Aboriginal Affairs Strategic Plan
Year Two Progress Report 2017
Two years ago we launched the Aboriginal Affairs Strategic Plan, which links the work of our agency with the NSW Government’s commitment to promoting economic, social and cultural development opportunities for Aboriginal people in NSW.

The principle and practice of genuine co-design continues to underpin all of our efforts to deliver on our five Strategic Priorities and transform the relationship between Government and Aboriginal communities.

I am pleased to provide this Year Two Progress Report (2017) outlining our achievements to date, and our ongoing and future commitments under the Strategic Plan.

NSW continues to lead the way in Aboriginal affairs reform with a forward looking strengths-based agenda that rejects deficit approaches focused on disadvantage.

We have continued to embed Aboriginal perspectives and experiences into all our work, while building the trust of communities by respecting cultural and language protocols.

Some of our achievements, such as our work on the Stolen Generations’ Reparations Scheme and the enactment of the NSW Aboriginal Languages Act 2017 - the first Act of its kind in Australia - have been recognised publicly at state and national levels. Other achievements, including our progress toward resolving complex problems through Solution Brokerage, have been less visible but no less significant for local Aboriginal communities.

I believe our unwavering commitment to a self-determining future for Aboriginal communities in NSW and our disciplined approach to working closely with Aboriginal people is at the core of our success.

I would like to thank everyone in my team who has worked tirelessly to advance the social, economic and cultural outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW over the last 12 months.

Jason Ardler
Head of Agency, Aboriginal Affairs

6 March 2018
Key Highlights & Deeper Insights

**Solution Brokerage**

"Aboriginal communities are over serviced and under delivered" [Aboriginal community member, Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal affairs community consultation, 2013]

Whilst said nearly 5 years ago, this statement still resonates. In nearly every conversation Aboriginal Affairs has with communities across NSW, this sentiment and frustration is raised.

Solution Brokerage is an innovative approach that attempts to cut through bureaucracy and solve issues in partnership with Aboriginal communities that "fall through the cracks". Administrative power is vested by the Premier and the Head of Aboriginal Affairs to declare an issue for solution brokerage – never in the Agency's history has this type of authority been given by Government.

In 2017, two matters declared under Solution Brokerage were successfully resolved. The first was the signing of an Accord to resolve the long-standing issues for the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) from the 1999 Eden Regional Forest Agreement, including in relation to the management of public land, economic development opportunities and access to conservation lands for cultural purposes.

The second saw the completion of a Response Plan to respond to the complex needs of the Bowraville community following the murders of three Aboriginal children. This declaration aimed to resolve issues adversely impacting community resilience, cohesion, healing, social harmony and quality of life for the whole of the community in Bowraville. This declaration is unique in that this Solution Brokerage was declared for the whole of the Bowraville community. This whole of community approach gives a great opportunity for the community to drive the coordination of agency services to achieve good community outcomes.


**OCHRE Evaluation**

Co-design, collaboration, engagement: don't just throw trendy words around [Easton, S (2017)].

As part of our commitment to genuine and meaningful co-design with Aboriginal communities the evaluation of OCHRE puts Aboriginal communities in control – not government, not the evaluator. Aboriginal communities decide if they want to be part of the evaluation and Aboriginal communities determine the measures of success for each OCHRE initiative that is to be evaluated.

The approach to the evaluation of OCHRE has been taken in response to the legacy of community mistrust of Western researchers and evaluators. Its success hinges on the forging of strong, respectful and collaborative relationships between Aboriginal communities and the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of NSW (SPRC) who have been engaged to undertake the evaluation.

The Agency’s regional staff are playing a critical role in building this invaluable trust, by bridging the gap between Aboriginal and Western approaches to evaluation.

Over the past year our regional staff have supported the SPRC and Aboriginal communities to co-design their approaches to the evaluation and to collect the information needed. Co-design was completed for Local Decision Making in the Murrin Paaki and Illawarra Wingecarribee regions, the Tamworth and Campbelltown Opportunity Hubs, and the Gumbaynggirr and North West Wiradjuri Language and Culture Nests. Data collection was completed or is in progress for all but one of these areas.

