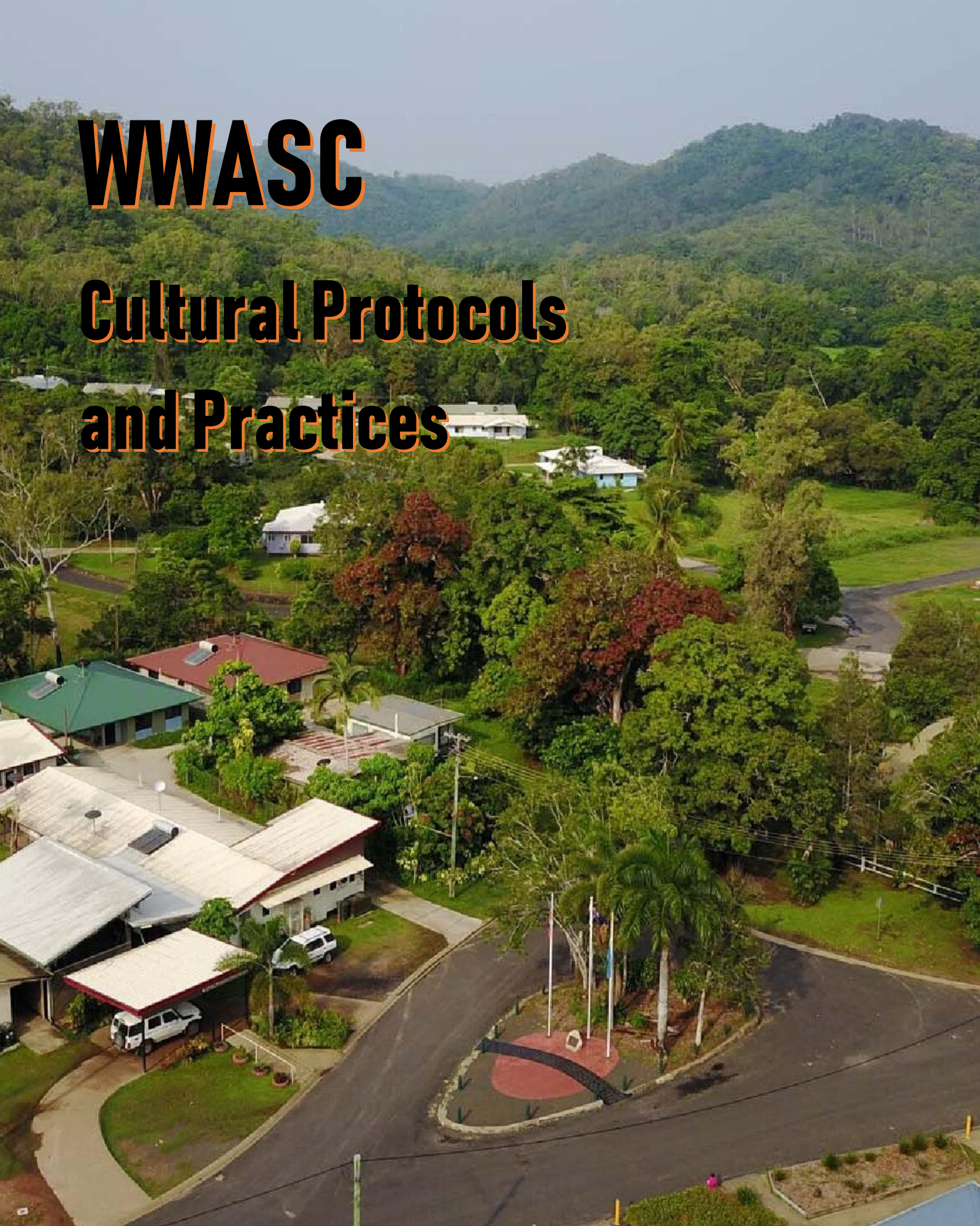


WWASC

Cultural Protocols and Practices



WUJAL WUJAL ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

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Table of Contents

PROTOCOLS	4
1. What are indigenous cultural protocols?	4
2. Aboriginal ceremonies and engagement activities	4
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols	4
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	5
4. Welcome to Country	5
5. Acknowledgement of Country	5
6. On Country	6
7. Meetings.....	6
8. Why do we need protocols?	7
9. Torres Strait Permits.....	7
10. Principles and reconciliation	7
11. Communication Introduction Period.....	8
12. Consultation	8
13. Bereavement / Sorry Business	8
14. Smoking Ceremony	9
15. Sorry Business	9
16. Aboriginality.....	9
17. Aboriginal Knowledge.....	9
18. Intellectual Property and Cultural Copyright.....	9
19. Style and key word Usage	10
20. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Consultation	10
21. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts	10
22. Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Images.....	10
23. Naming of Roads, Lanes and Reserves	11
24. Gender Awareness.....	11
SIGNIFICANT DATES	11
25. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar	11
FLAGS	13
26. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Flags	13
TERMINOLOGY	14
27. Appropriate words and terminology for Aboriginal topics	15

Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and is centred in an Aboriginal Community within the Bloomfield Area and includes the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Yalanji clans who hold a significant belief in tradition and culture.

