6569
Fax: 02 4782 4349
Email: admin@acrc.org.au

The Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre was officially established in 1996 with the purpose of undertake the following objectives:

- Acknowledge, appreciate and respect Gundungurra and Darug People as the traditional owners/custodians of the land, and their respective cultures;
- Provide all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of the Blue Mountains Local Government Area with:
 - access and equity in the provision of services;
 - support and assist in overcoming physical and cultural isolation; and
 - a place to share, learn and develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultures, arts, history and heritage;
- Create opportunities for and empower the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through economic development;
- Build cultural relations between the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal communities; and
- Be proactive in addressing racism and discrimination.

Darug Custodians Aboriginal Corporation

(Traditional Owner)
P.O. Box 81
Windsor NSW 2756
Ph: 02 4577-5181

Though not based in the Mountains the Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation's core business is supporting Darug People, Culture and Country, which includes large parts of the Blue Mountains region. The organisation has the following objectives:

- Maintain a custodial role in the protection of Darug sacred places and sites;
- Maintain a custodial role in relation to Darug Cultural Traditions;
- Be a custodial repository for artefacts and relics relating to Darug lands;
- Promote community awareness and understanding of Darug culture;

- Foster and promote wider community awareness and relationships with Darug descendents;
- Continue and expand Darug traditional crafts and contemporary arts and crafts;
- Provide an open venue for Darug descendents to discuss and negotiate matters relating to Darug land and culture;
- Promote and put into action, conservation practices based on Darug traditional values;
- Act as an agent for Darug native title holders; and
- Hold native title on behalf of Darug native title holders.

Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation

(Traditional Owner)

P.O. Box 441, Blacktown, NSW 2148

Ph: 02 9622 4081

Fax: 02 9622 4081

Email: darug_tribal@live.com.au

Web: www.darug.org.au

Based in Western Sydney the Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation's central focus is Darug People, Culture and Country, inclusive of large parts of the Blue Mountains. The organisation has the following objectives:

- Trace the family history of the Darug and preserve it for future generations of Australians;
- Establish a register of Darug people;
- Hold an annual reunion for all Darug people, their family and friends;
- Support the establishment of a cultural centre of Darug culture, for the benefit of the community, by collecting objects and information relating to Darug history and culture;
- Promote Darug culture in the wider community;
- Provide the Aboriginal community with resources and information on the Darug people;
- Work with and support other Aboriginal organisations in the Darug area;
- Obtain claims for Darug traditional lands under Native Title claims for Darug people; and
- Help create security for Aboriginal people through economic development.

Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council

P.O. Box V184, Mt. Druitt, NSW 2770

Ph: 02 9832 2457

Fax: 02 9832 2496

Email: Staff@deerubbin.org.au

Web: www.deerubbin.org.au

The Land Council is incorporated under Sections 5 & 6 of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983 No.42 as amended. The functions of the DLALC are those provided for in Section 12 of the Act and in the rules of DLALC. These include:

- Acquire land and to use it in accordance with the Act and Regulations;

- Seek funds from the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) for administrative purposes;
- Give effect to the wishes of members as expressed at meetings of the DLALC;
- Make claims for Crown Land;
- Provide housing for Aboriginal People in the Land Council's area;
- Protect and foster the interests of members and all Aboriginal people within the Land Council's area; and
- Commence support and carry out proposals designed to protect and preserve the sites and culture of traditional peoples of the Land Councils area.

The Council's name was officially changed to Deerubbin on 2nd May 1997 (being formally known as Daruk Local Aboriginal Land Council).

The Gully Traditional Owners Incorporated

(Traditional Owner)

P.O. Box 31, Lawson NSW 2783

Ph: 02 4757 3223

Fax: 02 4757 3293

Email: mwilliams18@bigpond.com

The Gully Traditional Owners Inc. is based in the Blue Mountains and has a specific focus on an Aboriginal Place known as 'The Gully' situated in Katoomba. The aims and objectives of the organisation are:

- Advance The Gully Traditional Owners awareness in relation to the development of The Gully;
- Advance the general public's awareness of the culture, land, heritage, and sacred sites (without disclosing the location of the sacred sites) of The Gully people;
- Identify traditional Gully sacred sites, culturally significant areas and the heritage of The Gully;
- Record and maintain all traditional Gully sacred sites, cultural significant areas and heritage of The Gully;
- Negotiate and consult with all relevant Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations on matters that pertain to The Gully people, their heritage, culture, land and sacred sites; and
- Promote employment for appropriately qualified Gully people in positions which will promote and advance the interest of The Gully people as well as encourage Gully people to seek such qualifications.

Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association Incorporated

(Traditional Owner)

P.O. Box 31, Lawson NSW 2783

Ph: 02 4757 3223

Fax: 02 4757 3293

Email: mwilliams18@bigpond.com

Located in the Mountains the Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association's core dealings are Gundungurra Land, Culture and People. The establishment of the organisation is to undertake the following aims and objectives:

- Advance Gundungurra peoples awareness in relation to the development of Gundungurra land;
- Advance the general public's awareness of the culture, land, heritage, and sacred sites (without disclosing the location of the sacred sites) of the Gundungurra people;
- Record and maintain all traditional Gundungurra sacred sites and land.
- Identify traditional Gundungurra sacred sites and land;
- Negotiate and consult with all relevant Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations on matters that pertain to the Gundungurra people, their heritage, culture, land and sacred sites; and
- Promote employment for appropriate qualified Gundungurra people in positions which will promote and advance the interest of the Gundungurra people as well as encourage Gundungurra people to seek such qualifications.

Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation

(Traditional Owner)

14 Oak Street, Katoomba NSW, 2780

Ph: 02 4782-6429

The Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation has its base in Katoomba having a core focus on Land, Culture and People within the Gundungurra area. The aims and objectives of the corporation are:

- Advance Gundungurra peoples awareness in relation to the development of Gundungurra land;
- Act as a registered Native Title Body Corporate pursuant to the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993, as amended, on behalf of Gundungurra people;
- Employ persons with the appropriate skills needed to service the administrative requirements of members of the Corporation;
- Establish and provide suitable premises to accommodate the incorporation to enhance accessibility of Gundungurra people;
- Provide culturally appropriate awareness programs of Gundungurra heritage and culture;
- Develop a Gundungurra communication network;
- Access and maintain suitable housing on behalf of Gundungurra people;
- Record and maintain all traditional Gundungurra sacred sites and land; and
- Negotiate and consult on an ongoing basis with all relevant Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations with matters relating to Gundungurra people, heritage and culture.

Link-Up NSW

5 Wallis Street, Lawson, NSW 2783

P.O. Box 93, Lawson NSW 2783

Free call: 1800 624 332

Ph: 02 4759 1911

Fax: 02 4759 2607

Email: linkup@nsw.link-up.org.au

Web: www.linkupnsw.org.au

Link-Up NSW was established in 1980 to reunite Stolen Generation members and their families and communities. The organisation has been based in the Blue Mountains particularly Lawson for the majority of its existence.

The aims and objectives of the organisation operate within the Aboriginal community and particularly the Stolen Generations with in that community and are as follows;

'The organisation's dominant objective is to redress the grave injustices, deprivations and incursions into the health and well being of Aboriginal people resultant from the impact of removing Aboriginal people from families, Community and Country. Mindful of the holistic nature of Aboriginal health and well being services to ameliorate ill health, suffering, distress and helplessness within the Aboriginal community, and in particular within the members of the Stolen Generations, the Aims and Objectives of the Organisation also incorporate and embrace the aims and objectives of the Aboriginal community controlled health sector as enunciated in Aboriginal community controlled health sector literature.'

Furthermore the General aims and objectives of Link-Up NSW are:

- The amelioration of poverty within the Aboriginal community;
- The advancement of Aboriginal religion;
- The development and maintenance of educational courses and programs for members of the Aboriginal community within the Aboriginal community; and
- Direct support and sustainable counselling to members of the Stolen Generations.

State and Federal Aboriginal organisations

Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales (AH&MRC)

Level 3, 66 Wentworth Ave
Surry Hills, NSW, 2010
PO Box 1565, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Ph: 02 9212 4777
Fax: 02 9212 7211
Email: ahmrc@ahmrc.org.au
Web: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/index.htm>

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Lawson Cres, Acton, ACT
GPO Box 553, Canberra ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6246 1111
Fax: 02 6261 4285
Email: web-eds@aiatsis.gov.au
Web: <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/>

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Level 9, 280 Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
GPO Box 9820, Sydney NSW 2001
Ph: 1300 653 227 (local call cost)
Fax: 02 8255 7799
Web: <http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/>

Indigenous Coordination Centre (Sydney Office)

Level 8, 280 Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
GPO Box K1176, Haymarket NSW 1240
Ph: 02 8255 7600
Ph: 1300 653 227 (local call cost)
Freecall: 1800 079 098
Fax: 02 8255 7660
Web: <http://www.icc.gov.au/icc/>

National Native Title Tribunal (New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory)

Level 25, Bligh Street
Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 9973
Sydney NSW 2001
Ph: 02 9235 6300
Freecall: 1800 640 501
Fax: 02 9233 5613
Email: enquiries@nntt.gov.au

Web: <http://www.nntt.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

NSW Aboriginal Land Council

(Head Office)