While many complexities and challenges have arisen from this work, an opportunity has also arisen to create a new future for policy reform – one that builds the evidence with Aboriginal people using Aboriginal approaches and knowledge to deliver benefits to Aboriginal communities across NSW.

To read more about this project, visit: https://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/conversations/ochre.

**Stolen Generations**

We suffered collectively and we need to heal collectively [Evidence, Aunty Lorraine Peeters, 5 February 2016, referenced in the General Purpose Standing Committee Report into Reparations for the Stolen Generations]

Over the past year, Aboriginal Affairs continued to work to implement the commitments made in the NSW Government’s response to the Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Reparations for the Stolen Generations. This follows the announcement of a reparations package of more than $73 million in 2016.

Two of the major recommendations of the Inquiry were the establishment of a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme offering one-off payments of $75,000 to survivors without the need for a lengthy and arduous legal process, and a $5 million Stolen Generations healing fund over 10 years to address the impacts of trauma for survivors and for their families, descendants and communities.

Aboriginal Affairs established the Healing and Reparations Directorate within the agency to implement recommendations within the Agency’s responsibility. The Directorate has worked closely with the Stolen Generations Organisations to establish the Stolen Generations Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee ensures that the voices of Stolen Generations survivors are heard by Government and that the NSW Government commitments in Unfinished Business are implemented swiftly, effectively and respectfully but most importantly in partnership with Stolen Generations survivors.

More than 970 applications for reparation funding have been received, and more than $20 million has been paid to date to Stolen Generations survivors in reparation payments alone.


**Aboriginal Languages**

We are going to see major changes in our communities. Why? Because we are going to be in leadership. [Dr. Ray Kelly at the introduction of Aboriginal Languages Act into Parliament, 13 October 2017]

Aboriginal languages are part of the cultural heritage of all people in NSW. Past government policies and practices meant Aboriginal languages were almost lost, only spoken in secret and passed on through Aboriginal families.

In 2016, Aboriginal Affairs laid the foundations for Aboriginal languages legislation in NSW and in October 2017, the Minister introduced a landmark Bill into the Legislative Council to support the revival of Aboriginal languages. Communities helped shape the legislation, through their contributions to 32 meetings and workshops held with Aboriginal communities and language experts at 16 locations across NSW. The consultations highlighted the importance of First Peoples’ ownership of, and control over, language activities, something that has been further acknowledged in the Bill.

Community members actively participated in the introduction of the Bill into Parliament with a poignant message stick ceremony and a speech on the floor of the NSW Parliament by Dhungulhi man, Dr. Ray Kelly, a leader in the Aboriginal languages community.

Aboriginal language leaders from across NSW passed a message stick from one to another, as they acknowledged Country in their own language, a potent symbol of Aboriginal peoples’ custodianship of languages.

With the passage of the Aboriginal Languages Act 2017, NSW became the first Australian state to explicitly acknowledge in law the unique value and importance of Aboriginal languages.

There is more work to be done. Over the next two years, a statutory trust will be established to advise the NSW Government, to resource and coordinate local language activities, and to empower NSW’s First Peoples to teach and direct the teaching and use of languages within government institutions. The Trust’s work will be based on a five-year strategic plan, which must be developed within two years of the Act coming into force.