Visiting agencies and other stakeholders should be aware that the cultural protocols of the community at large should be followed.

PROTOCOLS

1. What are indigenous cultural protocols?

“**Cultural protocols** refer to principles and practices that guide the behaviour of a **cultural** group. For **Aboriginal** and Torres Strait Islander Peoples these **protocols** include historic and current customs, practices, traditional lore and codes that are part of **Aboriginal** and Torres Strait Islander **cultural** observances.

Cultural protocols refer to the customs, lore’s and codes that guide the behaviour of a particular **cultural** group. **Protocols** are present in all **cultures** and observing the **cultural protocols** of a community demonstrates respect for the **cultural** traditions, history and diversity of that community.

Community protocols articulate **community**-determined values, procedures, and priorities. They set out rights and responsibilities under customary, state, and international law as the basis for engaging with external factors such as governments, companies, academics, and NGOs.

Culturally safe practices include actions which recognize and respect the **cultural** identities of others, and **safely** meet their needs, expectations and rights.

2. Aboriginal ceremonies and engagement activities

- Acknowledgement of Country
- Welcome to Country
- Smoking ceremonies
- Traditional art workshops
- Traditional dancers
- Aboriginal keynote speakers

3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols

There are several traditional owners across the three clans that reside in the area and thought, and respect must be shown, and the owners acknowledged.

Cultural protocols refer to the customs, lore’s and codes that guide the behaviour of a cultural group. Protocols are present in all cultures and observing the cultural protocols of a community demonstrates respect for the cultural traditions, history and diversity of that community. It also shows a willingness to acknowledge that the processes and procedures of another cultural community are equally valid and worthy of the same respect as one’s own cultural protocols.

Connection with country is crucial to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and protocols for welcoming visitors to country have been a part of the culture for thousands of years.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4. Welcome to Country

The 'Welcome to Country' is only given by a Traditional Owner - a descendant of the first people living in an area. The Traditional Owner will welcome people to their land at the beginning of a meeting, event or ceremony. This welcome must be conducted by an appropriate person such as a recognised Elder from the local area who is widely recognised as having ancestral connection with the country.

This protocol is an important mark of respect for ATSI peoples and is usually reserved for major civic events such as conferences, seminars, workshops and formal meetings that include internal and external stakeholders.

Welcome to Country enables the Traditional Custodians to give their blessing to the event and is an important mark of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's original inhabitants

There is no exact wording when Welcoming to Country. The content of the ceremony should be negotiated between the agency and the provider with reference to the nature of the event and community practices. Generally, providers offer participants local history and cultural information and will go on to welcome the delegates to the country.

Welcome to Country is a cultural practice that was used for people entering another clan/nation's land. It can only be conducted by the traditional custodians of the land that you are gathered on. Representatives, such as elders, that conduct this welcome should be treated as dignitaries.

The Welcome to Country should be the first item on the order of proceedings for the event and may comprise a single speech given by an Elder with or without an accompanying performance, such as playing of the Didgeridoo.

If you are officiating this event, ensure to ask the representative how they would like to be addressed.

In most communities, be prepared to pay a fee for this service.

5. Acknowledgement of Country

The 'Acknowledgment of Country' is given by non-Indigenous people or ATSI people who aren't Traditional Owners. At Wujal Wujal the 'Acknowledgment of Country' is often provided by elected representatives (Mayor or Councillors) and senior officers (CEO or Management). The acknowledgment aims to show respect for the Traditional Owners of the land on which an event is taking place.

This protocol is appropriate for meetings or gatherings of internal staff. It is courteous to supply all guest speakers with an 'Acknowledgement of Country' prompt card prior to their presentation or address. These are available through the Indigenous Cultural Advisor (ICA) The following are some options for an Acknowledgement of Country depending on the audience

An Acknowledgement of People and Country is a statement of recognition of the traditional owners of the land. An Acknowledgement of Country can be given by any person – Indigenous or non-Indigenous.

There is no set wording for and Acknowledgement and it is essential that the choice of words be meaningful to the person making them.

Typical Acknowledgement of Country statements can include: -

'I would like to acknowledge that we are here today on the land of the Traditional Owners/Custodians of this land we are gathered on, the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Jalunji clans of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present and emerging and extend that respect to the Aboriginal and Islander people with us today.

Example of Acknowledgement – mainland country:

'I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting today. I would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area.' (This would be appropriate anywhere in Australia).

Example of Acknowledgement – islands / saltwater country:

I would like to acknowledge the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Jalunji people, the traditional custodians of the land that we are gathered on. I pay my respects to elders, past, present and emerging and the Aboriginal and Islander people with us today. I give thanks for the land we are on and the sea that surrounds us.

If you are not sure who the local group is, do not assume as this may cause offense. Use 'traditional custodians' in place of the clan/group name.

