

# Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy

2022 - 2025





# Aboriginal brand identity –On Country

By Mumbulla Creative

This artwork captures the many different Countries located within our Regional NSW footprint.

The sun is at the heart of the artwork, providing life and uniting all the regions. The Great Dividing Range spans the entire length of NSW from north to south, separating the coastal from the inland areas. Saltwater and freshwater Countries are referenced by the coastline of NSW and the expansive network of rivers stretching through the regions.

The Far West is represented by red earth plains, mallee scrubs and an abundant emu population. The Central West features tablelands, woodlands and Eastern Grey Kangaroos.

The North West and New England region of NSW features tablelands west of the Great Dividing Range, giving way to plains beneath a dramatic sunset with magpies flying by.

The North Coast has lush green rainforests with circles representing raindrops falling onto water with a long-necked turtle swimming in the Northern Rivers.

The Hunter region has river valleys, bush turkeys and Moreton Bay Fig trees with their distinctive root system.

The Illawarra-Shoalhaven region has coastal lagoons and lakes, backed by a large escarpment and plateau. Two black ducks fly towards the lakes as a humpback whale travels south, passing shell middens along the coast.

The South East and Tablelands is represented by a towering forest of gum trees with a dense canopy of foliage and sugar gliders.

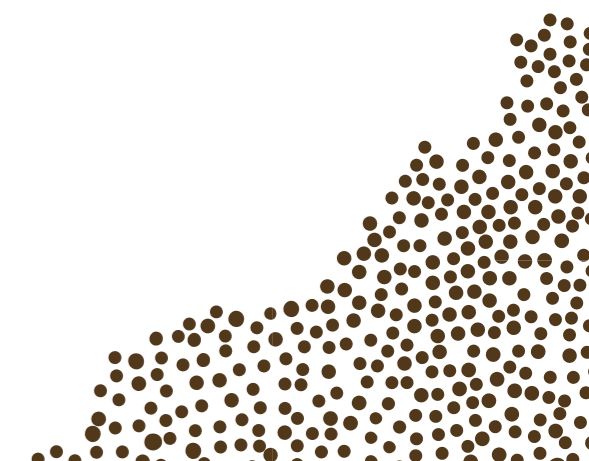
The Riverina Murray region is represented by the roots of a river redgum on the banks of a river. A Yellow-belly water skink scuttles along the roots of the tree and a large Murray Cod can be seen in the river.

The night sky features in the artwork, as it played an important navigational and story-telling role in traditional life.

## Contents

The Department of Regional New South Wales acknowledges that it stands on Country which always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work.

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## Secretary Message

New South Wales is Aboriginal land.  
It always was and always will be.

The Department of Regional NSW's inaugural Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy is about how we can make a positive difference for Aboriginal people in regional NSW.

Regional NSW is a great place to live, work, visit and do business. Our strategy outlines how we will support Aboriginal people and communities in regional NSW to raise families, start and grow businesses, have fulfilling careers, participate in vibrant community activities, play sport at quality facilities, and access first-class health care and education.

This strategy lays out an exciting way forward: we will enhance our Aboriginal cultural knowledge and understanding and build these into our processes and practices across the department. It will reinforce that we are always on Country, no matter what we are doing or where we are working.

Our staff live in, and are part of, regional communities and we are committed to making regional NSW a great place to live, work, play and invest for Aboriginal people, communities and businesses.

**Gary Barnes**

Secretary  
Department Regional NSW

## Aboriginal Support Network Message

As the chair of the Aboriginal Support Network (ASN) within the Department of Regional NSW, I am proud to endorse the implementation of the Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy.

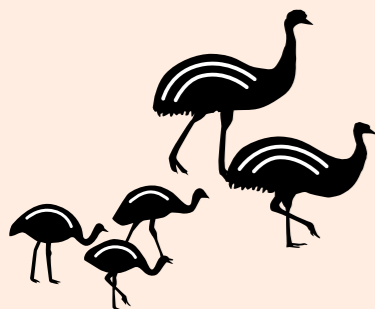
This strategy will be a major enabler for Aboriginal people, communities and businesses across regional NSW.

As we are all committed towards continuous improvement, the importance to endure and embed our cultural foundations is reflected within this strategy.

To complement this strategy we commit to ensuring Aboriginal staff feel culturally safe and supported within the ongoing development of the Aboriginal Support Network.