Strategic Priority 1
Culture and Healing

The outcomes we are seeking are:
• Aboriginal peoples’ knowledge and expertise in language, culture and identity are strengthened
• Members of the Stolen Generations are supported
• Healing supported through government and community collaboration
• Aboriginal Welfare Board records are accessible
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<th>WHAT WE AIM TO DO</th>
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| **1.1** Support an Aboriginal community led agenda to reclaim and revitalise Aboriginal cultural expression in NSW | **In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**  
- supported the Minister to pass the *Aboriginal Languages Act* through both houses of the NSW Parliament in October 2017, with an historic ceremony and celebration to accompany the introduction of the Bill into the Legislative Council  
- worked in partnership with the Office of Environment and Heritage, other state agencies, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and other stakeholders to develop draft stand-alone Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation and to commence community consultations.  
**In 2018, our next steps are to**  
- initiate the establishment phase of the *Aboriginal Languages Act*, including setting up the Aboriginal Languages Trust and developing the first five-year Aboriginal Languages Strategic Plan  
- advocate strongly for stand-alone Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation to be introduced into the Parliament. |

| **1.2** Work to strengthen Aboriginal identity, cultural connections and languages | **In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**  
- provided funding for NSW language stakeholders to attend the national Puliima Languages Conference in Cairns.  
**In 2018, our next steps are to**  
- establish the Aboriginal Languages Trust that will take over the management of languages grants from 2019. |
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<td><strong>1.3</strong> Promote healing and respectful dealings with Aboriginal people across government by translating dialogue into practice</td>
<td><strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong></td>
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<td>• worked in partnership with the Healing Foundation and with local planning committees to deliver four <em>OCHRE</em> Healing Forums in Terrigal, Mount Druitt, Griffith and Grafton</td>
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<td>• collaborated with Stolen Generations survivor organisations (SGOs) to implement the NSW Government’s response to <em>Unfinished business – Reparations for the Stolen Generations</em></td>
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<td>• commenced the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme on 1 July 2017</td>
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<td>• established the Stolen Generations Advisory Council</td>
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<td>• implemented recommendation 13 of the NSW Government response to the Law and Justice Standing Committee report <em>The family response to the murders in Bowraville</em> by supporting the healing needs of the children’s families and the Bowraville community</td>
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<td>• completed the implementation of recommendation 15 of the NSW Government response to the Law and Justice Standing Committee report <em>The family response to the murders in Bowraville</em> recommending the establishment of four new memorials honouring the murdered Bowraville children with the unveiling of Evelyn Greenup’s memorial.</td>
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<td><strong>In 2018, our next steps are to</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• deliver two <em>OCHRE</em> Healing Forums in Orange and Kempsey</td>
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<td>• publish a report on the <em>OCHRE</em> Healing Forums with permission from community.</td>
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<td><strong>1.4</strong> Support key contemporary Aboriginal cultural events in regional areas</td>
<td><strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong></td>
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<td>• provided support to 117 NAIDOC Week community cultural events and activities across NSW from the $200,000 NAIDOC grants budget</td>
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<td>• awarded $111,200 in cultural grants to support community events including the installation of cultural and historical signs in La Perouse, Elders Olympics and fishing clinics</td>
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<td>• developed an Aboriginal Affairs grants policy aligned with our Culture and Healing strategic objectives</td>
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<td>Ensure Aboriginal people have access to information held by the former Aboriginal Welfare Board</td>
<td>• continued to support Aboriginal men’s and women’s groups across NSW, including the North and South Coasts and the Greater West, through definition of purpose and capacity building, and established networks across the regions to connect communities with culture and progress healing</td>
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<td>• supported the Premier’s Reconciliation event at the Sydney Opera House recognising the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum</td>
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<td>• supported the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and NSW Parliament to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Bringing Them Home Report in parliament alongside members of the Stolen Generation</td>
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<td>• supported Aboriginal Affairs staff to recognise and celebrate NAIDOC Week.</td>
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<td><strong>In 2018, our next steps are to</strong></td>
<td>• implement revised procedures for the Aboriginal Affairs cultural grants including conversion to an online process using SmartyGrants</td>
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1.5 Ensure Aboriginal people have access to information held by the former Aboriginal Welfare Board

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

• developed and implemented changes to improve access to personal records and historical searches in consultation with NSW Stolen Generations organisations

• managed family records so that the NSW Government’s response to *Unfinished business – Reparations for the Stolen Generations* can be implemented efficiently, and with minimal evidentiary burden on claimants

