

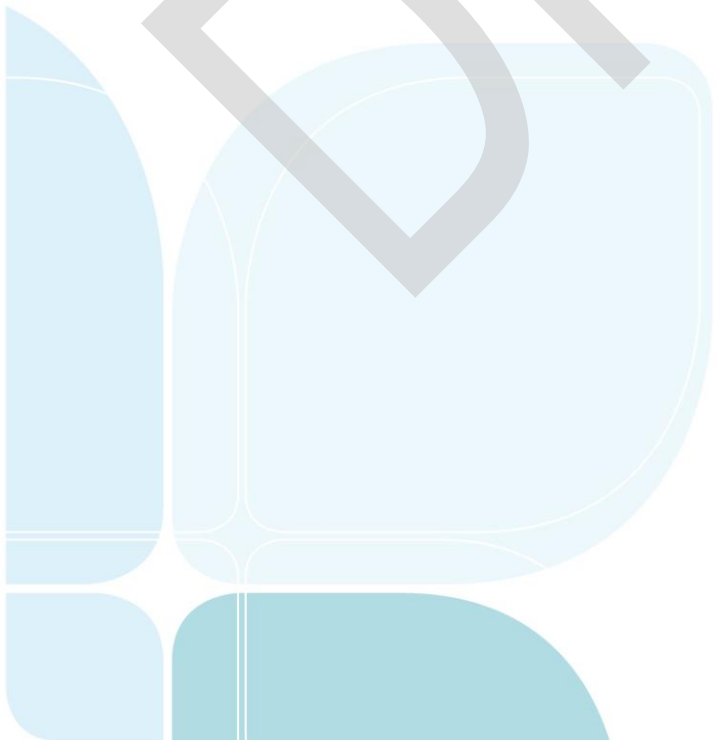


Local Land
Services

Aboriginal Community Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

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Aboriginal Community Advisory Group - Terms of Reference
Western Local Board
October 2018

More information

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Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing October 2018. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

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1. Western Local Board Aboriginal Community Advisory Group

1.1 Introduction

The Western Local Board recognises the importance and value of traditional knowledge in the management of natural resources and productive agricultural land throughout the Western region.

Western Local Land Services acknowledges all Aboriginal people residing within the Western region. The Western region includes the Aboriginal language groups and language dialects of the Ngemba, Wilyakali, Nawalgu, Ngiyampaa, Gurnu, Barundji, Garanggaba, Baranbinya, Yuwalari, Murrawari, Wanywalgu, Wadigali, Wangkumara, Malyankapa, Bandjigali, Euahlayi (Yuwaalaraay), Gamilarraay, Baarkindji (Paakantyi), Kureinji (Kemendok), Mutthi Mutthi, Nari Nari, Wadi Wadi, Tadi Tadi, Maurara, Kunja, Danggali, Budgidi, Wailwan, Wongaibon, Wandjiwalgil, and Kooma people.

Western Local Land Services takes this opportunity to pay respect to past, present and future Elders of those nations.

Western Local Land Services recognises that the protection and enhancement of Aboriginal culture, heritage and spiritual beliefs is an issue of great importance to the traditional owners of these lands and waters and is of benefit to the whole community.

Continuing connection to country and the ability to 'walk on their own country' is of great importance for Aboriginal people and is expressed through social, physical and spiritual lore. For the sake of future generations it is important for young Aboriginal people to gain traditional knowledge from their Elders. Western Local Land Services encourages the Aboriginal community to share their insights and knowledge. Similarly Western Local Land Services encourages the broader community to understand and respect the knowledge of traditional culture and ways of life. It is for these reasons that the Western Local Board seeks to establish an Aboriginal Community Advisory Group to work in partnership to guide this process. The Western region is the largest in NSW, covering 314,500km or 40 per cent of the state. Despite its size, it is the least densely populated region, with a population of approximately 42,873 people (18,500 of whom live in the city of Broken Hill).

The region is made up of the Brewarrina, Bourke, Balranald, Cobar, Central Darling and Wentworth Shires, Broken Hill City Council and the Unincorporated Area and portions of the Hay, Carrathool and Bogan Shires. Major service centres include Broken Hill, Menindee, Cobar, Bourke, Brewarrina, Hillston, Wentworth, Balranald and Buronga (Mildura).

1.2 Purpose of the group

The Western Local Board Aboriginal Community Advisory Group is designed to assist the Western Local Board and management on the direction of the organisation and management of programs.

The goals of the group are to:

- provide input into the development of local strategic plans
- seek input from Aboriginal communities during project planning and development phases
- seek input from Aboriginal communities on the range of services to be provided
- provide a forum for focussed and sustained discussion with Aboriginal communities
- provide a connection between the Western Local Board and Aboriginal communities on the issues that need to be addressed by Western Local Land Services
- seek input about the issues important to Aboriginal communities in relation to Local Land Services.

