



Ashfield Council

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Booklet

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Objective of this Booklet

The objective of this booklet is to enable culturally sensitive interaction with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the Ashfield Local Government Area. The handbook is a guide only and information provided should be tailored to suit the specific circumstance of any meeting, event or activity.

All cultures have customs, values, and codes of behaviour that are important. These contribute to the cultural diversity now cherished by Australians. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples this is just as important as it is for other cultures. But for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples much of their culture has been lost as a direct result of previous policies of all spheres of government. It is important that this knowledge is rebuilt and acknowledged by all spheres of government.

The rebuilding and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture shows respect and is vital in the development of strong and equal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Following is a summary of key cultural definitions and protocols to provide guidance when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Definitions

The following concepts and definitions may assist in understanding some of the terminology commonly used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and can be used as a starting point for seeking further information.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person

The NSW *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*, defines an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person as a person who:

- is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- identifies as an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander; and
- is accepted as such by the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community in which he or she lives.

Note that the term *Aborigine* has negative connotations for many Aboriginal peoples. Some peoples prefer the term *Indigenous* when referring to individuals or communities. The terms can be used interchangeably, but it is wise to check individual preferences. Avoid using the term *Indigenous* as an abbreviation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Always capitalize the "A" in Aboriginal for Australia's First Inhabitants and "I" for Indigenous where used. Lower case refers to an aboriginal person or indigenous people in any other part of the world.

The term 'peoples' is used to:

- signify distinct status, rights and meaning attached to continuing historical, cultural and social bonds, and attachments to land and identity.
- reflect the determination of a distinct group to preserve, enhance and pass on to future generations their distinct identity, social institutions and cultures.



Aboriginal settlement/reserves

For the purposes of this booklet, Aboriginal settlements are those discrete areas of land occupied by Aboriginal peoples, which are owned and managed by Local Aboriginal Land Councils. In effect this is private land. It needs to be respected as such to overcome the negative experiences associated with this land.

Some Aboriginal settlements were previously missions established by Christian missionaries. In the late 1880s these areas were progressively taken over by the colonial government and run as stations or reserves. Missions and reserves have bad connotations for Aboriginal peoples. It was such mechanisms that forced Aboriginal peoples from their land and destroyed families, culture and heritage. Animosity sometimes developed between various traditional groups forced to compete against each other to survive.

Country

A term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to refer to the land to which they belong and their place of The Dreaming. This has a much broader meaning than its meaning in English.

Community

A term used often by non-Aboriginal people to refer to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who live in a particular geographic area. However, it is important to understand that as a result of the dislocation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, a community may comprise Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples of different areas. What non-Aboriginal people see as one community may not be seen as such by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples a community is first and foremost about country, extended family ties and shared experience. It is about interrelatedness and belonging. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples may belong to more than one community. For example it can describe where they come from, where their family is or where they work.

Culture

Consists of accepted and traditionally patterned ways of behaving shared by a community. It includes land, beliefs and spirituality, language, ways of living and working, artistic expression, relationships and identity.

Elder

An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Elder is someone who has gained recognition as a custodian of knowledge and lore, and who has permission to disclose cultural knowledge and beliefs. In some instances Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples above a certain age will refer to themselves as Elders. It is important to understand that in traditional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture, age alone does not necessarily mean that one is recognised as an Elder. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples traditionally refer to an Elder as “aunty” or “uncle”. However it is recommended that [non-Aboriginal](#) people check the appropriateness of their use of these terms.



In some areas Elders meet together in Elders groups to share experience and reach common positions on important issues. There may be a number of Elders groups in a particular area reflecting local clans.

Kinship

A term to capture large extended family groups often spread over different communities and geographic areas. Kinship groups are strong and trace their origins back to traditional owners. Kinship is of fundamental importance in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander society, much more so than in Western society where it has lost many of its functions to other institutions such as the economy and the political system.

Kinship concerns the network of people who are related to a particular person. This network is unique to each individual, and every person has a different network. Everyone in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander society is part of a kinship network. Kinship categories extend to all aspects of life, including alliances, rituals and marriages.

Land Rights

To Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, land is not only about hunting and gathering, it is also the basis of spiritual life. The aim of the land rights movement is to counteract the land disposition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that occurred with European occupation.

The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* gave the right for Local Aboriginal Land Councils to make claims on vacant land held under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*. The Aboriginal Land Rights Act also gave rights to Aboriginal peoples to seek agreement with any landowner on access to land to hunt, fish or gather.

