



## Acknowledgement of Country

A **Welcome to Country** is delivered by a representative of the Aboriginal community.

It is appropriate to ask an Aboriginal community member to deliver this at a range of events. It may also be appropriate at important official/government events as a way of placing importance on the ongoing Aboriginal presence and community living in the area.

An **Acknowledgement of Country** is frequently appropriate.

This is a statement by non-Aboriginal people that pays respect to past and present elders and the ongoing custodianship and ownership of the land by the Aboriginal community. It reminds non-Aboriginal people about the history of European invasion and creates an awareness of the need to build respectful relationships with the Aboriginal community today.

### Acknowledgement

Where non-Aboriginal people wish to demonstrate respect for the Aboriginal community, an Acknowledgement of Country may be used. The following standard acknowledgements are recommended for use:

*Example 1: I acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land.*

*Example 2: In respect and recognition of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land we are standing on here today.*

#### Acknowledgement of Aboriginal people at an event

If a speaker wishes to acknowledge Aboriginal community people who may be attending the event, the following example may be used:

*Firstly I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the elders that are here today, to acknowledge those who have passed before us and to acknowledge the members of the Aboriginal community who are also attending this event.*

The standard acknowledgement and the acknowledgement of Aboriginal people could be combined for a suitable acknowledgement.

#### Acknowledgement of place

It may not always be possible to determine an acknowledgement of place because information relating to the traditional and original owners may not be well documented and the information not easy to locate. OAA may be able to assist in determining correct place names. If this type of acknowledgement is preferred, the following is an example of how it could be worded:

*(for Hobart) I would like to pay respect to the traditional and original owners of this land the Muwinina (mu wee nee nah) people, - to pay respect to those that have passed before us and to acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community who are the custodians of this land.*

#### Correct terminology

The following terms are suitable for use: Tasmanian Aborigines; Tasmanian Aboriginal community; Tasmanian Aboriginal people; **Office of Aboriginal Affairs**.



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### **Acknowledgement of traditional owners**

Either of the following is an appropriate acknowledgment of Aboriginal people/traditional owners of the land for any occasion.

'The [name of group] acknowledges that we are meeting here on Aboriginal land.' OR

'The [name of group] acknowledges that this building stands on Aboriginal land.' OR

'The [name of group] acknowledges Tasmanian Aborigines as the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting/on which this building stands.' OR

We acknowledge the (clan...eg.Muwinina) or (nation....eg South East Nation) as the original owners of the land on which we are meeting. The Mumirimina were dispossessed of their land and did not survive the white invasion (early colonial period). We pay respects to their long custodianship of the land, and we acknowledge the palawa people, today's Aboriginal community, as the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting.

If the meeting is in the north east then: We acknowledge the (clan....pinterara, truwulway) or (nation....North East Nation) as the original owners of the land on which we are meeting. White invasion resulted in the (group) being dispossessed of their land and their culture, language and way of life shattered. We pay respects to their long custodianship of the land, and we acknowledge the palawa people, today's Aboriginal community, as the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting.

Groups are encouraged to personalise the wording to suit the event or their own sentiments

## **Some further examples**

I would like to begin by offering a sincere acknowledgment of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional custodians of the land upon which we meet. I acknowledge elders past and present. This is not an insincere or obligatory acknowledgement. I genuinely wish to acknowledge the wrongs that have been done by past and present forms of colonialism, and note that I personally am committed to reconciliation and change via my attempts at decolonised teaching.

I acknowledge that these attempts will involve making mistakes, perhaps offending and being offended. I am prepared to learn from the community, from each other and from the journey of change as we all move to a period of genuine reconciliation, mutual respect and ultimately healing.

#### **Jocelynn Baltra-Ulloa**

I would like to begin by offering a sincere acknowledgement of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet. I acknowledge elders past and present. I acknowledge the myth of Terra Nullius and I support the sovereignty of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

#### **Physical Acknowledgement of Country for plaques or notices at the entry of church buildings**

##### **Jocelynn Baltra-Ulloa**

DEEWR acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and elders past, present and future.

Or

The [name of group] acknowledges the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners of lutruwita (Tasmania) and forward our respect to their elders both past and present. We also acknowledge the continued connection Tasmanian Aboriginal people still have to the skies, land and



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water of lutruwita that provides them with the food, medicine and craft celebrated through ceremony today.'