**Graham Kelly**

Chair  
Aboriginal Support Network



## Our Vision

Better outcomes in partnership with  
Aboriginal people, communities  
and businesses in regional NSW

## Our Strategy

The DRNSW Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy will grow our cultural understanding; deliver better outcomes in partnership with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses; and guide us towards becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal people.

We are committed to embedding Aboriginal inclusion as core business, enabling each group in our cluster to systemically, strategically and operationally delivering on our vision.

**This Strategy will be woven through our core business processes, including:**

- The DRNSW Outcomes Business Plan (OBP);
- Our strategy, policy and program development; and
- Through our evaluation methods.

By embedding Aboriginal inclusion into everything we do, DRNSW will leverage our strengths across all our business areas.

**Within the Regional NSW Cluster, there are seven business groups. They are:**

- Local Land Services
- Mining, Exploration and Geoscience
- Office of the Cross Border Commissioner
- Primary Industries
- Public Works and Soil Conversation Services
- Regional Development and Programs
- Regional Precincts

By implementing the Strategy's underlying principles of self-determination and co-design, DRNSW will be better placed to ensure Aboriginal people, communities and businesses have greater choice, access and control over their economic prosperity, through land, water, housing and resources. Economic prosperity will be created through employment options and by working closely with Aboriginal organisations and businesses to support their success as they grow the NSW economy.

This strategy champions the growth of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and understanding across the entire DRNSW cluster. Most importantly, it will reinforce the importance that we are always on Country, no matter what we are doing or where we are working.

### Case Study



Soil Conservation Service

## Hunter Aboriginal Riverkeeper Team project

The project is redressing environmental degradation, creating positive educational, employment and business outcomes for Aboriginal people. It overcomes Aboriginal disadvantage through environmental and heritage management and conservation.

It has established, strengthened and promoted partnerships, connections and engagement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The project has a culture-rich approach and continues the practice of Indigenous Caring for Country in the Upper Hunter region.



# Understanding and Using this Strategy

This Strategy is divided into two key parts.

Part One outlines the internal focus for DRNSW for our managers and staff. It has been developed as a road map for internal reflection and provides tools to embed Aboriginal inclusion in everything that we do.

1

Part One sets out the internal focus for DRNSW for our people.

- The importance of DRNSW staff being present in Aboriginal communities and developing a sense of belonging
- The values and approach that staff should adopt when working On Country
- The On Country actions that lay the foundations of our Strategic Outcomes for Aboriginal people in Regional NSW
- The ongoing cultural journey that must underpin every staff member's work with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses

2

Part Two outlines the external focus for DRNSW, and outlines the key strategic directions, namely:

1. Delivering Outcomes
2. Workforce Enrichment
3. Evidence Based Know-how

DRNSW Internal focus:

1. Our presence and belonging
2. On country principles
3. Cultural foundations

DRNSW How we work

Our Work on country

Review and evaluate

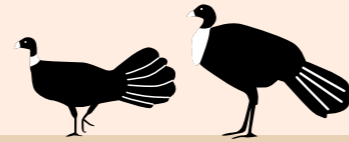
### DRNSW Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy

**Our Vision:**  
Better outcomes in partnership with Aboriginal people communities and businesses in regional NSW

1. Delivering Outcomes
2. Workforce Enrichment
3. Evidence Based Know-how

DRNSW Internal/ External focus:

# Demography summary



## Population:

The estimated resident population of Aboriginal people in NSW was 265,685, representing: 3.4% of the total NSW population and 33.3% of the Aboriginal population of Australia.

Regional NSW -34.5% of Aboriginal people live in Inner Regional, 15.5% in outer regional, 2.8% in remote and 0.9% in very remote.

## Age:

The median age of the NSW Aboriginal population was 22 years, compared with 38 years for the non-Aboriginal population.

53% of the Aboriginal population was aged 24 years and below, compared with 31% of the non-Aboriginal population.

## Workforce Participation

The workforce participation rate for those older than 15 years of age is 65% for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and 56% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Education:

67.1% of Aboriginal people in NSW aged 20-24 years had completed Year 12 or higher, compared with 89.3% of the non-Aboriginal population.

## Language:

Revitalisation of Traditional Aboriginal languages continues within NSW, resulting in many active languages practicing in NSW.