6. On Country

If you are invited on to traditional lands, ensure to dress appropriately. The exposure of certain parts of the body may be considered offensive. You can wear:

- Loose-fitting and long styles (below the knee) of the following: shorts, skirts, pants, trousers or dresses;
- Loose shirts or t-shirts with sleeves;
- If you are invited swimming you may swim with your clothes on, or t-shirt and shorts covering your swimming costume;
- You may be invited to sit on the ground, so wear clothes that will not cause embarrassment or discomfort in such a situation;
- Cotton garments, rather than synthetic fibres, are recommended as they allow the skin to breathe.

Please note that certain areas and cultural sites are only for men or women, ensure to respect these sites when you are informed.

7. Meetings

- Ensure to leave enough time for meetings, let the community members set the pace of the meeting
- Ensure the local councillor and PBCs are involved in the meeting planning.
- Where possible, organise catering from a local provider
- For community meetings in the Torres Strait, ensure that the meeting can be opened in prayer and that someone is available to bless the food.
- In the Northern Peninsula and Torres Strait region, ensure to address people with their correct titles – Mr, Mrs, Fr, etc.
- After the meeting, provide written confirmation/minutes of the agreed points. If meeting with an individual, do not appear to be talking in secrecy or be over familiar with each other. This could have negative perceptions and could impact future engagement with the community.

Reminder: One elder is not responsible for decision, ensure that you ask if anyone else is required to be consulted before finalising any plans or projects.

8. Why do we need protocols?

Use of Written Acknowledgement

Council publications often include the following phrase: 'Council respectfully acknowledges the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Jalunji clans. We pay our respect to their Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.'

This phrase can be used at the discretion of Council staff in reports, publications, strategies, or plans.

Traditional Cultural protocols practiced in Wujal Wujal are:

Entry Protocols

- Agencies intending to enter Wujal Wujal must first ask permission from the Mayor as a courtesy.
- Once this has been addressed and the dates of the visit are supplied, the cultural advisors are notified along with other relevant agencies.
- If workers intend to do business for an extended period, the traditional 'smoking ceremony' is conducted by the cultural advisors before any undertaking of business is carried out within the community.
- The Mayor may delay entry during time of 'sorry business' or for other cultural reasons.
- Wujal Wujal has a 'do not knock' protocol in place it is culturally insensitive to 'turn up at people's houses without giving notice.

9. Torres Strait Permits

Registrations are required for the outer islands of the Torres Strait. To register your visit, go to <http://www.tsirc.qld.gov.au/register-your-visit> You will be required to fill in details about your visit, mode of transport, intention and who you are visiting. This will take a few days to approve, you cannot visit without it.

Sibuwanay/Tar Digri – Giving of the Gift

Sibuwanay in Kala Lawgaw Ya and Tar Digri in Meriam Mir are similar in meaning. Giving gifts is an important aspect of Torres Strait Islander culture and is a highly respected practice. The value is not on the gift itself, but the time, effort and spirit exchanged between the parties.

If you are the recipient at a meeting or event where this practice takes place you should receive the gift with a humble gesture and thank the individual or community. This practice is not intended to create conflict of interest.

10. Principles and reconciliation

Reconciliation action plans provide a framework for organisations to realise their vision for reconciliation. They are practical plans of action built on relationships, respect and opportunities. These plans create social change and economic opportunities for Aboriginal Australians.

Positive relationships and high levels of respect deliver opportunities, which provide the best outcomes for Aboriginal Australians.

Cultivation of: Relationships – Respect – Opportunities – Connections

RELATIONSHIPS

The development of genuine and respectful relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians is a fundamental step towards the goal of reconciliation. Relationships

based on high levels of trust, a lack of prejudice and the growth of strong partnerships is a positive step forward.

RESPECT

Another fundamental principle for Aboriginal Cultural Protocols is respect – respect for Aboriginal heritage and culture, and the rights of Aboriginal people to own and control their culture. This includes respect for customs, points of view and lifestyle. Understanding the historical context of Aboriginal Australians and recognising the accomplishments and continuation of one of the oldest known cultures shows knowledge and respect.

OPPORTUNITIES

Strong relationships and respectful understanding can build opportunities for Aboriginal Australians. Increasing access to tertiary education, and including the Aboriginal voice in decision-making processes, has the potential to provide Aboriginal Australians with vocational and tertiary pathways to success.

CONNECTIONS

Aboriginal Australians have a strong and continuing relationship with their Country's Land and Waters. This connection to the Land is fundamental to their wellbeing. Culture, Law, Lore, spirituality, social obligations and kinship all stem from relationships to and with the Land. Aboriginal Australians belong to the Land, rather than owning it. The Land is sacred and spirituality, Dreaming, sacred sites, Law and Lore are within it. Land is a living thing, often described as 'Mother'. Aboriginal Australians have culturally specific associations with the Land and these vary between Communities. An Aboriginal Community's cultural associations with their Country may include or relate to cultural practices, knowledge, songs, stories, art, pathways, flora, fauna and minerals. These cultural associations may include custodial relationships with particular landscapes.