Nation, Tribe, Clan, Mob

These are all terms referring to a culturally distinct group of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples associated with a particular, culturally defined area of land or country. A number of “tribes” or “clans” comprise a larger grouping of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples that identify as a “Nation”. Mob is a term that is being increasingly used by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities as a generic term. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will often refer to themselves as being Koori, Goori or Murri. These are terms drawn from Aboriginal languages.

Goori – is usually used by Aboriginal peoples in northern NSW coastal regions.

Koori – is usually used by Aboriginal peoples in parts of NSW and Victoria.

Murri – is usually used by Aboriginal peoples in north-west NSW and Queensland.

Care needs to be taken to check with local communities about local acceptable terminology.

Native Title

The *Native Title Act 1993* (Commonwealth) gives legal recognition to the existence of native title, reversing the concept of “terra nullius”, the legal premise that European occupation was based on, namely that the land was empty. Under the Act, the expression ***native title*** or ***native title rights and interests*** means the communal, group or individual



rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders in relation to land or waters, where:

- (a) the rights and interest are possessed under the traditional laws acknowledged, and the traditional customs observed, by the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders; and
- (b) the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders by those laws and customs, have a connection with the land or waters; and
- (c) the rights and interests are recognised by the common law of Australia.

Torres Strait Islander

A Torres Strait Islander is a person/descendent from the Torres Strait Islands. There are many Torres Strait Islanders living in NSW.

Traditional Custodian

“Traditional Custodians” and “Traditional Owners” are terms that can be used interchangeably. However particular communities have specific preference about which term to use. Both terms refer to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who are descendants of the original inhabitants of the land. They have a spiritual, cultural, political and often, physical connection with a particular part of the land.

Traditional Owners may be identified as being registered Aboriginal owners (see below), native title claimants or holders, or have organised themselves into incorporated (or unincorporated) groups. However, there may be several Aboriginal Corporations and groups asserting that they represent the Traditional Owners of that area. Preference must be given to Aboriginal groups with legally recognised rights and interests (that is, Aboriginal Owners and native title claimants and holders) on involvement in cultural and heritage matters.

Aboriginal owners are Aboriginal peoples who have been registered as having cultural association with certain lands (usually conservation reserves that are Aboriginal owned or earmarked for Aboriginal Ownership under Part 9 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*). Aboriginal owners have proven their cultural association through descent from the land’s original inhabitants and cultural connection through culture, custom, stories, laws, etc. The Registrar, *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* also maintains the Register of Aboriginal Owners, and he or she must be satisfied with the applicant’s genealogical and anthropological proof of cultural association. Aboriginal Owners (and Traditional Owners generally) can also be members of the relevant Local Aboriginal Land Council. Not all areas have registered Aboriginal owners. For further information contact the Registrar, *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*.

The Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* gives registered native title claimants and native title holders specific rights to be consulted on land uses or activities that may impact on their native title rights and interests. Native title are the rights and interests to lands or waters held by the community, a group, or an individual based on their traditional laws and customs that are recognised by the Australian law.



Registered native title claimants have, in the opinion of the National Native Title Tribunal, passed the administrative registration test. The registration test is that claimants have clearly identified the claimed area, the groups and individuals involved in that claim, the nature and extent of the claimed native title rights and interests and the factual basis for the claim; the claim makes a *prima facie* case that there is physical connection to the claimed lands; and there has not been extinguishment of the claimed native title (for example through the grant of freehold title to a third party).

Native title holders have been determined by the Federal Court (or High Court) to have particular rights and interests in the lands or waters subject to the determination. The determination may be made with the consent of the Government or through litigation. In addition to the right to be notified or consulted enjoyed by native title claimants, native title holders may also have rights to compensation.

Cultural Protocols and Recognition – Key Requirements

All cultures have customs, values, and codes of behaviour that are important. These contribute to the cultural diversity now cherished by Australians. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples this is just as important as it is for other cultures. But for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples much of their culture has been diluted as a direct result of previous policies of all spheres of government. It is important that this knowledge is rebuilt and acknowledged by all spheres of government. The rebuilding and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture shows respect and is vital in the building of strong and equal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Protocols are ethical principles which guide behaviour in a particular situation. These protocols are designed to protect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property rights. The protocols pave the way for improving working relationships and consequently for achieving better program outcomes. Cultural and intellectual property rights include the right for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to:

- own and control their cultural and intellectual property,
- ensure that any means of protecting their cultural and intellectual property is based on the principle of self-determination,
- be recognised as the primary guardians and interpreters of their cultures and so regulate how stories and information is presented,
- authorise or refuse the use of their cultural and intellectual property according to customary law,
- maintain the secrecy of their knowledge and other cultural practices,
- be given full and proper attribution for sharing their heritage,
- control the recording of cultural customs and expressions, the particular language which may be intrinsic to cultural identity, knowledge, skill and teaching of culture.