## Housing and home ownership:

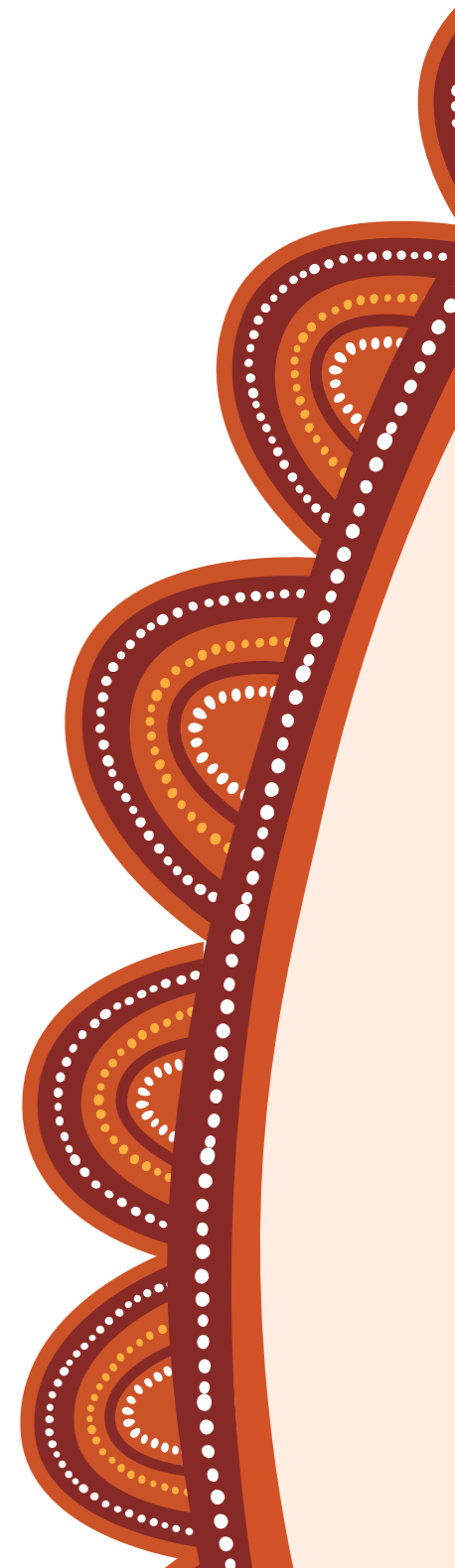
42% of Aboriginal households in NSW own or were purchasing their home, compared with 65% of non-Aboriginal households.

# On Country – DRNSW Presence and Belonging

Being 'On Country' is at the core of every Aboriginal person's identity, enabling a sense of presence and belonging. It is the place from which Aboriginal language and culture is derived, where Aboriginal people self-determine families and kinship, and where Aboriginal families and kinship systems make up communities.

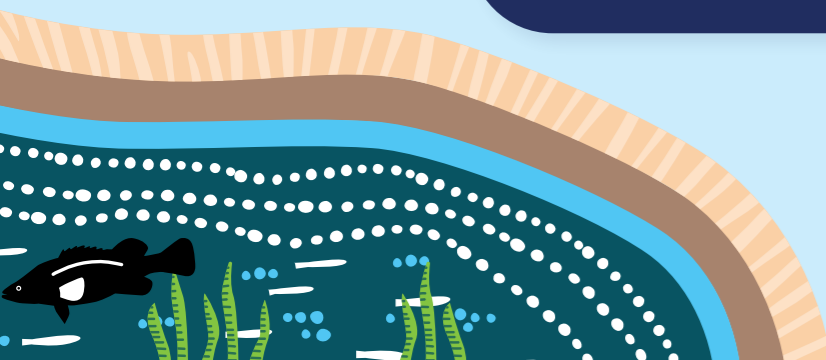
**In delivering our core business, DRNSW staff must focus on:**

- Actively pursue a greater understanding of the Aboriginal communities in which we serve, and integrating this knowledge into our work practices and processes
- Increasing our Aboriginal workforce across all areas of our organisation and at all levels as we become an employer of first choice for Aboriginal people
- Co-design and self-determination principles, which are crucial to a strong working relationships with Aboriginal people and communities in Regional NSW
- Supporting economic prosperity for Aboriginal people and businesses
- Enabling greater choice, access and control for Aboriginal people and communities over land and water, housing and resources



# Our Presence and work On Country

When DRNSW works with Aboriginal Communities, we will work collaboratively to build on our strengths and successes.