11. Communication Introduction Period

While relationships are being built, is it important to have the right approach.

- Smile when first meeting someone
- Using the hand to point can sometimes be seen to be disrespectful
- Non-verbal introductions e.g. nod of the head may be the first contact until more familiar
- Do not use confused statements that you may think is funny
- Some people may not make eye contact due to previous strict rules in culture. Not making eye contact is often used to show respect.

12. Consultation

- Respect the law and customs of the area you are entering.
- Decision making can involve many people, ensure when planning trips or requesting answers that you factor time into your plans.
- Do not assume that one person speaks for all.
- When addressing the group, ask the group how they would like to sit.
- Using the hand to point can sometimes be seen to be disrespectful
- Always begin by thanking the group for allowing you to speak.

13. Bereavement / Sorry Business

In community, when someone passes it is common for the whole community to be involved in proceedings. Avoid visiting during this period. If you are already in a community when this occurs, cancel your meetings and leave the community.

Ensure to remove any images of the deceased that you may have. It is up to the family to grant permission to grant use after the mourning period.

ELDER AND TRADITIONAL OWNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In formal communications and speeches, a Traditional Owner will be referred to by name and the title 'Yalanji representative' or if in a leadership capacity 'Senior Yalanji spokesperson'.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Wujal Wujal will only be referred to as Aunty/Uncle' upon their request.

14. Smoking Ceremony

A smoking ceremony is undertaken in Aboriginal communities to cleanse a space.

The ceremony is a purification ritual and is always undertaken by an Aboriginal person with specialised cultural knowledge.

15. Sorry Business

Death and grieving in the ATSI community is known as 'Sorry Business'.

It is a cultural and social obligation for ATSI people to attend 'Sorry Business' for their clan, including extended family. Action 17 in the RAP states: 'A traditional time of mourning for the ATSI community - when a death occurs, funding may be available for activities and events that recognise the contribution of members of the local ATSI community'.

All requests for 'Sorry Business' assistance will be assessed by the ICA with advice sought from Senior Elders.

A considered recommendation for the provision of assistance must be approved by a CEO of the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council.

16. Aboriginality

While it is beneficial, as an organisation, to collect ATSI employee data, it is offensive to question the 'amount' of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander 'blood' a person may possess.

It is particularly offensive to use labels such as 'half-caste' or 'quarter-caste' as these are historical reminders of government and societal definitions of ATSI people.

Wujal Wujal follows the principles defined by the Australian Government:

An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is someone who is:

1. of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
2. identifies as an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander;
3. accepted as such by the ATSI community in which he or she lives.

17. Aboriginal Knowledge

ATSI knowledge systems are complex, specialised and owned by ATSI people. As in Western culture, specialised knowledge is not something that is usually given away for free. ATSI people who are commissioned or engaged by the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council in a cultural capacity, including performing a traditional dance, giving a speech or traditional welcome, providing artwork or participating in a project are entitled to request remuneration for their time and expertise.

18. Intellectual Property and Cultural Copyright

Protection of intellectual property and cultural copyright are vital issues for ATSI people. They are the custodians of their culture and have the right to own and control their own cultural

heritage. An officer seeking access to, and use of, ATSI cultural information must have permission from relevant individuals or organisations. Rights to use ATSI material may be held by an individual, but mostly cultural material belongs to the Traditional Owners as a collective.

19. Style and key word Usage

In keeping with advice from Reconciliation Australia ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ is to be used when referring to people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Once identified, this term can be abbreviated to ‘ATSI people’.

Always use a capital for Aborigine, Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous, Traditional Owner, and Elder. The lowercase word ‘aborigine’ refers to an Indigenous person from any part of the world and not to the ATSI people. Also refer to the Terminology section.

20. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Consultation

It is respectful to include and invite the input and views of the local ATSI community, the Traditional Owners and the when reviewing, planning and developing strategies.

Officers must consider the capacity of the local community to respond to all requests to participate in consultative and planning processes for the Wujal Wujal Shire. It should also be noted this type of work is unpaid and voluntary most of the time.

All requests and invitations seeking input from the local ATSI community will be made through the ICA. The ICA will work with Council’s Governance team to determine the relevance of the proposed consultation, and where appropriate, and in consultation with the Kuku Yalanji, Kuku Nyungul and Jalunji clans:

- Provide feedback
- Invite officers to discuss the identified topic at a Traditional owners meeting
- Support broader consultation with the local ATSI community.

Council staff should leave sufficient time to ensure this process can be carried out efficiently and effectively.

21. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts

Wujal Wujal is committed to supporting ‘a culturally vibrant township, and acknowledges the ‘social, health and wellbeing and economic benefits of fostering a diverse, culturally engaged and active community.’

Our Bana Yirriji Arts Centre is supporting this vision with traditional arts and culture which showcases our regions unique delights and attractions. Council Indigenous Arts Officers produce CIAF artwork for the annual art exhibition.