• assisted approximately 240 people gain access to personal and family records held in Government archives through the Family Records Service.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**

• implement recommendations from the *Family Records Service Strategic Review* to improve and streamline access to the former Aborigines Welfare Board records

• commence the History Project to contextualise the former Aborigines Welfare Board records.
Strategic Priority 2
Leadership in Government

The outcomes we are seeking are:

- Aboriginal perspectives are 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, Non-Government Organisations and other tiers of government
- Productive local and national partnerships across governments and the non-government sector and corporate sectors
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| 2.1 Lead or influence strategic policy reforms to support the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal people | In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs  
- continued to participate in priority reform processes across Government that align with the strategic priorities of Aboriginal Affairs and support the Minister to influence future policy reforms in Cabinet and Parliament  
- promoted a strengths-based approach to policy and program development, rejecting approaches centred around gaps or deficits  
- within the reporting period Aboriginal Affairs prepared over 645 pieces of advice for Government and over 85 pieces of advice for Cabinet  
- supported the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances (NCARA) to develop their Strategic Plan |
| 2.2 Develop and promote evidence to inform effective policy and strategy | In 2018, our next steps are to  
- support the NCARA to successfully negotiate a state-wide Accord with the NSW Government  
- update and rejuvenate OCHRE, the NSW Government’s community-based plan for Aboriginal affairs based on the continuing conversations the Agency has had over the last 5 years with community. |

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs  
- published *Transforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the NSW Government: Aboriginal Affairs NSW research agenda 2018-2023* to deliver evidence to inform change in NSW Aboriginal affairs policy  
- supported the evaluation of *OCHRE* through co-design and fieldwork with Aboriginal communities  
- supported the *OCHRE* evaluation Steering Committee  
- published multiple research reports on topics including a history of land recovery in NSW, devolving decision-making to Aboriginal communities, and a review of best practice for Aboriginal public servants in their dual roles as Aboriginal community members and public servants  
- supported the Advisory Group on Aboriginal Affairs Research.
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<td>In 2018, our next steps are to</td>
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<td>• promote the research priorities in <em>Transforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the NSW Government: Aboriginal Affairs NSW research agenda 2018-2023</em> and establish research partnerships</td>
<td>• publish a report on the first stage of the <em>OCHRE</em> evaluation</td>
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<td>• commence three research projects arising from the Aboriginal Affairs’ research agenda</td>
<td>• implement the Department of Education Planning and Audit team audit recommendations to strengthen the governance of <em>OCHRE</em> to support delivery of key initiatives</td>
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<td>• support Aboriginal communities to review and disseminate the findings of the <em>OCHRE</em> evaluation</td>
<td>• implement the findings from the review of <em>OCHRE</em>'s State-wide Industry Based Agreements</td>
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<td>• publish a case study on community consent and co-design in evaluation</td>
<td>• commence an update and rejuvenation of <em>OCHRE</em> to ensure it remains current, relevant and representative of Aboriginal voices and aspirations.</td>
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<td>• establish a process for sharing knowledge between Aboriginal affairs and the research sector.</td>
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2.3 Share lessons learnt in the implementation of the NSW Government’s Aboriginal Affairs plan (*OCHRE*)

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

- brought together representatives from all Australian Governments to share practise and insight into resetting the relationship with Aboriginal People
- participated in a workshop in the Northern Territory to share experiences and knowledge with community and government in Local Decision Making
- published *OCHRE: Four years on*, complemented by stories from public servants, sharing their experiences as participants in Local Decision Making
- published a literature review of approaches to Aboriginal affairs policies and a case study on the development and implementation of *OCHRE*
- published a review of *OCHRE*'s State-wide Industry Based Agreements
- accepted the recommendations of the Department of Education Performance and Audit team to strengthen the governance arrangements for *OCHRE*
- supported Aboriginal communities to develop and agree on how success will be assessed for the *OCHRE* evaluation.