Our work is grounded in an On Country presence, that builds on the following elements:

Elements that build On-Country Presence	Must Do	Working towards	What does success look like
<b>Regional Presence</b>	On-the-ground engagement and interaction with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses within Regional NSW including communities across state borders.  Enabling growth in economic prosperity, land utilisation, community priorities and sustainable local communities.	Outcomes aligned to aspirations, needs and expectations from Aboriginal people and communities within Regional NSW including communities across state borders.	Aboriginal people, communities and businesses are reaching their full potential to live, work, play and invest in Regional NSW including communities across state borders.
<b>Place/Strength Based investment and coordination</b>	Understand the strength based domains in each community in which we serve.	Tailored, co-designed services/programs, infrastructure and investment to deliver on local needs.	Services/programs at the local level are achieving positive and sustainable outcomes.
<b>Evidence based evaluation</b>	Our decision-making processes will be evidence based and outcomes driven along with co-designed with Aboriginal people and communities.	Integrated co-designed evaluation systems to inform Aboriginal outcomes across DRNSW.	Single view system that enables automation and reporting aligned to Aboriginal outcomes.
<b>Land, River, Sea utilisation</b>	Support the enduring connection to Land, River and Sea for Aboriginal communities to engage with natural resources and traditional sustainability.	Recognition of the rights, culture and economic aspirations of Aboriginal people and communities	Cultural sustainability for Aboriginal people and communities.
<b>Cultural Immersion for DRNSW staff</b>	Enhance and embed our Aboriginal cultural capability within our core business processes.	Improved relationships, service delivery outcomes, community cohesion and resilience in regional Aboriginal communities.	Aboriginal inclusion is integrated within DRNSW DNA.
<b>Aboriginal Participation Strategy (Procurement)</b>	Enable economic prosperity for Aboriginal people, communities and businesses, through inclusion in procurement opportunities	Increased economic participation by Aboriginal people's and businesses in DRNSW commissioning.	Wealth and cultural creation for Aboriginal peoples and businesses.
<b>Develop an Aboriginal Employment Strategy for DRNSW</b>	Increase Aboriginal employment in DRNSW to minimum of at least 6% across all grade levels by 2025.  Double the number of executive leadership roles held by Aboriginal people in DRNSW by 2025.	Employer of first choice for Aboriginal people in the regions.	Achieve 6% or greater Aboriginal employees in DRNSW.
<b>Develop an Aboriginal cultural capability framework</b>	Cultural capability, consciousness and safety across our DRNSW workforce.	Embed Aboriginal cultural capability, consciousness and safety within our Department.	DRNSW is a culturally capable, and conscious Department that is safe for its employees and clients.
<b>Service mapping and data aggregation of Aboriginal service delivery</b>	Location specific data to inform the services within a specific town and/or region.	Integrated service mapping and data aggregation system to inform the services within a specific town and/or region.	Services/programs delivering positive outcomes within a specific town and/or region for Aboriginal People.

# Cultural Foundations

We are committed to the journey. Some of us are already achieving great results and outcomes with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses, and while we are a large and diverse Department, we are all committed to continuous improvement.

Journey	Business As Usual	Integration	Partner
<b>Cultural Immersion</b>	Staff engaged in and have completed a DRNSW endorsed Cultural Immersion program.	Staff have engaged and attended a localised DRNSW endorsed Cultural immersion program.	Staff take a proactive approach to deepen their knowledge and skills, participating in a range of opportunities to learn and celebrate Aboriginal knowledge and contributions.
<b>Leadership and Accountability</b>	Senior executive and managers are aware and promote the importance of developing responses that address the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people impacted by our work.	Senior executive and managers create and support opportunities for Aboriginal staff and stakeholders to address the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people impacted by our work.  Leaders are held accountable through governance and contractual arrangements.	Senior executive and managers support Aboriginal staff in partnership with Aboriginal communities to respond to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people.  Leaders are held accountable through governance and contractual arrangements and engage with Aboriginal community members about our DRNSW performance.
<b>Engagement and Participation</b>	Staff embrace and understand the value of developing effective working relationships with Aboriginal people.  Staff have identified ways of liaising with and sharing information with Aboriginal people, community members and organisations.	Staff have developed respectful relationships with a broad range of Aboriginal people.  Staff routinely engage with Aboriginal people to understand their perspectives and incorporate their views.	Staff have built and maintained collaborative, trusting and respectful relationship with a brand range of Aboriginal people.  Aboriginal people are involved in decision making, particularly in areas that impact them and their traditional lands and waterways.
<b>Delivering our priorities</b>	Leaders and staff reflect on their own knowledge and beliefs about Aboriginal histories and peoples and understand that their beliefs and preconceptions have an impact on the way we engage and work with Aboriginal people and carry out our roles.	Leaders and staff have deepened their understanding about Aboriginal peoples, histories, cultures and experiences and are able to take steps to incorporate that knowledge into how they approach their work.	Leaders and staff are responsive to the need of Aboriginal people in a variety of contexts (policy, delivery, local, state).
<b>Review and Evaluation</b>	Staff are provided with foundational knowledge on evidence based review and evaluation aligned to specific Aboriginal service delivery.	Staff have deepened understanding to embed evidence based review and evaluation specific to Aboriginal service delivery.	Integration of evidence based review and evaluation is shared amongst our partners to inform our Aboriginal outcomes.