Following is a summary of key cultural protocols to guide council and the community when engaging with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Respect

Respect and acknowledgment are essential to good working relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities and should be your first priority. For example, discussing when and how to use Traditional Welcomes and Acknowledging Traditional Owners will show that you are respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples connection to the land. This demonstration of your respect will make it easier to set up mutual standards of respect and trust and will make it easier for consultation and negotiations to take place effectively.

What to Call People

It can be offensive to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the wrong way. Some prefer to be called 'Aboriginal' and others prefer 'Indigenous'. It's always a good idea to try and gauge how people want to be addressed. Spend some time listening to their conversation, or you can ask if you feel that it won't be offensive. It is generally better to avoid referring to Aboriginal peoples as Kooris or Murris or any other name they may use themselves.

Gender protocols

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society still regards some information as specific and sacred to either men or women. This knowledge is sacred and recorded in a way that only men or only women can access. It is likely that a council will be unable to distinguish between men's and women's business. Council needs to be aware that such issues exist and seek advice from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples about when they are likely to arise and how to manage such issues.

Naming the deceased

In NSW, Aboriginal communities may have different protocols regarding naming deceased Aboriginal persons than that which is often raised with northern Australian Aboriginal communities. The best way for Council to use the appropriate protocol regarding naming the deceased or showing photographic images is to consult the Local Aboriginal Land Council in the area. In many Aboriginal communities in northern Australia it is offensive to refer to a deceased person by name or show photographic images of the person during the mourning period, unless agreed to by the relevant family. Many organisations are now using cultural warnings to avoid causing offence to the families of deceased persons.

Communicating with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities

The communication process requires:

- Respect
- Good listening
- Patience
- Understanding
- A common language
- Checking, clarification and confirmation.



Language

The understanding and use of language used in communicating with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community can be very different from that of the wider community. There are different ways of using language, which you will have to take into account and adopt when talking to any member/s of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community you are working with. The following points to remember which may be useful:

1. Don't assume anything.
2. Be honest and sincere.
3. Use simple, clear, plain and appropriate language.
4. Speak slowly if and when necessary.
5. Jargon or technical language should be explained.
6. Don't mimic Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ways of speaking (ie words, slang, speech or accent).
7. Be open minded.
8. Never be boastful about your ideas.
9. Don't be too direct as this can be taken as confrontational and/or rude.
10. Direct eye contact may also be considered confrontational and/or rude [check with someone who has experience with the people you are dealing with].
11. Emphasise the purpose of your activity and intended benefits to the community.
12. Don't ask hypothetical questions.
13. Deal in practical, real issues not theoretical ideas.

To gain the support of the community you will need to demonstrate that you are there to assist their community. The client/s need to be invited to provide input (not just feedback) during and after consultation, and decision-making processes. You may need a facilitator, interpreter or mediator to assist you through this process.

Getting permission

Getting permission is essential before starting work on any council project that has an impact directly on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a strong sense of owning their history and knowledge and being in control of their future. This ownership has often been ignored in the past. Getting permission involves forming strong partnerships with Aboriginal organisations. They can advise on the correct protocol for gaining consent. Permission will rarely be refused if the purpose of the work is clearly understood and the way of undertaking the work is properly negotiated. Where it is refused, the reason may relate to issues that are sacred or taboo, related to a death custom, or be specifically women's or men's business.

Collaboration and Negotiation

One of the most significant practices for all parties is the capacity to show mutual respect for different cultural groups and their practices. It is important to understand that the meanings of ceremonies and acts of practices differ across region and locality.

Reporting Back and Staying in Touch

Staying in constant contact with the community is essential because:

- It keeps both you and the community informed and aware of any potential problems which may arise.



- The community should have the right to make final decisions and give permission to any stage of a project that affects them.
- Keeping the community informed about the progress of the project also promotes good relationships, trust and goodwill.

What is a Welcome to Country?