33 Argyle Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box 1125, Parramatta NSW 2124

Ph: 02 9689 4444

Fax: 02 9687 1234

E-mail: penwurru@alc.org.au

Web: <http://www.alc.org.au/>

NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)

Incorporated

(State Office)

Postal Address: 37 Cavendish St Stanmore NSW 2048

Phone Number: (02) 9550-5666

Fax Number: (02) 9550-3361

info@aecg.nsw.edu.au

www.aecg.nsw.edu.au

NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Level 13, Tower B

Centennial Plaza

280 Elizabeth St

Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9219 0700

Fax: 02 9219 0790

Email: enquiries@daa.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.daa.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Reconciliation Council

Level 13, Tower B, Centennial Plaza

280 Elizabeth St

Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9219 0719

Fax: 02 9219 0790

Web: <http://www.nswrecon.com/>

Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

(OATSIH)

(NSW Office)

Level 18, 1 Oxford Street

Darlinghurst NSW 2010

GPO Box 9848, Sydney NSW 2001

Ph: 02 9263 3560

Fax: 02 9263 3579

Web: <http://www.health.gov.au/oatsih>

Concepts and definitions

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person generally refers to someone who:

- Is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- Identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- is accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they currently (or formerly) live.

Always use capital letters when writing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and never shorten to acronyms such as ATSI etc

Aboriginal community

The Aboriginal community is numerous Aboriginal people and families that make up a larger group, which often has cultural, social and historical commonalities. In this document the term Aboriginal community generally refers to the local Blue Mountains Aboriginal Community. However there are instances where the term Aboriginal community may have a broader context.

Aboriginal Land Council

The term Aboriginal Land Council is often used to describe an organisation that is incorporated under Sections 5 & 6 of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983. The NSW Land Rights Act is a State legislation that allows Local Aboriginal Land Councils to make claims over vacant crown land in their area. For more information please refer to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council website: <http://www.alc.org.au>

Aboriginal people

When referring to Aboriginal people do not use the term Aborigine, the preferred term is Aboriginal person or people.

Aboriginal Place

Aboriginal Place means a place which has been declared so by the Minister administering the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 because he or she believes that the place is or was of special significance to Aboriginal culture. It may or may not contain Aboriginal objects.

Aboriginal Protection Board (APB) / Aboriginal Welfare Board (AWB)

This State Government agency was mainly responsible for implementing and administering legislation and policies that affected Aboriginal people in NSW. The Aboriginal Welfare Board (formerly the Aboriginal Protection Board 1883-1943) operated from 1883 to 1969.

Aboriginal Site

Aboriginal sites show the remains of Aboriginal occupation or places that are significant to Aboriginal culture and communities. Aboriginal sites can be found in various landscapes including; towns, beaches, along river banks and

tracks, on open plains and dense forests. Aboriginal Sites and objects are protected by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

Darug people

The Darug people are a language / tribal group (also referred to as a nation) of Aboriginal Australians. It is commonly accepted that the Darug people are traditional custodians of much of what is modern day Sydney, Western Sydney (Mouth of the Hawkesbury River; inland to Mount Victoria, Campbelltown, Liverpool, Camden, and Penrith; at Windsor)⁴ and the western (to Mt Victoria) and northern sections of the main ridge of the Blue Mountains (to around Mt Tomah and Bells Line of Road).

(Darug is also recorded as *Dharruk, Dharrook, Dhar'rook, Darrook, Dharug*)⁴

Elders

Elder(s) in an Aboriginal cultural sense is used to describe people who have knowledge and wisdom as well as the respect of their local community.

Gundungurra people

The Gundungurra people are a language / tribal group (also referred to as a nation) of Aboriginal Australians. The Gundungurra people state that the Gundungurra Country includes the lands and waters of the Burragorang, Megalong, Kanimbla, Jamison and Hartley Valleys and to Lithgow, Clarence and Wallerawang. Gundungurra Country also extends to the watershed ridge above the O'Connell Plains, the watershed of the Abercrombie River; south to Goulburn and Bungonia including the Wombeyan and Jenolan Caves, east to Bundanoon, Bowral, Picton, Warragamba and Penrith. Gundungurra Country includes parts of Springwood and Katoomba.