- advise the Western Local Board on strategic and operational issues of relevance to the implementation of the Local Land Services Reconciliation Action Plan
- provide a forum to foster and nurture partnerships between Western Local Land Services and the wider communities.

1.3 Scope

These Terms of Reference provide guidance to those appointed to the Aboriginal Community Advisory Group in relation to the scope of the agenda to be covered.

Western Local Board will seek input on a range of matters related to service delivery. This may include:

- region specific priorities
- advice on services required
- community consultation.

2. Group composition

2.1 Group

Western Local Board will establish one (1) Aboriginal Community Advisory Group reflective of the geographical area of the Western Local Land Services region: (refer to Figure 1). Up to three (3) Aboriginal Community Advisory Group members will be appointed from each of the following approximate regions:

- North: covering Angledool, Brewarrina, Goodooga, Weilmoringle, Bourke, Cobar & surrounding districts.
- West: covering Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Engonnia, Tibooburra, Menindee & surrounding districts.
- South: covering Wentworth, Buronga, Balranald, Ivanhoe, Hillston & surrounding districts.

(Figure 1: Map of Western Region.)



2.2 Membership

- The group will consist of up to nine Aboriginal community members reflective of the geographical area of the Western Local Land Services region. Members must demonstrate Aboriginality and a current and ongoing relationship with the Aboriginal community and cultural landscape of the Western region.

2.3 Nomination and appointment of members

Expressions of interest will be called from all Aboriginal people who reside or work, and who have a current and ongoing relationship with the Aboriginal community and cultural landscape within the boundaries of the Western Local Land Services region. The members of the group will elect a Chair for the group. Members will be appointed through a competitive selection process based on the attributes listed in section 2.4. The Western Local Board reserves the right to replace or appoint additional members to ensure ongoing and constructive representation of service areas is maintained. The Western Local Board seeks to establish a group with a mix of age, gender and experience to ensure a diverse range of views and knowledge is represented.

2.4 Attributes required of Local Aboriginal Community Advisory Group members

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

Essential

- be able to demonstrate Aboriginality
- have a current and ongoing relationship with the Aboriginal community and cultural landscape of the Western region
- must reside or work within the boundaries of the Western Local Land Services region
- be easily contactable via phone or email
- a strong interest for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, caring for country and land management.

Highly desirable:

- be endorsed by the Local Aboriginal Land Council or Community Working Party or recognised Aboriginal organisation
- demonstrate ability to seek input from and provide feedback to the Aboriginal community on the issues and topics dealt with by the Aboriginal Community Advisory Group
- ability to network with a wide range of community groups
- a strong desire to contribute to programs and projects with a traditional land management focus
- ability to show leadership and work as a team.

Desirable

- Aboriginal cultural heritage knowledge
- current representation on other Aboriginal or Cultural Heritage advisory bodies, groups or committees
- land management knowledge
- good written and oral communication skills
- experience on committees, boards of management or similar
- demonstrated experience in working with community.

2.5 Role of members

Appointed members have a responsibility to:

- dedicate sufficient time to carry out their role effectively
- adhere to Local Land Services Code of Conduct (refer to Section 4)
- respect the confidentiality of Western Local Board (refer to item 4.2)
- have input into group discussions and provide feedback both to the Western Local Board and to their local communities.

2.6 Term

Membership of the Aboriginal Community Advisory Group is for a maximum term of two years or until such time as their replacement may become necessary as described in 2.7 (Vacancies). For the purposes of retaining core group knowledge at any one time, replacements may be staggered. The Chair of the Western Local Board has discretion to the termination and appointment of members to ensure the purpose of the group is not compromised.

2.7 Vacancies

A vacancy arises if a member:

- resigns in writing
- is absent from two consecutive meetings without leave being granted by the Chair
- fails to abide by the requirements of the Group, including, but not limited to, the Code of Conduct (refer to section 4).

Appointment processes to fill vacancies will be conducted by a request from Western Local Board for applications and a selection made as per Section 2.3.

2.8 Western Local Land Services

Western Local Board will be represented at Aboriginal Community Advisory Group meetings by a senior staff member and other staff as required. Meeting outcomes will be presented to the Western Local Board.

2.9 Other attendees

Visitors or presenters may be invited to attend meetings, or part thereof, to provide input to the discussions or observe the proceedings, at the discretion of the Chair.

Other attendees will be required to meet confidentiality requirements of Western Local Board (refer to item 4.2). Other attendees do not have any voting rights.

2.10 Secretariat support

Secretariat support will be provided by staff of Western Local Land Services.

3. Meeting procedures

3.1 Meeting schedule

Meetings will be held as required, with a minimum of four (4) per calendar year (one per quarter). Meetings shall only be called by the Chair.