A "Welcome to Country" is where the Traditional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Custodians (in most cases the Elders) welcome people to their Land. This is a significant recognition and is made through a formal process. A "Welcome to Country" should always occur in the opening ceremony of the event in question, as the first item.

The "Welcome to Country" is conducted by a representative (or representatives) of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Custodians of the land/Nation/language group who welcome the delegates, invited guests, staff and other visitors to their Country. Protocols in relation to the performing of a "Welcome to Country" Ceremony are wide and diverse and can vary according to region and locality. A Representative may also be a person who has been granted authority to represent by a local indigenous community.

A "Welcome to Country" may consist of a single speech by the representative of the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community, or it can also include a performance of some description (which will vary according to region and locality). Performances can include a Traditional Welcoming Song, a Traditional Dance, didgeridoo performance or a combination of any of the above. An appropriate person such as a recognised Elder within the local area needs to conduct this welcome.

Acknowledgement of Country

An "Acknowledgment of Country" is a way that **non-Aboriginal peoples** can show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and the ongoing relationship of traditional owners with the land. State and Federal Government, public sector departments, organisations and Local Government are adopting the practice of Acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of Country at events, ceremonies, meetings and functions. At the beginning of a meeting or function, a Chair or Speaker begins by Acknowledging that the meeting is taking place in the Country of the Traditional Custodians. Where the name of the Traditional Custodians is known, it is specifically used. Where it is not known, a general Acknowledgement is given.

"Acknowledgement of Country" can be performed by both Aboriginal and **non-Aboriginal peoples**. It is a demonstration of respect dedicated to the Traditional Custodians of the Land and/or Sea where the gathering of participants is being conducted.

Following are examples of "Acknowledgement to Country" that are endorsed by Ashfield Council:

Option 1:

"Let us acknowledge that we are meeting on country for which the members and elders of the local Aboriginal community have been custodians for many centuries, and on which Aboriginal people have performed age old ceremonies. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region."



Option 2:

“I would like to acknowledge that we are here today on the land of the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Wangal peoples. The Wangal peoples form part of the wider Aboriginal nation known as the Eora Nation.”

Option 3:

“I would like to begin by paying my respects to the past and present Elders of the Wangal nation and acknowledge their custodianship of the land on which we are meeting today”.

Option 4:

“I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting today”.

Ashfield Council has an Acknowledgment of the Aboriginal Community policy and strongly supports the use of ‘Welcome to Country’ or ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ as appropriate.

Flags on display

The Aboriginal flag

This is now well recognised as the flag of Aboriginal peoples. This flag was designed by Harold Thomas, Luritja man from the Arrernte clan of Central Australia. Mr Harold Thomas, an Aboriginal Elder, holds the copyright for the flag. The black top half of the flag symbolises the Aboriginal peoples. The Red bottom half, represents the earth and the yellow circle in the centre represents the sun. The Australian Aboriginal Flag was proclaimed on 14 July 1995. Permission is not required to fly the Australian Aboriginal Flag.

The Torres Strait Island flag

This flag has three horizontal panels, the top and bottom are green and the middle one blue. The panels are divided by thin black lines. The green represents the land, the blue represents the sea, and the black represents the Torres Strait Islander people. In the centre is a white dari (dancer’s headdress), which is a symbol of the Torres Strait Islander people. Underneath the dari is a white five-pointed star. This represents the island groups in the Torres Strait and the white represents peace. Bernard Namok of Thursday Island created this flag.

Flag Flying Protocol

The Australian National Flag should always take precedence. It should be flown on the far left of the person/s facing the flags. After the Australian National Flag, the order of precedence of flags is:

- national flag of other nations
- state and territory flags
- other Australian flags prescribed by the *Flags Act 1953* (including Indigenous flags) ensigns and pennants
- the Local Council flag (if this is an event associated with a Local Government Authority).



Smoking ceremonies

Smoking ceremonies are undertaken in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities in order to cleanse a space where an event or special celebration will be taking place. The Smoking Ceremony is a purification ritual and is always undertaken by an Aboriginal person with specialised cultural knowledge. Aboriginal peoples may request a Smoking Ceremony in a workplace where a death or other traumatic event has occurred. This request is of tremendous significance and should be respected. Failure to do so may cause significant distress.

Ownership, copyright, cultural and intellectual property

The knowledge and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is owned by its peoples. As stated above, any access to this information must have permission from the relevant individuals and the community.

