



Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country

A Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgment of Country are protocols that precede an activity or event. They are a sign of respect, and recognition of the position of Aboriginal people in Australian culture and history.

When planning and hosting public events, civic receptions, significant meetings or celebrations, Council staff need to consider how to acknowledge country.

If the event is large or significant a local Traditional Owner (TO) Elder or family member should be invited to perform a Welcome to Country. If a TO is not available, an Acknowledgement of Country can be made by the host or speakers at the event.

Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country is a ceremony performed by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people to welcome visitors to their traditional land. It can take many forms, depending on the particular culture of the traditional owners. A Welcome to Country is only performed by a Traditional Owner.

Acknowledgment of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing awareness of and respect for the traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owners of the land on which a meeting or event is being held, and of recognising the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to their country. An Acknowledgment of Country can be performed by anyone—Indigenous or non-Indigenous.

For example at the start of every Council meeting the Mayor says *“I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting, the Latji Latji people, and pay my respects to Elders both past and present.”*

For more information

- Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recognition Policy
- Contact Council's Social Inclusion Officer on ext. 8630.
- To arrange a Welcome to Country for a Council event, contact Helen Jones ext. 8152