Any officers that seek to use ATSI specific visual, musical, dance or ceremonial representation must first contact Council’s Indigenous Arts Manager to assess the cultural appropriateness of their request.

22. Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Images

The use of imagery of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders is to be strictly controlled.

Due to much lower life expectancy rates, images of people in Council’s image library could include ATSI people who have passed away.

Whenever Wujal Wujal staff intend to use an image of ATSI people or Indigenous themes, even if it is stored on the image library, the ICA is to be notified and asked to provide advice on the suitability of the image. Without approval from the ICA imagery of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders should not be used.

If the ICA doesn't know if it is appropriate, they will then consult with local people, Traditional Owners, and local community groups to ascertain:

- the context for use
- whether the life situation of a particular subject has changed since the image was taken
- whether the image is representative of the local ATSI community of Wujal Wujal.

23. Naming of Roads, Lanes and Reserves

Road names are required for property addressing, property identification, mapping and for tourism. The process of selection is contained in Council's Guidelines for the Naming or Renaming of Roads, Lanes and Reserves.

A request to name a lane, road or reserve can be originated from the wider community or by Council officers. To address the imbalance of the types of names currently in use, new names have to meet one or more of five criteria. The first criteria look to recognise: 'The role or contribution of Aboriginal people to Australia or to the township of Wujal Wujal'. Where the proposal is for an Aboriginal name, the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* must be followed.

If an Aboriginal name is proposed, the Council will, via the ICA, consult with appropriate Aboriginal community members.

24. Gender Awareness

In planning for and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Council officers will consider and respect gender values and community norms. In different societies and cultures, different values and norms attached to men and women assign them different statuses. Strongly-defined cultural roles help to maintain political, cultural and social stability and ensure the future of custom and tradition. Many sacred ceremonies are open to the whole community and often men and women play complementary roles in them.

Some ceremonies are open only to men, similarly, some ceremonies are only open to women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women possess separate sacred knowledge and carry out separate ritual ('women's business') to that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Therefore, 'men's' and 'women's' business does exist in Aboriginal cultures. Support in relation to the Gender Awareness is available through the ICA.

SIGNIFICANT DATES

25. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar

Sorry Day

Sorry Day is an annual event that has been held on 26 May across Australia, since 1998, to remember and raise awareness of the forcible removal of ATSI people. The annual commemorations remind Australians about the significance of the forcible removal policies and their impact on the children that were taken, but also on their families and communities.

In 2008, former Prime Minister the Honourable Kevin Rudd moved the "Motion of Apology to Australia's ATSI peoples", apologising for past laws, policies, and practices that negatively impacted ATSI peoples, particularly members of the Stolen Generation.

Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is celebrated across Australia each year between 27 May and 3 June. 'Reconciliation' refers to bringing together ATSI people and other Australians. Supporting reconciliation means working to overcome the division (often called 'the gap') and inequality between ATSI and non-ATSI people.

Differences are greatest in health, income, living standards and life expectancy, but also prejudice and racism.

1967 Referendum

Two dates commemorate significant milestones in the reconciliation journey – the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum, which saw over 90 per cent of Australians voting to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for ATSI people and recognise them in the census, and Mabo Day. The referendum vote saw two references in the Australian Constitution, which discriminated against ATSI people, removed.

Mabo Day

June 3 celebrates Mabo Day. On 3 June 1992, the High Court of Australia delivered its landmark Mabo decision which legally recognised that ATSI people have a special relationship to the land - that existed prior to colonisation and still exists today. The Mabo ruling overturned the legal justification - 'terra nullius'- used by the British Empire for the appropriation of Australia. The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 was the first attempt by an Australian Government to legally recognise the Aboriginal system of land ownership and put into law the concept of inalienable freehold title.

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week originally stood for 'National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee' after a Day of Mourning was held on Australia Day, 1938. The Day of Mourning was declared due to the lack of response from the Commonwealth government to petitions from Aboriginal people in 1935 and 1937 seeking representation in the Parliament and the establishment of a national department of Native Affairs and State Advisory Councils.

From 1940 until 1955, the Sunday before Australia Day was the Day of Mourning, now known as Aborigines Day. In 1955 the day was shifted to the first Sunday in July and was promoted as a celebration of ATSI culture.

In 1957, the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NADOC) formed and the second Sunday in July became a day of remembrance for Aboriginal people and their heritage. In 1991 NADOC became NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) to recognise Torres Strait Islanders and to describe a whole week of recognition, rather than one day.

Today NAIDOC celebrations are held around Australia in July by all Australians to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of ATSI people.

Wujal Wujal Foundation Day

Celebrated on 26 October 2020 as the date that Wujal Wujal celebrates its colonial foundations.

References and Contacts

List of all Prescribed Body Corporates can be found at: <https://www.nativetitle.org.au/>

Geospatial Native Title Data <http://www.nntt.gov.au/>

Local Government Directory <http://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/localgovernment/local-governmentdirectory/search-the-local-governmentdirectory.html>

Torres Strait Regional Authority <http://www.tsra.gov.au/>

National Indigenous Tourism Product Manual – 3rd Edition, Tourism Australia

FLAGS

26. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Flags

For significant weeks, such as National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week and Sorry Day, the Aboriginal Flag replaces the Australian Flag on the main flagpoles of St Kilda, Port Melbourne and South Melbourne Town Halls.