(Gundungurra is also recorded as *Gandangara, Gundungari, Gundanora, Gurra-gunga*)⁵

Land Rights

Land Rights is the abbreviation of Aboriginal Land Rights and often refers to the 1983 NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

Native Title

Native Title refers to the Federal Native Title Act. 1993. The purpose of Native title is to recognise the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to land according to their traditional laws and customs. In many cases the land that is subject to Native Title is unallocated or vacant crown land. For more information please refer to the National Native Title Tribunal website: <http://www.nntt.gov.au>

⁴ Tindale, N.B. 'Aboriginal Tribes of Australia' (1974) South Australian Museum website accessed 24th February 2009, <http://www.samuseum.australia.sa.com/tindaletribes/daruk.htm>

⁵ Tindale, N.B. 'Aboriginal Tribes of Australia' (1974) South Australian Museum website accessed 24th February 2009, <http://www.samuseum.australia.sa.com/tindaletribes/gandangara.htm>

Stolen Generations

The Stolen Generations are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people removed as children from their families from 1909 to 1969. The practice also occurred before and after this period with churches, welfare bodies and governments involved. It is estimated that between 10 to 30 percent of Aboriginal Children were removed.

‘The Gully’

‘The Gully’ also known as Catalina Park (incorporating Frank Walford Park and Katoomba Falls Reserve) was a place where Gundungurra, Darug, other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people lived as a community until being forcibly removed. In 2002 ‘The Gully’ was declared an Aboriginal Place under NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act. In 2008 BMCC entered into a co-operative management partnership with The Gully Traditional Owners Inc.

Traditional ‘Country’

Country refers to the area of land that encompasses the boundaries of Aboriginal language/ tribal groups or clans (Traditional Owners) where they have a spiritual and historical connection. Country for Aboriginal people means a place of belonging, and where the spiritual ancestors come from. Country is not just the landscape and waters, but includes lore, spirits and seasons and most importantly all living things.

Traditional Lore

Aboriginal Traditional Lore may also sometimes be referred to as Aboriginal Traditional Law and is the set of customs, principles and practices connected to, or associated with narratives about creation (sometimes referred to as the Dreaming or Dreamtime), country, relationships, the spiritual/ sacred/ secular world, the seasons and all living things.

Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners is used to describe the original identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group who inhabited an area of land at the time of European colonisation. Traditional Owners in a current context refers to the descendents of the identified original inhabitants of the area, recognising their ongoing connections.

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APPENDIX 1

Blue Mountains City Council's Demonstration of Respect

Protocol	When to use it	Process	Notes
Welcome to Country	Traditional Welcomes should be incorporated into the opening of Civic or other significant events. Some of these include major internal or public events, public meetings, forums and functions. Welcomes should always be arranged for a public event where the Council is a major partner. An example of when to arrange a Welcome to Country is for citizenship ceremonies.	Council Officers organising an event as described should contact Traditional Owner organisations to arrange the appropriate Elder. Plan well ahead to allow for the availability of the Elder to perform the Welcome. Payment is required; refer to the fee for service table on page 21. Transport may also be required.	The present Traditional Owner contacts for the Welcome to Country at events where the Council is a major partner is: Darug – Aunty Val Aurisch book through Bev Ward, Ph: 02 4782 4299 Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association – book through Merle Williams, Ph: 02 4757 3223 Some events may be gender specific therefore arrange for the appropriate Elder.
Acknowledgment of Country	Acknowledgement of Country should follow a Welcome to Country and occur when there is no welcome. There may be no official welcome because the event is smaller, not a major public event or is less formal. An example of when an Acknowledgment is performed is at ordinary Council meetings.	Wording for an Acknowledgement of Country is on page 20. The first speaker or most senior representative should perform the Acknowledgement.	The general rule is that the Council recognises the Darug and Gundungurra people jointly as the Traditional Owners of the area, irrespective of the exact location. Other subsequent speakers should also acknowledge Country.
Acknowledgment of Elders	At all events following the Welcome to Country and / or Acknowledgement of Country the speaker pays respect to Elders past and present.	The Master of Ceremonies or Facilitator of the event may perform this recognition. Wording for the Acknowledgement of Elders is on page 20.	Irrespective if Elders or Aboriginal people are present this acknowledgement should be performed. Elders can be acknowledged by name if appropriate and prior approval is confirmed
Acknowledging significant Aboriginal sites	When an event is held close to a significant Aboriginal site or place. This acknowledgment can be used following any Acknowledgment of Country from the MC or Facilitator if it is not part of the Welcome to Country and is deemed appropriate. A local example of a significant Aboriginal site is 'The Gully' which is a declared Aboriginal Place. Traditional Owners may prefer some sites are kept confidential.	An Elder, the Master of Ceremonies or Facilitator of the event may perform this recognition. Prior to the event consult with the Aboriginal Community particularly Traditional Owners to establish if there is a site of significance close to the event. Confirm if this acknowledgement is appropriate for the event. If there is a Welcome to Country and it is appropriate to acknowledge significant sites, confirm who will perform this.	Contact Traditional Owner organisations to establish sites of significance near the event. Other non-Traditional Owner organisations may be able to assist if required, only if Traditional Owners are un-available. Contact list starts on page 30. Local Traditional Owners organisations are designated as such.