



Education
Aboriginal Affairs



**Aboriginal Affairs,
Department of Education**
Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Message from the Head of Aboriginal Affairs



It gives me great pleasure to present our 2016-2019 Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Affairs.

Our plan links our day to day work with the NSW Government's commitment to promoting economic, social and cultural development opportunities for Aboriginal people in NSW. Our plan sets the direction of Aboriginal Affairs for the next 3 years, and will ensure our efforts are focussed towards achieving our strategic goals.

Our values, vision and priorities reflect a fresh and forward looking approach for the agency that is consistent with the directions of *OCHRE*, the NSW Government's plan, and current trends for Indigenous affairs agencies in comparable international jurisdictions such as Canada, New Zealand and the United States.

We know from the evidence that supporting community led governance, economic development and cultural expression improves community health and well-being by increasing confidence and reducing reliance on government.

Aboriginal Affairs occupies a unique position within the NSW Government – we have the privilege of embedding Aboriginal voices and perspectives into policy development, implementation and evaluation. We have adopted “Truth and Recognition” as a core value to reflect our distinctive role.

I look forward to sharing our progress and the lessons learnt under this plan with our stakeholders and invite you to work with us to implement our initiatives and build a reimagined Aboriginal NSW where our First Peoples prosper and thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Ardler".

– Jason Ardler
Head of Aboriginal Affairs
15 December 2015

Our Vision

Aboriginal people in NSW are determining their own futures.

Aboriginal Affairs works with Aboriginal communities to promote social, economic and cultural wellbeing through opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility and empowerment.

We implement *OCHRE*, the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal affairs, establish partnerships for economic prosperity, support effective Aboriginal community governance and strengthen cultural identity and language.

Our Values

Aboriginal Affairs has a unique role in government. Our difference is described in our agency's core value.

Our Core Value – Truth and Recognition:

- We value Aboriginal cultures.
- We embed Aboriginal voices into our work.
- We promote Aboriginal people's rights and interests.
- We promote healing and respect.
- We recognise Aboriginal leadership and empowerment.

Values of the NSW Public Service

As part of the NSW Public Service, Aboriginal Affairs also adopts the values of:

- Integrity
- Trust
- Service
- Accountability

Aboriginal languages have been spoken for a millennia and Aboriginal philosophies and Aboriginal ethics are deeply embedded into their meaning.

YINDYAMARRRA is a *Wiradjuri* word that means ***respect, honour, be polite, be gentle and to go slow.***

WINANGALI is a *Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuawaalayaay* word that means ***to hear, to listen, to know, to remember.***

These words speak broadly to the English words of Truth and Recognition and are at the heart of the work we do every day to realise our vision of Aboriginal people in NSW determining their own futures.

Introduction

We will focus on key priority areas:

1. Culture and healing
2. Leadership in government
3. Growing New South Wales' first economy
4. Strengthening governance and capacity
5. Strengthening our foundations.

The following section details the actions we will undertake over the next three years and the outcomes we aim to achieve.

1. Culture and Healing

Actions

- 1.1 Support an Aboriginal community led agenda to reclaim and revitalise Aboriginal cultural expression in NSW.
- 1.2 Work to strengthen Aboriginal identity, cultural connections and languages.
- 1.3 Promote healing and respectful dealings with Aboriginal people across government by translating dialogue into practice.
- 1.4 Support key contemporary Aboriginal cultural events in regional areas.
- 1.5 Ensure Aboriginal people have access to information held by the former Aboriginal Welfare Board.

Outcomes

Aboriginal peoples' knowledge and expertise in language, culture and identity strengthened.

Members of the Stolen Generations supported.

Healing is supported through government and community collaboration.

Aboriginal Welfare Board records accessible.

2. Leadership in government

Actions

- 2.1 Lead or influence strategic policy reforms to support the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal people.
- 2.2 Develop and promote evidence to inform effective policy and strategy.
- 2.3 Share lessons learnt in the implementation of the NSW Government's Aboriginal Affairs Plan (*OCHRE*).
- 2.4 Bring Aboriginal voices into government decision making.
- 2.5 Deliver Solution Brokerage, which requires NSW Government agencies to work together to find practical solutions on issues that might otherwise fall between the cracks.

Outcomes

- Aboriginal perspectives reflected in policies affecting Aboriginal well-being.
- Policy reforms that address complex cross government issues.
- Evidence-based policy and strategy.
- Practical solutions built on collaboration between NSW Government agencies, Aboriginal communities, NGOs and other tiers of government.
- Productive local and national partnerships across governments and the non-government sector and corporate sectors.

3. Growing New South Wales' first economy

Actions

- 3.1 Develop and implement the Aboriginal Economic Prosperity Framework for NSW.
- 3.2 Support Aboriginal communities to participate in regional economies.
- 3.3 Facilitate economic opportunities by connecting Aboriginal communities, industry and government.
- 3.4 Remove land use planning, management and infrastructure barriers to help realise the economic potential of Aboriginal land.
- 3.5 Administer the *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983* to support the capacity of Aboriginal Land Councils to deliver tangible economic, social and cultural benefits to Aboriginal communities.

- 3.6 Establish an Aboriginal Centre for Excellence in Western Sydney.

Outcomes

- Increased Aboriginal participation in the economy through jobs and business ownership.
- The realisation of Aboriginal aspirations for employment and wealth creation.
- Sustainability achieved for existing community infrastructure, including water and sewerage, in discreet Aboriginal communities.
- Resolution of land claims to support the social, cultural and economic goals of Aboriginal land councils.

4. Strengthening governance and capacity

Actions

- 4.1 Build the legitimacy of the Aboriginal jurisdictional view in Government.
- 4.2 Strengthen Aboriginal community governance and leadership to drive improved service delivery and local accountability.
- 4.3 Work collaboratively with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the Local Aboriginal Land Council Network to build governance capability and improve the councils' sustainability.

Outcomes

- Aboriginal jurisdictional views evident in Government decisions.
- Improved service delivery through Aboriginal community leadership and management.
- Better targeted government investments that reflect community priorities.
- A sustainable Aboriginal Land Council network.

5. Strengthening our foundations

Actions

- 5.1 Uphold Public Service values.
- 5.2 Promote practices that foster collaboration within Aboriginal Affairs.
- 5.3 Encourage and support continuous learning for our employees.
- 5.4 Develop a long-term workforce planning framework.
- 5.5 Build leadership capabilities.
- 5.6 Recognise and reward achievement.
- 5.7 Cultivate a culturally competent and safe workplace.

Outcomes

- A demonstrated commitment to inclusive practice.
- A workforce that can respond to changes in the community, the Agency and in government expectations.
- The Agency as an employer of choice for young Aboriginal professionals.