Permission may be individual or communal, depending on the subject. An agreement outlining the conditions of consent must be obtained from the owner/s of the knowledge before commencing the project.

You are advised to have contracts drawn up between Aboriginal and **non-Aboriginal** parties. Proper legal representation and advice for the Aboriginal community members should be offered so that they understand what they are signing for.

Copyright and moral rights are very important issues to be aware of when working with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community. In the past, Aboriginal stories, songs, dance, and knowledge have been appropriated by **non-Aboriginal** people. This has had the effect that Aboriginal knowledge holders are not recognised as the owners of the stories, songs, dance and information that they have imparted to people who have entered into their communities. They have not benefited from the use of their stories and knowledge and they no longer control the dissemination of the material. One example that has occurred in many parts of Australia is where Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples tell researchers and writers about their culture, or relate a traditional story. The **non-Aboriginal** person who writes the story in a book is recognised as the copyright owner of the written version of the story.

Traditional knowledge is not protected adequately under Australian and International laws. Concepts of ownership of traditional knowledge differ to Western Law. (For more information visit the WIPO Website www.wipo.int).

It is important that you raise the issue and discuss copyright with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples you are dealing with. The ideas, stories and knowledge that come from Aboriginal peoples are considered by them to be their intellectual property even though the western legal system may have difficulty recognising this ownership.

Rights to use Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander material can be held by an individual, but mostly cultural material belongs to the traditional owners of that knowledge as a community. These rights are referred to as Aboriginal Cultural and Intellectual Property rights. In many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities there are traditional laws covering the protection of cultural expression and knowledge. These laws cover the



visual arts, photographs, stories, songs, dances, colour combinations and other expressions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture.

The Australian Copyright Council
Ph: (02) 9215 9000
www.ozco.gov.au

The Arts Law Centre of Australia
Ph: (02) 9356 2566
www.artslaw.com.au

Viscopy
Ph: (02) 9280 2844
www.viscopy.com.au

World Intellectual Property Organisation.
www.wipo.int

Fee for Service

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander knowledge is complex and specialised, and is owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As in Western culture, specialised knowledge is not something that is usually given away for free. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who choose to work for councils in any capacity, including performing a traditional dance, giving a speech or traditional welcome, providing artwork or participating in a project, are entitled to be paid for their time and expertise.

Conclusion

When using this booklet it should be borne in mind that the information provided should be tailored to suit the situation depending on the focus, size, intention, public exposure and so on. The Cultural Awareness booklet is to assist with orientation and guidance with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples culture rather than a sole prescriptive formula with a single approach.

Days of Significance

26 January - Australia Day/Day of Mourning/Survival Day/Invasion Day/Yabun – a celebration of Aboriginal culture and music

21 March – Harmony Day

Harmony Day (21 March) celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. www.harmony.gov.au

26 May – National Sorry Day – is to publicly acknowledge the pain and suffering by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were part of the 'Stolen Generations' and the effects of their removal from family and community today. www.nsd.org.au
The day is also known as the Journey of Healing Day that marks the anniversary of the 1997 tabling of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report "*Bringing Them Home*".

A National Committee maintains a web-site with an events calendar at <http://www.journeyofhealing.com>.

27 May to 3 June - National Reconciliation Week

This is the anniversary of the 27 May 1967 Australian Referendum where over 90% of eligible voters supported changes to the Constitution. Changes related to Section 51 of the Constitution giving the Commonwealth Parliament the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and, Section 127 to ensure that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders would be counted in the Census.

National Reconciliation Week is celebrated annually from the 27th May and ends with *Mabo Day* on 3 June. 'Reconciliation involves symbolic recognition of the honoured place of the first Australian, as well as practical measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in health, employment, education and general opportunity'. www.reconciliation.org.au

3 June – Mabo Day

This day marks the anniversary of the 1992 High Court of Australia's decision in the Mabo case. The decision recognised the Native Title rights of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

First full week of July each year – NAIDOC Week

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week is observed in the first full week of July each year. The aim of NAIDOC celebrations is to give Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the opportunity to display the richness of culture and heritage to all.

4 August – National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day

www.aboriginalchildrensday.com.au

9 August – International Day of the World’s Aboriginal Peoples

The United Nations’ (UN) International Day of the World’s Indigenous People is observed on August 9 each year to promote and protect the rights of the world’s indigenous population. www.un.org

Aboriginal Language Map of NSW



Source: NSW Department of Family & Community Services