The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas, a Luritja man from Central Australia. It was created as a symbol of unity and national identity for Aboriginal people during the land rights movement of the early 1970s.



The flag was first flown at Victoria Square in Adelaide on National Aborigines Day, 12 July 1971.

The flag was chosen as the official flag for the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra and was first flown there in 1972.

In 1995, the Australian Government proclaimed the flag as an official 'Flag of Australia'.

The symbolic meaning of the flag colours (as stated by Mr Harold Thomas) are:

Black

Represents the Aboriginal people of Australia

Red

Represents the red earth, the red ochre and a spiritual relation to the land

Yellow

Represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector

The Torres Strait Islander flag was created as a symbol of unity and identity for Torres Strait Islander people, designed by the late Bernard Namok from Thursday Island.



The flag was recognised by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in June 1992 and given equal prominence with the Aboriginal flag.

In July 1995, it was recognised by the Australian Government as an official 'Flag of Australia'.

Each part of the flag is designed to represent something about Torres Strait Island culture.

Green

Represents the land

Blue

Represents the sea

White

Represents peace

Black

Represents the Indigenous people

The dhari (head-dress) represents Torres Strait Island people and the five pointed star represents the five major Island groups. The star also represents navigation, a symbol of the seafaring culture of the Torres Strait.

TERMINOLOGY

**Appropriate words and
terminology
for Aboriginal topics**

TERMINOLOGY

27. Appropriate words and terminology for Aboriginal topics

Which words should you use, which avoid? Use this guide to appropriate terms when talking or writing about Aboriginal topics to avoid offending Aboriginal people.

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Aborigine/s	Aboriginal people(s)	'Aboriginal' which in Latin means 'from the beginning' and other such European words are used because there is no Aboriginal word that refers to all Aboriginal people in Australia. Sometimes 'Indigenous people(s)' is also acceptable.
aborigine/s (with no initial capital)	Aboriginal person	
Aboriginal/s	Aboriginal Australians	Always capitalise 'Aboriginal' to show your respect.
Blacks	Torres Strait Islander people	The more specific the better: <u>Aboriginal language group names</u> such as 'Koori', 'Murri' or 'Noongar' are always more appropriate for the areas where they apply. It implies also a connection to country: "We like to be acknowledge[d] by the spirit of our grounds, e.g. Karna, Narunnga, not 'Aboriginal people'." [1] (If you were in Munich for the Oktoberfest, you wouldn't talk to a 'European' either, it would be a 'Bavarian'.)
Yellafellas	Torres Strait Islander person	
Coloured	First Australians	The term 'Native' conjures up an image not appropriate to modern times. 'Aborigine', 'Aborigines' and 'Aboriginals' are terms widely used within historical texts and colloquially, but do not adequately describe the complexity and diversity of Aboriginal Australians. First Nations is used worldwide to refer to indigenous peoples but is not common in Australia. Consider using 'New Australians' instead of 'other Australians' to avoid us-them concepts.
Native	Language group, e.g.:	
ATSI, A&TSI (acronyms for 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander')	Koori (NSW)	
	Murri (QLD)	
	Yolngu (NT)	
	Anangu (Central)	
	Noongar (WA) etc.	
	Indigenous peoples	
	Indigenous Australians	
	First Nations peoples	
Ayers Rock	Uluru	Uluru is the Aboriginal name for this significant site in Central Australia which should be respected and recognised. This recognition of Aboriginal Australia is fundamental to social justice.
The Olgas	Kata Tjuta	

Using the right names

I am not an Australian, I am a Euahlayi/Gomeri Dthane [man]. — *Michael Ghillar Anderson, Head of State of the Euahlayi Peoples Republic*

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Transitional	Aboriginal people	Categorising or classifying people and assuming that there are real differences between Aboriginal people of different areas is offensive.
Traditional		
Contemporary		Also, the implication that 'urban' Aboriginal people are less Aboriginal than 'traditional' or 'transitional' people is most offensive.
Modern		
Urban		A real problem is the 'real Aborigine' syndrome – the idea that the 'real' Aboriginal people live in remote areas, and that only 'traditional' Aboriginal people and cultures are 'really Aboriginal'.
Rural		
Isolated or remote		
Real		
Part-Aborigine		
Tribe	Aboriginal people/s	'Nation' refers to a culturally distinct group of people from a culturally defined area of land, e.g. Ngarrindjeri Nation, Kaurna Nation. Note 'nations' is not supported by all (it's more common for American Indians), they prefer to be identified by their language or country. 'Mob' may not be appropriate for non-Aboriginal people to use unless this term is known to be acceptable to Aboriginal people.
Horde	Aboriginal nations	
Band	Aboriginal communities	
Clan	Mob/s	'Tribe' is a European word that tends to impart western preconceptions developed from colonial experiences.
Moiety	Family groups	
Traditional owners	Language groups	'Horde' is a more technical word used by anthropologists, but its common usage also has derogatory connotations.
	Culture groups	The terms 'band', 'clan' and 'moiety' are usually used by anthropologists and are less practical for teaching.
	Traditional custodians	
	Sovereign people	While 'traditional owners' (often abbreviated as 'TO') emphasises the connection to land, 'traditional custodians' expresses better the concept that Aboriginal people don't own the land, but it owns them. The words are often capitalised. Consider using 'Sovereign people', as 'owner' is a Western concept.
Chief	Elder	Aboriginal people did not, and do not have chiefs, kings or queens. These were colonial labels used to raise up individuals for the authorities to deal with and to simplify the complex