## Case Study



Artwork by Lavinnia Inglis

### Fisheries initiative – DPI

Aboriginal cultural fishing and economic development DPI Fisheries, in partnership with Aboriginal communities in the Tweed and Hastings area, are progressing a two year trial of cultural fishing Local Management Plans (LMP).

An LMP is a collective of arrangement that provides access to fisheries resources for a local Aboriginal community to pursue their cultural practices. It also presents an opportunity for community co-management of fisheries, including aspects of self-regulation.

The LMP covers matters such as areas of fishing, fishing equipment to be used, species of fish, including those of cultural significance, and take and possession limits. The trials will inform the best approach to commence the s.21AA of the Fisheries Management Amendment Act 2009.

For LMP purposes, cultural fishing does not extend to a commercial fishing activity, consistent with the NSW Fisheries Management Act 1994 and Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993.



→ Strategic Directions

# Delivering Outcomes

## Improve outcomes for Aboriginal people, communities and businesses in regional NSW.

### Objective

Services and programs positively enhance the lives of Aboriginal people, communities and businesses to ensure they live, work, play and invest in regional NSW.

### On-country presence

- Regional Presence
- Place/Strength Based investment and coordination
- Land, River, Sea utilisation
- Aboriginal Participation Strategy (Procurement)

Action	Timeline	Lead
Establish, implement and review -DRNSW Aboriginal procurement participation strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal owned businesses to be awarded at least 5% of the total number of domestic contracts for goods and services</li> <li>• Minimum of 1.5% eligible project spend to Aboriginal participation for contracts over \$7.5m</li> </ul>	July 22 to June 25 July 22 to June 25	Chief Financial Officer Group Heads
Increase Aboriginal workforce population and Aboriginal business growth through DRNSW funded services and programs.	June 22 to June 25	Regional Precincts Regional Development and Programs
Engage with Aboriginal people and communities across Regional NSW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• embed a strength-based approach in everything we do                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each DRNSW Group to embed Aboriginal engagement within core business</li> </ul> </li> <li>• improve responsiveness to the economic and enterprise needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish a coding system to inform needs and aspirations for reporting purposes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	June 22 to June 25	Deputy Secretaries and Group Heads  Aboriginal Outcomes team
Program and service design with Aboriginal people and communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure investments and services are designed for long term legacy outcomes                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use immediate, medium and long term indicators</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Embed our Place/strength based approach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roll-out 3 areas -Walgett, Wilcannia, Moree</li> <li>- Each DRNSW Group to expand approach</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support the enduring connection to Land, River and Sea for Aboriginal communities to engage with natural resources and traditional sustainability.</li> <li>• Coordinate and/or implement targeted place-based solutions to achieve positive life experiences (aligned to social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes for Aboriginal people, communities and businesses.)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- i.e-Post School economic outcomes and Regional digital connectivity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	June 22 to June 25 Dec 21 to June 25 January 23 to June 25 July 22 to June 25	Group Heads Group Heads DPI, LLS, MEG Regional Development and Programs Regional Precincts Group
Increase the number of Aboriginal members on DRNSW Boards and Advisory Committees	July 22 to June 25	Deputy Secretaries and Group Heads



→ Strategic Directions

# Workforce enrichment

Better outcomes in attraction, retention, development and career progression for Aboriginal staff at DRNSW.