In 2018, our next steps are to

- publish a report on the first stage of the *OCHRE* evaluation
- implement the Department of Education Planning and Audit team audit recommendations to strengthen the governance of *OCHRE* to support delivery of key initiatives
- implement the findings from the review of *OCHRE*'s State-wide Industry Based Agreements
- commence an update and rejuvenation of *OCHRE* to ensure it remains current, relevant and representative of Aboriginal voices and aspirations.
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<td><strong>2.4</strong> Bring Aboriginal voices into government decision-making</td>
<td><strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong></td>
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<td>• held 32 workshops about the Aboriginal Languages Bill in 16 locations across NSW, in two rounds (Lightning Ridge, Bourke, Moruya, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Dubbo, Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Dareton, Tamworth, Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Taree, Sydney, Mount Druitt and Moree)</td>
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<td>• supported a regional approach to the <em>OCHRE</em> evaluation that enables Aboriginal community participation</td>
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<td>• continued to participate in regional forums, cross-agency meetings and local council activities</td>
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<td>• ensured that Aboriginal stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the review and development of Regional Forest Agreements, and other Natural Resource Management reforms</td>
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<td>• increased the potential for the resolution of land claims by supporting the commencement of Aboriginal Land Agreements negotiations with Aboriginal people</td>
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<td>• influenced planning authorities to ensure that discussions regarding land planning, including its economic potential, takes the aspirations of affected Aboriginal communities into account</td>
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<td>• supported the involvement of Aboriginal stakeholders and their contribution to the Review of Travelling Stock Reserves</td>
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<td>• supported a jointly sponsored NSW Government commitment to developing standalone Aboriginal Cultural Heritage legislation that is predicated on an increased Aboriginal role in decision-making</td>
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<td>• using StoryCorps, assisted nine Aboriginal language teachers and tutors to record and publish their stories and their experiences of teaching Aboriginal languages in NSW Government schools</td>
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<td>• commenced the use of Filmpond to support storytelling by Aboriginal communities that highlights their achievements and aspirations.</td>
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| In 2018, our next steps are to | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| • use the information collected through the continuing conversations held between the Agency and Aboriginal communities to update and rejuvenate *OCHRE*, the NSW Government's community-based plan for Aboriginal affairs. |
**WHAT WE AIM TO DO**

**2.5** Deliver Solution Brokerage, which requires NSW Government agencies to work together to find practical solutions to complex issues that might otherwise ‘fall between the cracks’

**WHAT WE ARE DOING**

**In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**

- worked with the Department of Planning and Environment to complete the Solution Brokerage business case and funding submission for the Aboriginal Community Land and Infrastructure Project (ACLIP)
- led the development and coordination of the *Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council – Land and Economic Participation Solution Brokerage Accord* (October 2017 – September 2019) – the Accord has been published
- supported the Jaanymili Bawrunga Bowraville Community Reference Group to identify key community priorities following the declaration of Solution Brokerage in the Bowraville community
- worked with the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment to deliver the Bowraville Solution Brokerage projects, including the Solution Brokerage Response Plan
- commenced an internal review to identify ways to strengthen Solution Brokerage as a key accountability mechanism under *OCHRE*.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**

- finalise and implement the Response Plan for the Aboriginal Community Lands and Infrastructure Project (ACLIP) Solution Brokerage with the Department of Planning and Environment, with an emphasis on identifying options within the planning system to better recognise the economic potential of Aboriginal community-owned land
- commence the implementation of recommendations arising from the review of Solution Brokerage.
Strategic Priority 3
Growing NSW’s First Economy

The outcomes we are seeking are:

- Increased Aboriginal participation in the economy through jobs and business ownership
- The realisation of Aboriginal aspirations for employment and wealth creation
- Sustainability of existing community infrastructure, including water and sewerage, in discrete Aboriginal communities
- Resolution of land claims to support the social, cultural and economic goals of Aboriginal land councils
**WHAT WE AIM TO DO**

