



Fact sheet

April 2015

Solution Brokerage

Through OCHRE, the Aboriginal affairs plan, the NSW Government has established a whole of government accountability framework for brokering solutions to improve outcomes in Aboriginal communities.

What is Solution Brokerage?

Solution brokerage is the coordinated management of critical issues and opportunities to bring about improved outcomes in Aboriginal communities. It includes service and policy integration and coordination to ensure policy reforms deliver their full potential and do not have unintentional consequences for, or at odds with, other reforms.

It requires agencies to work together and collaborate with Aboriginal communities, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and other tiers of government to find practical solutions.

Why was the Solution Brokerage role developed?

Many programs, initiatives and policies are currently being implemented by multiple organisations in Aboriginal communities. This complex landscape of service provision and policy can be confusing, and is viewed as wasteful and failing to enhance capacity in the local community.

Solution Brokerage requires agencies to work together and collaborate with Aboriginal communities, NGOs and other tiers of government to find practical solutions to multifaceted issues.

How are Solution Brokerage issues identified?

Care and discretion must be exercised in taking on the solution broker function as resources are limited and must be applied effectively and efficiently.

Aboriginal affairs will identify potential issues for solution brokerage in the course of its business.

Any third party, including Aboriginal communities, government agencies, NGOs and or community organisations can also nominate potential solution brokerage issues to Aboriginal Affairs.

How are solution brokerage issues declared?

The authority to invoke the solution broker functions is vested in the Head of Aboriginal Affairs.

For a solution broker issue to be declared, it must:

- require multiple agency engagement to resolve the issue or maximise the opportunity;
- be 'significant' (defined as the potential to bring about significant benefit or significant harm);
- be able to be managed to a point where a sustainable solution can be put in place and maintained in the short to medium term (within 6 months);
- be able to be managed within existing workload and resource levels; and
- be a current issue (it is not the role of solution brokerage to investigate past action or review past performance as these review functions sit within the role of the NSW Ombudsman and NSW Auditor General).

Aboriginal Affairs will consult with other NSW Government agencies before declaring Solution Brokerage issues.

What functions does the Solution Brokerage role cover?

The solution broker role covers three broad functions, including:

- Coordination; this includes both service and policy integration to drive improvement.
- Emergency response; in these instances, government needs to identify priority responses, work with community leaders, coordinate delivery of outcomes and monitor and direct resources.
- Problem solving and advocacy; in these instances the solution broker role will focus on coordination and problem solving.

How will Aboriginal Affairs respond to a declared Solution Brokerage issue?

A three tiered approach to solution brokerage has been adopted to enable tailored responses to range of issues at different scales and complexity.

The highest tier, Level Three, is for major policy reform integration, extraordinary or state-wide issues or issues that require directed agency response. Tier Two issues will be more complex local or regional issues that will be addressed through regional governance mechanisms. Tier One includes local or place specific issues that require minimal cross-agency input, primarily involving engagement with Aboriginal communities and other local stakeholders.

Who manages Solution Brokerage issues once they have been declared?

All declared solution brokerage issues will have an Officer in Charge assigned who will be responsible for managing and coordinating the response.

They will oversee the development and implementation of a Solution Brokerage Response Plan, working with a project team of government and non-government stakeholders.

Depending on the tier assigned, the Officer in Charge may either be an Aboriginal Affairs' Senior Regional Coordinator, an Aboriginal Affairs senior executive or the Head of Aboriginal Affairs. Staff from other NSW Government agencies may also be nominated as an Officer in Charge.

Are all your questions answered?

In the first instance refer to the Aboriginal Affairs website at www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au

If you need further assistance, email or ring Aboriginal Affairs head office on:

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