Improved knowledge, awareness and workplace application through Aboriginal cultural immersion for DRNSW staff.

### Objective

DRNSW staff have knowledge and are aware of their local Aboriginal cultural values/norms, to better inform how we work in partnership to deliver on our activities. Our Aboriginal workforce numbers reflect the communities in which we serve, supported by retention, development and career progression approaches.

### On-country presence

- Cultural Immersion for current DRNSW staff
- Aboriginal Employment Strategy for future staff
- Aboriginal cultural capability framework for all DRNSW staff

Action	Timeline	Lead
<p>Launch and support adoption of our DRNSW Aboriginal branding identity</p>	<p>June 2022 to June 2025</p>	<p>Aboriginal Outcomes team Communications team</p>
<p>Improve DRNSW staff understanding of Aboriginal culture and people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on-country immersion training for DRNSW staff</li> <li>• annual mandatory on-line training</li> <li>• deliver internal advisory and education programs</li> <li>• annual staff survey on experiences and knowledge obtained</li> <li>• recognise and celebrate significant Aboriginal events</li> </ul>	<p>October 2022 to June 2025</p>	<p>People team Communications team</p>
<p>Establish, implement and review DRNSW Aboriginal acknowledgement of country protocol.</p>	<p>August 2022 to June 2025</p>	<p>Corporate Communications</p>
<p>Enhance cultural safety in the Department</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and support our DRNSW Aboriginal team network</li> <li>• Establish, implement and review our DRNSW Aboriginal staff Shadow/Mentoring program</li> </ul>	<p>August 2022 to June 2025</p>	<p>People team</p>
<p>Launch, Implement and review our DRNSW Aboriginal employment strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a development, implementation and review committee for this strategy</li> <li>• Include staff attraction, development and retention initiatives</li> <li>• achieve at least 6% Aboriginal staff representation within DRNSW</li> <li>• double the number of Aboriginal people in DRNSW leadership roles</li> <li>• undertake annual Aboriginal Graduate and/or Cadetship program intake</li> <li>• increase the use of identified and targeted recruitment opportunities across DRNSW</li> <li>• establish HR reporting framework to monitor outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>September 2022 to June 2025</p>	<p>People team</p>

→ Strategic Directions

# Evidence based know-how

## Evidence based data to better inform services/programs needs and evaluation reporting.

### Objective

Aboriginal customer centric focus to inform place-based, tailored services and programs which is supported by an evidence-based evaluation.

### On-country presence

- Use outcome based reporting
- Undertake service mapping and data aggregation
- Develop evidence based evaluation



Action	Timeline	Lead
Establish a DRNSW governance group to monitor and report on Aboriginal outcomes across DRNSW groups in our Cluster.	July 2022 to June 2025	Data and Performance
Establish, implement and review our Aboriginal outcomes monitoring and reporting framework with the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed a single view Customer Relationship Management (CRM) automation system</li> <li>• Service and Program outcomes</li> <li>• Expenditure and Value for Money</li> <li>• Workforce enrichment</li> <li>• Aboriginal Procurement participation for DRNSW Procurement</li> </ul>	January 2023 to June 2025 Aboriginal Outcomes team Data and Performance Data and Performance Finance team People team Group Heads	
Embed, implement and review Aboriginal inclusion (Aboriginal people, communities and businesses) within all DRNSW Strategies and Policies, including the Outcomes and Business Plan (OBP).	July 2022 to June 2025	Group Heads Strategy, Corporate and Performance
Establish evidence-base to improve understanding of Aboriginal communities and businesses to inform policy and program development and implementation.	December 2022 to June 2025	Data and Performance
Develop and embed evaluation Aboriginal Outcomes framework.	December 2022 to June 2025	Data and Performance
To support our DRNSW Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy with Comms and marketing across the cluster.	November 2022 to June 2025	Communications team

## Case Study

### Local Land Services Aboriginal Trainee Ranger Program

The Local Land Services (LLS) Aboriginal Ranger Program offers Aboriginal trainees an opportunity to gain employment experience, knowledge and skills within LLS and the public sector generally.

Trainees undertake Introduction to Land Management, at TOCAL which leads to a Cert III Conservation and Ecosystem Management.

Trainees will receive further training across a range of LLS business units including Traveling Stock Routes (TSRs), and Biosecurity and pest animal management. This training has a focus on Cultural Land Management including Cultural sites work and Cultural burning across two winter burning seasons.

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