### 3.1 Develop and implement the Aboriginal Economic Prosperity Framework for NSW

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

- worked in partnership with the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation to develop a new draft Aboriginal Procurement Policy
- contributed to a review of the Aboriginal Participation in Construction (APIC) Policy
- administered monitoring and reporting obligations under *Growing NSW’s first economy – A framework for Aboriginal economic prosperity*
- published the NSW Government's Response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into economic development in Aboriginal communities in NSW.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**

- finalise the new Aboriginal Procurement Policy and support implementation
- consolidate monitoring, reporting, governance and other organisational arrangements for *Growing NSW’s first economy – A framework for Aboriginal economic prosperity*
- assist in strengthening the coordination of NSW Government efforts by identifying priority focus areas for future NSW Government Aboriginal economic development reform.

### 3.2 Support Aboriginal communities to participate in regional economies

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

- facilitated economic development workshops in the Murdi Paarki region
- assisted the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council to finalise governance and reporting structures for the Bundian Way Advisory Committee
- worked with the Three Rivers Aboriginal Alliance to establish a local Industry Based Agreement to promote Aboriginal business development and employment growth across the Three Rivers Region
- worked with the Department Planning and Environment and the Greater Sydney Commission to ensure that Regional Plans and District Plans prioritised Aboriginal economic participation.
- agreed to negotiate a new social housing system in the Murdi Paaki region that would see greater employment opportunities for Aboriginal People

**In 2018, our next steps are to**

- establish two regional Industry Based Agreements in the Three Rivers and Illawarra-Wingecarribee Local Decision Making regions.
### WHAT WE AIM TO DO

**3.3** Facilitate economic opportunities by connecting Aboriginal communities, industry and government

### WHAT WE ARE DOING

**In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**

- worked with the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and NSW Government agencies to implement an Industry Based Agreement for Aboriginal business development and support
- continued to develop partnerships with local government, private sector bodies and other relevant stakeholders to improve economic development opportunities for Aboriginal communities such as at the Bourke abattoir, Dubbo Hospital and with the Coffs Harbour to Ballina highway upgrade
- supported the NSW Aboriginal Tourism Operators Council (NATOC Inc.) and Destination NSW to grow and develop Aboriginal owned and run tourism business, across urban and regional NSW
- promoted increased use of Aboriginal-owned businesses within Aboriginal Affairs
- established partnerships with government agencies and the private sector to enhance the benefits flowing to Aboriginal businesses from government procurement
- supported the Department of Primary Industry (Fisheries) Aboriginal fishing reforms, including the establishment and administration of the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund
- supported Accord negotiations to achieve economic prosperity, a community priority area for the Illawarra Wingecarribee Alliance Aboriginal Corporation and the Three Rivers Regional Assembly
- supported the Murdi Paarki Regional Assembly to increase the economic prosperity of Aboriginal communities in the Assembly’s footprint, through the Murdi Paaki Local Decision Making Accord.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**

- enhance opportunities for Aboriginal business to provide goods and services to government, through work with the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation.
WHAT WE AIM TO DO

3.4 Remove land use planning, management and infrastructure barriers to help realise the economic potential of Aboriginal land

WHAT WE ARE DOING

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

- participated in the Aboriginal Land Agreement Governance Committee that is managing the implementation of Aboriginal Land Agreements across NSW
- worked with Department of Premier and Cabinet and other relevant agencies to improve the NSW Government’s administration and management of Native Title claims
- provided staffing resources to help develop and implement the Eden Land Management Project
- commenced consultations to establish a municipal services strategy to co-ordinate infrastructure and services in discrete Aboriginal communities
- completed the independent review of the Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewerage Program, informed by the internal audit findings.

In 2018, our next steps are to

- establish a municipal services strategy to co-ordinate infrastructure and services in discrete Aboriginal communities.