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
King	Senior people	Aboriginal societal structures. These labels usually included an element of mockery.
Queen	Community Elder Traditional custodian Senior lore person Community spokesperson	'Elders' are men and women that Aboriginal communities respect for their wisdom and knowledge of culture, particularly lore. Male and female Elders , who have higher levels of knowledge, maintain social order according to traditional lore. You can also use 'senior lore person' or 'senior dance person' to be more specific about their area of expertise. Check with the community if this is appropriate. The word 'Elders' should be written with a capital letter as a mark of respect.
Aboriginal leader	[use their job title] Spokesperson Head of... Representative Leader of the... group etc.	When you use 'Aboriginal leader' it reinforces a false homogenous view of Aboriginal people. Check with the particular Aboriginal group or collective who their elected leader or speaker is, and if it's a 'speaker' identify them as such. Don't determine 'Aboriginal leaders' on their behalf. Best to use the person's job title, better yet, ask them how they would like to be described.
Nomadic, nomads, nomadism	Seasonal occupation	Nomadism has been associated with lack of belonging to the land and the myth that Aboriginal people didn't have permanent structures. The extension of the doctrine of terra nullius was based on this kind of distinction. The preferred suggestions imply intimate knowledge of, caring for, and belonging to, the land. They also express that such seasonal movements are purposeful, rather than random.
Walkabout	Seasonal movement	
Wandering	Communal movement	
	Rotational/cyclical occupation Looking after the country/the land	
Primitive	Aboriginal nations	Previous terms are offensive because they imply Aboriginal societies are not as 'advanced' as European societies. The terms are based on the 'progress' model of history which many people now question, and on the idea of evolution from 'lower' to 'higher' (Western) forms of social organisation. The better terms recognise how effective and sophisticated Aboriginal resource management and social organisation can be. [3]
Simple	Complex and diverse societies	
Native	Efficient resource managers	
Prehistoric	Aboriginal Australian society	
Stone age		
Avoid classifications		

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Dreamtime	The Dreaming The Dreamings	'The Dreaming' or 'The Dreamings' are mostly more appropriate as they describe Aboriginal beliefs as <i>ongoing</i> today. Many people use 'Dreamtime' inappropriately to refer to the period of creation. However, sometimes the use of 'Dreamtime' is appropriate if it includes the present time.
Religion	Spirituality Spiritual beliefs	The word 'religion' tends to refer mainly to western religions. Note, however, that many Aboriginal people are religious in terms of mainstream religions, and often combine these beliefs with Aboriginal spirituality.
Myths	Cultural stories	Words such as 'myth', 'mythology' or 'story' convey the impression that information from the Dreaming is not true or is trivial, only happened in the distant past, or are fairy tales rather than creation stories. But for Aboriginal people they are true and express "deep and meaningful stories of their ancestors and their ancestral spirits". ^[1] Dreaming stories inform about law, family relationships, relationships to the land and sea, food gathering etc.
Mythology	Creation/Dreaming stories	
Folklore	Ceremonial stories	
Legends	Historical stories	
Story	Spiritual stories	You can use 'Songlines' "because [a creation story] comes in song and dance and ceremony and speech and togetherness and Spirit and with oneness". ^[1]
Stories	Teachings from the Dreaming/s Spiritual beliefs Songlines Legends (Torres Strait Islander people only)	It is appropriate to use 'The Legends' when referring to Torres Strait Islander culture. 'Creation Stories' or 'Dreaming Stories' convey more respect for Aboriginal Australian people's beliefs. Capitalising these terms conveys more respect.
Corroboree	Ceremony Celebration the local language word Aboriginal dance	'Corroboree' is a colloquial term that belongs to the Botany Bay dialect 'Korabra' and has been generalised to explain all Aboriginal ceremonies. Some Aboriginal people use this term and such usage needs to be respected. "Ceremony" and "celebration" are useful general terms to use in the context of the classroom. ^[4] When possible, use the local language group's word, for example, the Pitjantjatjara word is Inma, the Kurna word is Palti, the Ngarrindjeri word is Ngikawallin, the Narrunga word is Gurribunguroo, the Yolngu word is Bungul, the Western Arrarnta word for women's ceremony is Nthapa, and the Eastern Arrente word for men's ceremony is Urnteme.