3.2 Quorum

A quorum will be deemed as more than 50 per cent attendance of the group. Decisions will be by consensus.

3.3 Conflict of interest

It is agreed that Aboriginal Community Advisory Group members are not, by virtue of membership, excluded from funding opportunities or program participation. Conflicts of interest will be managed according to accepted protocols consistent with comparable processes such as assessment panels.

Management of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest involves a conflict between a public official's duties and responsibilities in serving the public's interest and the public official's private interests. A conflict of interest can arise by avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage. *(Definition sourced from ICAC Managing Conflicts of Interest in the Public Sector Toolkit.)*

It is recognised that the successful function of the role of Chair and/or member of Aboriginal Community Advisory Group is contingent upon having a high degree of interaction with the local community. The role of the Aboriginal Community Advisory Group is to provide advice to the Western Local Board which is based upon this interaction and knowledge of issues of importance to the local community and wider region. For this reason, it is inevitable that there will be occasions where actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest may arise. It is the intention of the Western Local Board and Aboriginal Community Advisory Group Chair that members not be disadvantaged or restricted in the advice that they provide due to participation in these groups. The following procedure will be implemented locally by each Aboriginal Community Advisory Group to manage any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest that may arise.

The Aboriginal Community Advisory Group Chair and members will:

- Disclose any conflicts of interest whether pecuniary, filial, or otherwise, that could conflict with the proper performance of a member's functions. All disclosed conflicts of interest will be recorded on a register which will be maintained and updated.
- Where conflicts of interest are of low risk, disclosure and registration will be all that is required. It is anticipated that this will be applicable for the vast majority of conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest is significant and of high risk and requires further management the following procedures will be implemented:
 - where a disclosed significant or high risk conflict of interest is pertinent to a decision which may result in private interests interfering with the public role of a Chair or member of the Local Community Advisory Group, detail the level of interest for the group, refrain from discussion, not participate in or influence the decision in any way, and record the discussion.

3.4 Meeting protocol

The Aboriginal Community Advisory Group shall adhere to normal meeting protocols. The Chair convenes and conducts all meetings and may delegate responsibility for this function if required. Meetings are closed to the public. However non-members may attend to make presentations for a particular agenda item or discussion, at the invitation of the Chair (as per Section 2.9).

3.5 Agenda papers

Agendas and other documentation necessary for conducting a meeting will be made available to Group members at least five days before each meeting.

3.6 Records

A record will be kept of the subject matter discussed and of the feedback received. Names of members making comments will not be recorded. The focus is on the information and feedback received.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1 Conduct of members

All members are required to adhere to the Local Land Services Code of Conduct.

4.2 Confidentiality

All material provided for discussion and consideration is Confidential, and must be respected by members. No material is to be discussed with any third persons. All discussions are encouraged to take place at the meeting, rather than outside of the meeting.

4.3 Sensitive information

Members may occasionally come into possession of sensitive information including information classified as personal information under the National Privacy Principles. Members may not disclose any such information to any person outside the Group.

4.4 Security of documentation

All written materials provided by Western Local Land Services as part of the Western Local Board Aboriginal Community Advisory Group must be kept secure by the member, destroyed or returned to Western Local Land Services.

4.5 Public representation

Membership of the Western Local Board Aboriginal Community Advisory Group does not entitle, nor authorise, members to hold themselves as representing Western Local Land Services, the Western Local Board, the Local Aboriginal Community Advisory Group or their opinions.

Aboriginal Community Advisory Group members are covered (indemnified) under the Treasury Managed Fund cover to the extent their activities are in connection with the Local Land Services brief. As with any cover, this would not cover cases where the members are wilfully negligent or acting in contravention to laws etc.

The Aboriginal Community Advisory Group or its members would have no mandate or engage professional services (or purchases goods) of any description - if this was required it would need to be initiated by Local Land Services. This is by reason of their status as an entity and not covered by Local Land Services financial delegation.

Aboriginal Community Advisory Group members are not employees of Local Land Services.

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1 Reimbursement

In consideration of the commitment required to participate in the Aboriginal Community Advisory Group and the need to attract dedicated and capable representatives, members will be reimbursed for travel and accommodation as deemed appropriate by the General Manager of Western Local Land Services.

Sitting Fees are as follows:

Chair sitting fee: \$350.00/Day plus vehicle/transport costs*

Member sitting fee: \$220.00/Day plus vehicle/transport costs*

All meals and accommodation are provided by Local Land Services Western Region.

*Transport to and from meetings will be provided by Western Local Land Services. If in the case that transport cannot be provided by Western Local Land Services, members may be reimbursed for the use of a private motor vehicle at the discretion of the General Manager and in accordance with the Local Land Services Motor Vehicle Policy.

Provision is made for members only to attend meetings as requested. Family, friends, carers etc