



# LOCAL DECISION MAKING

NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances  
(NCARA)

Local Decision Making Accord



Aboriginal  
Affairs



OCHRE

*Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment*



Local Decision Making



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## Preamble

This Accord sets out how the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government will work together.

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances is made up of Aboriginal chairs and delegates representing a network of Aboriginal Regional Alliances across NSW.

The strength of the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances is the network of regional alliances and diverse community bodies and organisations that make up their membership and inform its leadership and advocacy at the state level.

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances provides a point of coordination and collaboration across regions. It aims to support and drive initiatives that reclaim, renew and return Aboriginal people to prosperity, by shifting decision-making about government services from the centre to the grassroots. This work is strengthened through this Accord as it articulates mutual service delivery priorities and goals negotiated between the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government.

The Accord recognises the need to foster collaboration and deliver outcomes through co-design. Through this Accord, the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government seek to uphold the principles of local decision making by ensuring Aboriginal communities fully participate in the design, delivery and implementation of services and projects.

This Accord and the relationship between the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government exists for the benefit of Aboriginal peoples but also the benefit and wellbeing of all peoples that call NSW home.

## 1. Introduction

The Accord between the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government is based on the principle of self-determination and recognises that Aboriginal leaders and communities understand their own needs and have the ability to develop and manage their own solutions.

It is underpinned by a commitment to respectful relationships and recognition of the need to heal the hurt and injury caused by past government policies. Both parties, through this Accord, commit to respectful consultation, collaboration and negotiation to co-design solutions.

The Accord also recognises and builds on the positive work undertaken by regional alliances and the NSW Government at a local, regional and state level to fundamentally and positively change the relationship between Aboriginal communities and government, and enable Aboriginal communities to participate fully in decision making concerning service design and delivery.

## 2. Parties to the Agreement

Parties to this Accord acknowledge that self-determination is a fundamental factor in generating sustained socio-economic development and wellbeing in Aboriginal communities.

The Parties agree to work together constructively and in good faith to address the objectives and priorities agreed to in this Accord:

### The State of NSW

The State of NSW acknowledges that the matters dealt with in this Accord are binding on the NSW Government and its agencies. The State of NSW authorises NSW Government agencies to participate to meet the terms of the Accord.

### The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances enters into this Accord on behalf of its regional alliances and in partnership with the NSW Government and agrees to work in partnership to meet the terms of this Accord

## 3. Objectives

In the spirit of partnership, the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government jointly commit to work together and with Aboriginal peoples to reclaim, renew and return Aboriginal peoples to prosperity by:

### Focusing on communities

The primary focus of this Agreement is the wellbeing and prosperity of Aboriginal peoples and communities. Parties commit to the principles of Local Decision Making by ensuring Aboriginal communities participate in the co-design, delivery and implementation of services and projects.

### Expanding the Local Decision Making footprint

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government commit to working in partnership to expand the Local Decision Making footprint across NSW to ensure equity and opportunity in decision making for all Aboriginal peoples across NSW.

### Learning through exchange

Information and data on outcomes is critical for building the case for change and enabling the devolution of decision-making power to regional alliances. Through this Agreement, parties will share information and data to inform decisions about service design and delivery.

## Strengthening the framework and relationship

For Aboriginal communities and government to work together effectively and meaningfully there needs to be respectful negotiation and dealings. Through this Accord, the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and NSW Government will meet and work together based on principles of; knowledge sharing, joint decision making, co-design and informed consent.

### 4. Focus areas

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government agree to work together to address the following focus areas:

- Decreasing the number of Aboriginal youth entering the juvenile justice system including incarceration rates and recidivism;
- Improving early childhood outcomes for Aboriginal children under 5, giving consideration to school-readiness, participation in pre-school education, health outcomes and family engagement.

Additional areas for action under this Agreement include:

- Strengthening the relationship between the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and the NSW Government; and
- Recurring hard-to-address issues arising from Regional Accords.

### 5. Agreed priorities

This Accord commits the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances and NSW Government to the commencement of a formal process for negotiation of priorities, targets and timeframes to address agreed focus areas.

Specific priority areas will be negotiated progressively with relevant Schedules appended to this Accord as they are completed.

Formal negotiations will commence in May 2019 prioritising engagement with government agencies to reduce the number of Aboriginal youth entering the juvenile justice system, including incarceration and recidivism.

The Parties to this Accord recognise that considerable work has already been undertaken to identify areas for further joint work and agree to work together to develop targets, strategies and timeframes.

## 6. Duration and amendment

The Accord commences once it is ratified by the Chairperson of NCARA, on behalf of NCARA and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on behalf of the NSW Government.

The Accord will continue in force for three (3) years from the date it is ratified, or until the Parties agree to terminate the Accord or prepare another document that replaces this Accord.

This Accord and the attached Schedules can be amended by agreement of both Parties.

## 7. Dispute Resolution

Any disputes that arise during negotiation or implementation will be managed consistent with the [Local Decision Making Dispute Resolution and Loss of Faith Policy](#).

## 8. Governance arrangements and structure

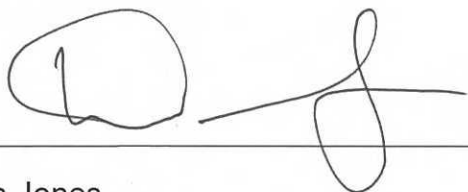
Agencies responsible for actions and commitments under this Accord:

- Commit to meeting with NCARA on a regular basis in accordance with the relevant schedule;
- Will jointly review and monitor progress of agreed initiatives;
- Will provide appropriate representation determined by delegation, knowledge and cultural competency to allow timely and effective decision making.

Governance, Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements consistent with the principles of knowledge sharing, joint decision making and co-design will be included as part of each schedule.

This Agreement commences on 27 February 2019.

Signed for and on behalf of the **NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances**  
by:



Mr Des Jones

Chair of the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances



Signed for and on behalf of the **State of NSW** by:



The Hon. Sarah Mitchell MLC

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