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

In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs

- assisted the Minister to progress the Improvement Framework amendment Bill which passed through NSW Parliament in February 2017 and commenced operation on 3 April 2017
- worked with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the Registrar, Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983, to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate implementation of the Improvement Framework

In 2018, our next steps are to

- finalise an MOU between the Registrar, NSWALC, and Aboriginal Affairs for the implementation of the Improvement Framework
- commence discussions with the NSWALC and the Registrar to consider possible amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983 arising out of the 2017 statutory review of the Act.
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<td><strong>3.6</strong> Establish an Aboriginal Centre for Excellence in Western Sydney</td>
<td><strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong></td>
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<td>• established a specialist project team to manage the establishment of the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence, following an unsuccessful Request for Tender</td>
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<td>• appointed a Strategic Director to lead a community engagement program</td>
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<td>• established a Project Advisory Committee comprised of young Aboriginal people, to guide the development of the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence.</td>
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<td><strong>In 2018, our next steps are to</strong></td>
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<td>• implement a communications and engagement strategy to engage with, inspire and activate the community during the establishment of the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence</td>
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<td>• design and complete refurbishment works of the Whalan site for the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence with the guidance of the Project Advisory Committee and the broader community</td>
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<td>• establish a legal entity to run the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence and recruit a Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>• open the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence.</td>
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Strategic Priority 4
Strengthening Governance & Capacity

The outcomes we are seeking are:

• Aboriginal jurisdictional views are 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
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| **4.1** Build the legitimacy of the Aboriginal jurisdictional view in Government | **In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**<br>• developed a business case for enhancing Local Decision Making<br>• updated the NSW Government’s Local Decision Making implementation plan<br>• supported Regional Alliances participating in various phases of Local Decision Making supported the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances (NCARA) to develop their Strategic Plan and Accord with the NSW Government.  
**In 2018, our next steps are to**<br>• commence community consultations on legislation to underpin Local Decision Making<br>• begin Accord negotiations between the NSW Government and NCARA on key policy issues. |

<p>| <strong>4.2</strong> Strengthen Aboriginal community governance and leadership to drive improved service delivery and local accountability | <strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong>&lt;br&gt;• updated and published the Local Decision Making good governance guidelines in partnership with Regional Alliances and government stakeholders&lt;br&gt;• provided resources for seven Regional Alliances to strengthen their governance and to better enable them to take part in decision-making&lt;br&gt;• supported Accord negotiations with the Illawarra Wingecarribee Aboriginal Alliance Corporation and the Three Rivers Regional Assembly&lt;br&gt;• commenced Accord negotiations with the Northern Region Aboriginal Alliance&lt;br&gt;• refined the Accord monitoring and reporting system&lt;br&gt;• continued to support emerging regional governance structures&lt;br&gt;• scoped options for a secondment program in conjunction with the Public Service Commission and the Deputy Ombudsman. |</p>
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<th>WHAT WE AIM TO DO</th>
<th>WHAT WE ARE DOING</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.3</strong> Work collaboratively with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the Local Aboriginal Land Council network to build governance capability and improve the councils’ sustainability</td>
<td><strong>In 2018, our next steps are to</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- support NCARA to host a gathering of Aboriginal regional alliances to share good practice and build capacity across Local Decision Making sites</td>
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<td>- facilitate the signing of Accords in Illawarra Wingecarribee Aboriginal Alliance Corporation, and Three Rivers Regional Assembly</td>
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<td>- oversee Local Decision Making Accord negotiations with the Northern Region Aboriginal Alliance</td>
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<td>- oversee negotiations to amend the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly Local Decision Making Accord to establish a new regional housing model.</td>
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<td><strong>In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs</strong></td>
<td><strong>In 2018, our next steps are to</strong></td>
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<td>- published the findings of the 2017 Statutory Review of the <em>Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983</em>, which was tabled in both Houses of Parliament on 21 November 2017.</td>
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<td>- provide advice to the Minister on possible amendments to the <em>Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983</em> arising from issues raised in consultations conducted as part of the statutory review</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- liaise with NSWALC and the Registrar on possible amendments to the <em>Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983</em>.</td>
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Strategic Priority 5
Strengthening Our Foundations