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Traditional law	Lore	Aboriginal lore describes the knowledge and practices that are as important to an Aboriginal community as Western laws are to New Australians. Lores vary from group to group, just as laws vary between countries. Use "law" to refer to Australian law and avoid "traditional law" to avoid confusion between the "law" and "lore". [4]
Law	the local language word Traditional lore	
References to culture and spirituality		
Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Pre-history	Aboriginal (Australian) history	'Pre-history' is a term used by some archaeologists and historians and originally denoted the time period before European history was recorded in writing. The term suggests that Aboriginal people did not have a history before European invasion, because it is not written and recorded.
Prehistoric	Pre-invasion history	
Pre-settlement	Invasion history	It also denies a place for Aboriginal people in history. This is still reflected in those schools today which begin a study of Australian history in 1770 or 1788. Using the term 'invasion' recognises what happened when Captain Cook arrived in Australia, rather than the romanticised notion of 'discovery' or '(peaceful) settlement'.
Discovery	Post-invasion history	
Stone Age	Pre and post contact	
Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for 40,000 years...	Since the beginning of the Dreaming/s... Since the beginning of time...	40,000 years (or any other number) puts a limit on the occupation of Australia and thus tends to lend support to migration theories and anthropological assumptions. Many Aboriginal people see this sort of measurement and quantifying as inappropriate. 'Since the beginning of the Dreaming/s' reflects the beliefs of many Aboriginal people that they have always been in Australia, from the beginning of time.
Captain Cook discovered Australia	Captain Cook was the first Englishman to map the east coast of 'New Holland'	Aboriginal people lived in Australia long before Captain Cook arrived; hence it was impossible for Cook to 'discover' Australia. Most Aboriginal people find the use of the word 'discovery' offensive.
Settlement	Invasion Colonisation Occupation	'Settlement' has a peaceful implication and ignores the reality of Aboriginal frontier wars, <u>massacres</u> and Aboriginal peoples' lands being stolen from them. From an Aboriginal perspective, Australia was invaded, occupied and colonised. Aboriginal peoples' lands were stolen from them, and countless died in the many wars they fought against the invaders. Describing the arrival of the Europeans as a 'settlement' is a UK-centric, rather than an Australian, point of view.
Skirmish	Massacre	Using 'skirmish' or related terms hides the fact that many incidents where Aboriginal people died were extremely violent and included men, women and children.
Encounter		

Instead of these words...	use these...	because...
Killing		Use 'massacre' if an act resulted in the killing of "a number of usually helpless or unresisting human beings under circumstances of atrocity or cruelty" (<i>Merriam-Webster Dictionary</i> definition) and where "6 or more people died" (Part of University of Newcastle's <i>Colonial Frontier Massacres in Eastern Australia 1788-1872</i> project's definition of a 'massacre'). Councils have started to recognise the term 'massacre' as appropriate for memorial inscriptions. [5]
[insert explorers' names] were the first men to [cross/reach/find]...	[insert explorers' names] were the first European men to [cross/reach/find]...	Aboriginal men, women and children had crossed/reached/found Australia's landmarks for thousands of years before European explorers.
Walkabout	Gone missing Disappeared Cannot be found	'Walkabout' for many Aboriginal people is a contentious word and considered an archaic colonial term. Its use by non-Aboriginal people is considered inappropriate. Groups such as Reconciliation Queensland Inc advise against its use when discussing Aboriginal culture. [6]
References to history		
Examples for inclusive writing		
Instead of writing this...		write this...
The Government's new strategy will support increased business with Aboriginals.		The Government's new strategy will support increased business with Aboriginal people.
Most Australians continue to see Aboriginal people...		Most non-Aboriginal Australians continue to see Aboriginal people...
Ambiguous use of 'people' and 'peoples'		At the time of European invasion, there were approximately 600 Aboriginal peoples. ('Peoples' is used to describe the groups of Aboriginal people, each with their own language, cultural practices and beliefs.) At the time of European invasion, there were between 300,000 and 1 million Aboriginal people living in Australia. ('People' refers to more than one person.)
...involving them in policy making decisions...		...involving members of the Aboriginal community in policy making decisions...
If you people need...		If the Aboriginal community needs...
First settlers in Australia...		First Europeans in Australia...
Best way to write		
Offensive terms not to be used anytime		

Instead of writing this...		write this...	
• 25%, 50% Aboriginal •	•	Gin	• Abo
• ATSI	•	Blacks	• Boong
• Coconut	•	Coloured	• Coon
• Full-blood	•	Half-caste	• Inferior
• Jacki Jacki	•	Lubra	• Mixed blood
• Native	•	Nigger	• Part-Aboriginal
• Primitive	•	Quarter-caste	• Savage
• Sooty	•	Stone Age	• Them
• Them people	•	Those folk	• Those people
• Uncivilised	•	You people	• Darky

Source: Appropriate words & terminology for Aboriginal topics - Creative Spirits, retrieved from

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