The outcomes we are seeking are:

• 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
### WHAT WE AIM TO DO

#### 5.1 Uphold Public Service values

**In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**
- achieved a 2016-17 budget result within one per cent of the forecast for a third year in a row
- published the Aboriginal Affairs Intranet site to ensure procedures within Aboriginal Affairs are consistent and that the necessary information and contacts are readily available to all staff
- built a business classification scheme unique to our core business and individual directorate structures and trained Aboriginal Affairs staff to manage records electronically in TRIM
- achieved a 95% timeliness rate for advice provided to the Minister.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**
- finalise Recruitment and Selection Policy and Guidelines for all staff
- develop a forward strategy for ongoing budget sustainability for the Agency
- develop a business process manual for use by all support staff across Aboriginal Affairs to ensure administrative procedures within Aboriginal Affairs are consistent and transparent
- improve the business processes by which we fund community organisations to achieve their goals, to provide greater transparency and accountability across the Agency
- investigate better ways to reimburse community members involved in consultations with Aboriginal Affairs
- establish a process to ensure continuous reception cover at Central Office during business hours given increased demand as a result of key reforms such as the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme.

#### 5.2 Promote practices that foster collaboration within Aboriginal Affairs

**In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**
- delivered five workshops to Agency staff on land rights reforms, bringing together academic and practice knowledge
- held an Aboriginal Affairs all-staff meeting and two Aboriginal Affairs Regional gatherings.

**In 2018, our next steps are to**
- use the relocation of the Agency's Central Office and Sydney-Newcastle Regional Office as an opportunity to strengthen organisational culture and collaborative practice.
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| **5.3** Encourage and support continuous learning for our employees | **In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**  
- continued to build the finance capability of managers and staff  
- supported staff to complete a Diploma of Project Management and to continue University study towards attainment of a Bachelor Degree  
- supported staff to participate in the Public Service Commission’s (PSC) emerging leaders program  
- participated in Organisational Leadership Excellence for Aboriginal Leaders and Managers.  
| **In 2018, our next steps are to**  
- develop an online Induction Program. |
| **5.4** Develop a long-term workforce planning framework | **In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs**  
- implemented the Aboriginal Affairs Workforce Strategy  
- hosted school-based Aboriginal trainees in the Dubbo and Batemans Bay offices.  
| **In 2018, our next steps are to**  
- review the Workforce Development Plan  
- review hosting arrangements for school-based Aboriginal trainees within the Agency  
- develop a Recruitment Strategy for Aboriginal Affairs. |
### WHAT WE AIM TO DO

#### 5.5 Build leadership capabilities

- In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs
  - continued to build the leadership capabilities of Aboriginal Affairs staff through forums and targeted development programs
  - commenced leadership coaching for the first cohort of Aboriginal Affairs management.

- In 2018, our next steps are to
  - invest in strengthening the collaborative practices of the Executive team.

#### 5.6 Recognise and reward achievement

- In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs
  - created a Reward and Recognition Working Group to formulate a Reward and Recognition Policy and Program that will formally recognise the contribution of staff to achieving the goals of the Agency
  - recognised staff who have reached significant milestones in their public-sector employment
  - informally recognised contribution of all staff in the achievement and implementation of significant policy and programs in 2017.

- In 2018, our next steps are to
  - finalise and implement the Aboriginal Affairs Reward and Recognition Policy and Program.

#### 5.7 Cultivate a culturally competent and safe workplace

- In 2017, Aboriginal Affairs
  - continued to build the cultural competency of staff to ensure a safe and inclusive workplace
  - continued to support Aboriginal staff nominated to participate in the Aboriginal staff advocacy group
  - convened de-briefing, mentoring and self-care sessions/workshops to overcome vicarious trauma.

- In 2018, our next steps are to
  - conduct Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshops.