



**WELCOMING INDIGENOUS
AUSTRALIANS INTO YOUR
ASSOCIATION**



Basketball Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Country throughout Victoria and pay respects to their Elders past and present.

We are respectful of the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal Peoples from all of the Victorian Aboriginal Nations.



Our artwork is the creation of Victorian based Aboriginal artist Gary Saunders.

The logo represents the strong affinity that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community have with basketball. The basketball at the centre of the design shows that it's at the heart of the program and the reason for bringing community together.

The rings surrounding the basketball represent a meeting place and the dots represent the community members that support their friends and family. The half circles surrounding the logo depict the Elders of the community overseeing and enjoying the gathering.

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INTRODUCTION

Basketball Victoria is committed to reconciliation and the ongoing inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into basketball through associations and environments that are welcoming and culturally sensitive.

As an organisation, we are currently implementing a 'Reconciliation Action Plan' or 'RAP' that will be registered with Reconciliation Australia. Our 'RAP' will provide a framework and an accountable structure for us as our relationship with Australian Indigenous community continues to grow.

The Indigenous community have a long and proud association with basketball. This involves significant contribution as players, coaches, officials and volunteer administrators through local clubs, state and national representation at Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Our plan is to continue to grow our inclusive footprint and welcome more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into basketball and enjoy all of the benefits that being involved in sport brings, which includes mental and physical health, fostering social

bonds as well as enhancing community connections and confidence.

This resource has been developed to assist associations to create inclusive and welcoming environments through internal growth and education, understanding as well as building relationships with the local community and partnering with key organisations to build sustainability and retention.

The resource does not attempt to explain any current public debate in Indigenous affairs.

However, it is important to know and understand the history of Australia's First People and European settlement to effectively plan and sustain Indigenous participation in basketball.

We would like to thank our Indigenous Advisory Committee for their contribution to the development of this resource: Mike Bainbridge, Nova Peris, June Bamblett, Charles Williams and Rob Hyatt. We would also like to thank Karen Milward who is guiding us on our journey.



Deadly SPORT GIPPSLAND



UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE

Facts and Figures

There is evidence Aboriginal people have lived in Victoria for tens of thousands of years prior to European settlement - including the Maribyrnong Valley, near the present-day Keilor, about 40,000 years ago. 39 Aboriginal languages were spoken in Victoria, with 19 sub-dialects in seven languages.



In 2014, the Australian Human Rights Commission released data and statistics regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that highlights some of the challenges and barriers faced by the community. These include:

- In 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented 3 per cent of the Australian population (670,000 people) and by 2031 the population will increase to 4 per cent (1,000,000 people)
- 43 per cent live in regional areas
- The imprisonment rate is 15 times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than the general population
- Unemployment rates are also significantly higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

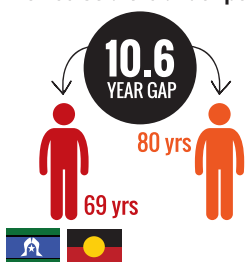
THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION



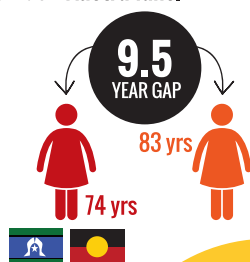
WHERE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE LIVE



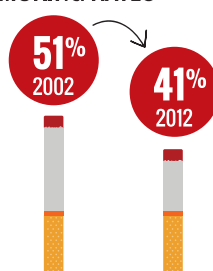
In 2010-12, the average life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was



TEN YEARS LESS than that of non-Indigenous Australians.



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SMOKING RATES



National rate of imprisonment



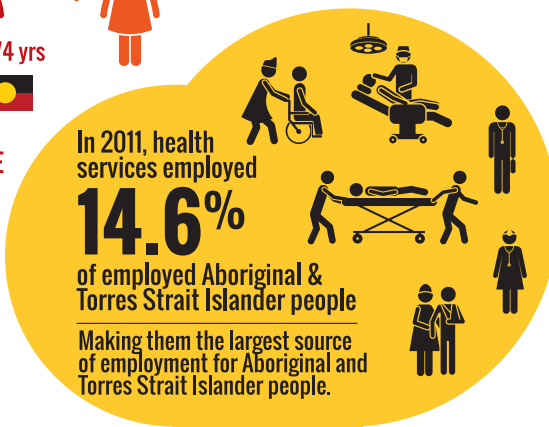
PROPORTION OF UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE (between 15-64 yrs), 2012-2013



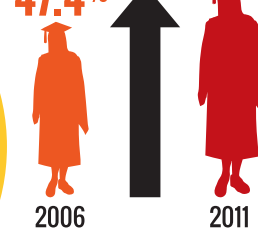
In 2011, health services employed

14.6% of employed Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

Making them the largest source of employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



47.4%



Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20-24 yrs that had attained a Year 12 or equivalent qualification



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health in Victoria

There are health differences in Victoria between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people. As a nation, Australia has the greatest health difference between its native people than any other country in the world¹.

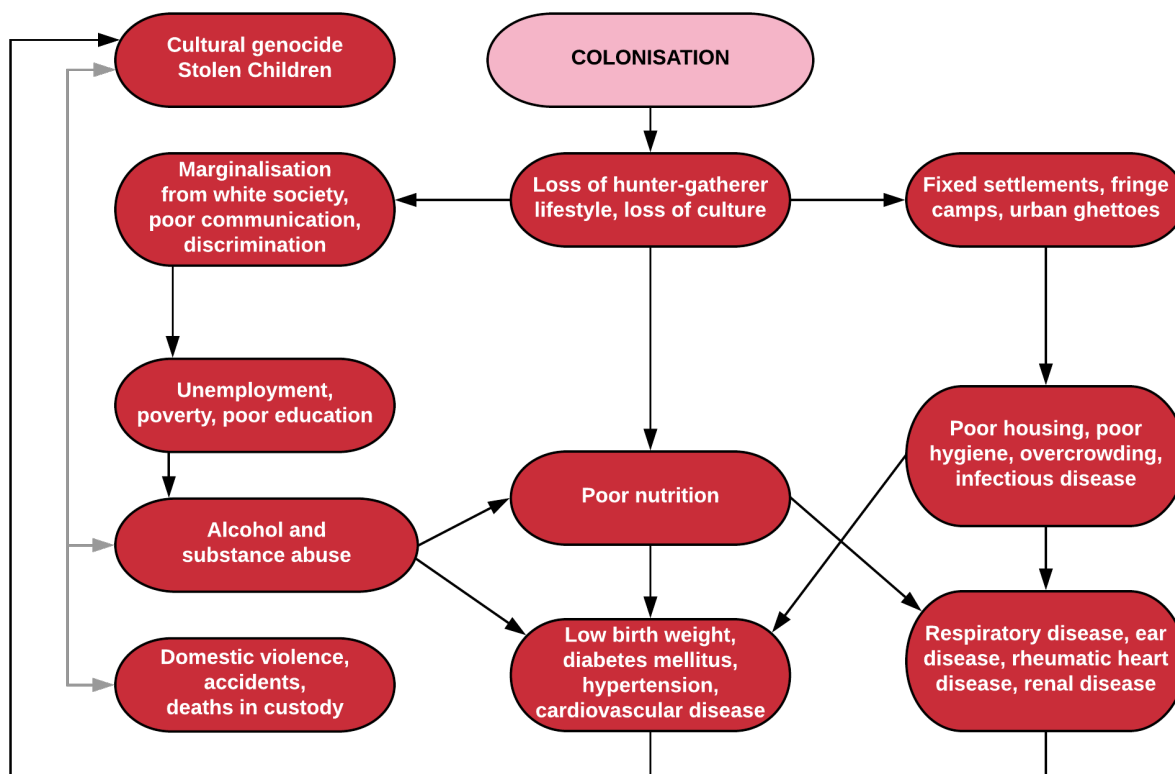
In 2009, VicHealth stated ‘the gap in health status between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is demonstrated by significantly lower life expectancy for Indigenous men and women.’

This is largely as a result of unequal access to resources and opportunities necessary for good health – income, quality housing, education and participation in community activities².

Describing Aboriginal health involves looking at an individual’s behaviour and characteristics, but also the wider social, economic and environmental factors that influence health.

It is also important to understand ‘The history of colonisation’ and the disadvantage that was experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for over 200 years³.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia have experienced loss of culture and land as well as subsequent policies such as the forcible removal of children. In many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities this trauma continues to be passed from generation-to-generation with devastating effect.



Matthews, 1997

¹Burden of Disease, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2011)

²Improving Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing, VicHealth (2009)

³Aboriginal Societies: The Experience of Contact, Australian Law Reform Commission (2011)

Past Australian Government policy and practices enabled the destruction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community kinship groups, languages and cultural rituals through the forcible removal and separation of Indigenous children from their families and kinship networks over some five generations⁴.

The 'Bringing Them Home' report concluded the forcible removal and separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was an act of genocide and the consequence continues to impact today.

Research shows people who experience trauma are more likely to engage in self-destructive behaviours, develop lifestyle diseases as well as enter and remain in the criminal justice system.

In fact, high rates of poor physical health, mental health problems, addiction, incarceration, domestic violence, self-harm and suicide in Indigenous communities are directly linked to experiences of trauma. These communities are directly linked to experiences of historical trauma and causes of new trauma which together can lead to a

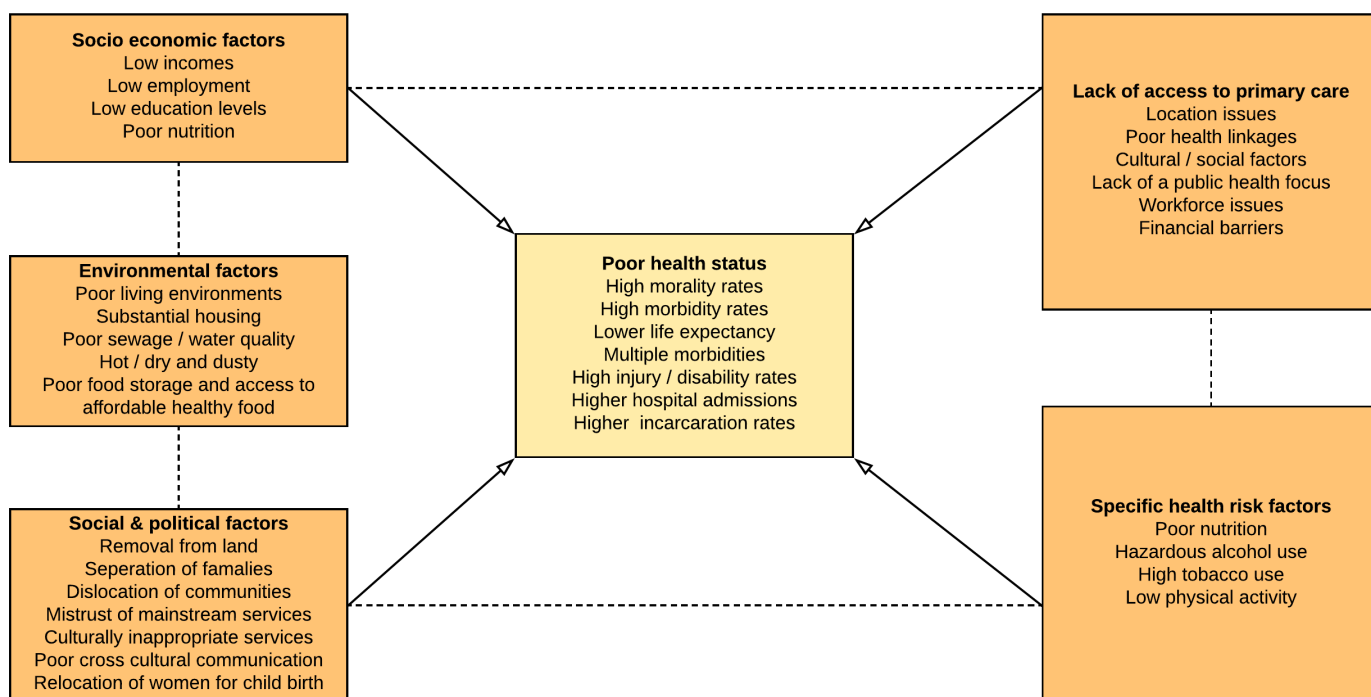
vicious cycle in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population born in 2010–2012, life expectancy was estimated to be 10.6 years lower than that of the non-Indigenous population for males [69.1 years compared with 79.7] and 9.5 years for females [73.7 compared with 83.1].

Between 2005–2007 and 2010–2012, life expectancy at birth for boys increased by 1.6 years and by 0.6 years for girls. Over the same period, the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy narrowed by 0.8 years for males and 0.1 years for females⁵.

There are four preventable chronic conditions that are among the biggest contributors to the life expectancy gap: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and mental illness.

The four risk factors that make the greatest contribution to the disease burden faced by Indigenous Australians are tobacco, physical inactivity, nutrition and security of food supply and alcohol.



Factors impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status - Interactions of social and physiological determinants of health
 National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, 2003 - 2013

⁴ Bringing them Home, Australian Human Rights Commission (1997)

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2016)



Basketball Victoria's Response

Basketball Victoria is committed to the inclusion and positive contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to our sport. This is demonstrated through the establishment of our Indigenous Advisory Group and the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.

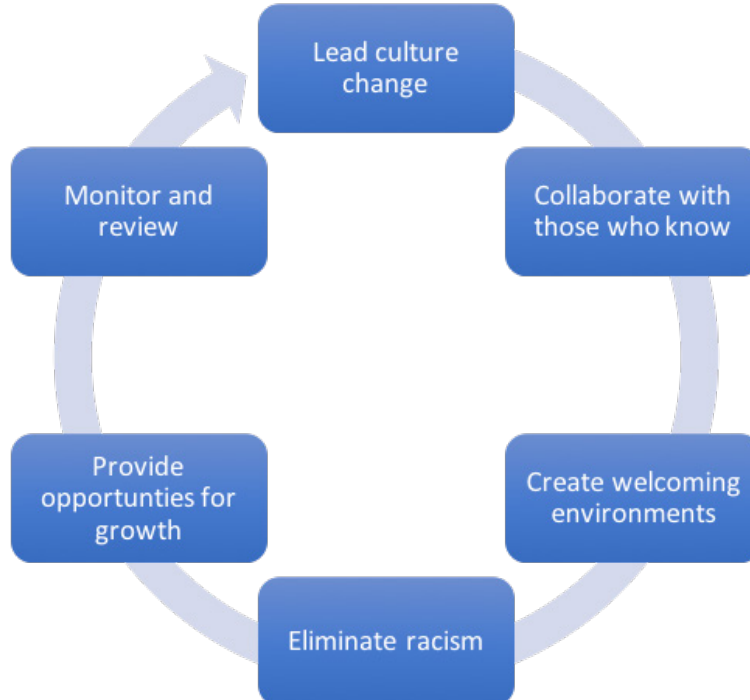
We acknowledge the important role basketball plays in the wider community as a vehicle for social change and the responsibility that we have to the wider community. Sport has been shown to be one of the most effective ways of engaging vulnerable people and changing lives.

We understand that basketball is one element of a much wider plan needed to remove social and health barriers that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face on a daily basis.

Through collaboration with member associations, clubs, local community organisations, local government, Aboriginal health co-operatives and organisations we will work closely with local communities to make a contribution to improving and sustaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Our response is multifaceted with many different points of engagement that will increase knowledge and confidence to effectively include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Basketball Victoria will lead the way for associations and clubs through our actions and decision making. We will continue to work closely with Elders, community leaders and specific organisations who are well-connected and have the knowledge to make a difference.



1. Lead culture change

The development of Basketball Victoria's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides a good platform to lead from. This change is diverse and includes how we can communicate internally and externally, how we plan and how we make decisions.

2. Collaborate with those who know

There are a number of community-based organisations that have far greater knowledge and experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than we do. These organisations include local government, Aboriginal Health Co-operatives and organisations and local community service providers.

Community Elders and Community Leaders are also important people to work with. In most cases Elders will determine how and when the community will engage and support community involvement.

Basketball Victoria has implemented an advisory group to assist in our decision-making and the direction of our work. This will ensure it remains impactful by meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and our work is sustainable into the future.

3. Create welcoming and culturally sensitive environments

Basketball Victoria will work with member associations and clubs to increase knowledge of the social and health challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Australians. This includes the development of resources, the use of social media campaigns. A number of cultural awareness education sessions will be held.

The wider basketball community will be engaged and become culturally aware through a series of events including themed WNBL events and an Indigenous Round of the Big V competition.

Targeted associations are encouraged to establish locally driven working groups that consist of key local stakeholders including local Elders, community service organisations and Aboriginal Health Co-operatives.

4. Eliminate racism

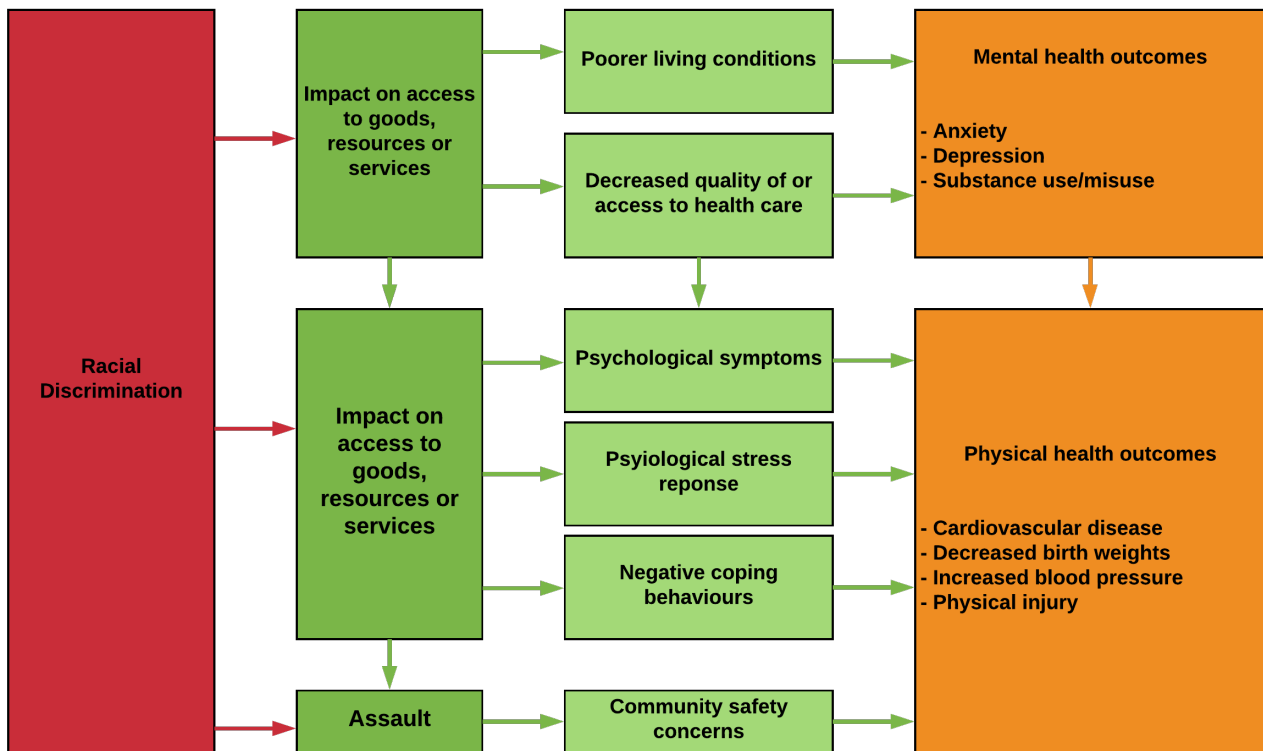
There is a link between experiencing racism and poor health, including poor mental health. Racism, either through deliberate actions or through sub-conscious actions, is a regular occurrence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Depending on the aspect of racism, up to 97 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experienced racism in 2002. This includes verbal abuse, physical abuse, employment discrimination or moving away from Aboriginal people on public transport or in shopping centres⁶.



⁶Challenging Racism: The Anti-racism Research Project, Paradies (2011)





Racism and Health Impacts, Paradies et al. [2013]

Basketball Victoria does not tolerate racism or any racist behaviour. This includes behaviour that is deemed as being harassment, discrimination or vilification. Members are protected from this behaviour through the Basketball Victoria Member Protection By-Laws.

To help eliminate racism and racist behaviour, Basketball Victoria will coordinate an educational social media campaign that promotes the identification of racist behaviour and the reporting of instances of racism within the basketball environment.

Basketball Victoria By-Laws:
 There are a number of By-Laws and Policies available for download.
 These can be accessed by visiting the 'Association' section of www.basketballvictoria.com.au



5. Provide opportunities for growth

Basketball Victoria is committed to providing more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander basketballers to participate within environments that are of their choice and at a level that is suitable for their ability.

This includes creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander basketballers to access the basketball pathway through specifically designed programs and offers that will remove some of the barriers and challenges faced by participants when accessing sport.

We will continue to work with associations to provide culturally sensitive environments that encourage and strengthen the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in active sport and recreation.

Basketball will be used as a tool for empowerment through the creation of new role models and community leaders through coach education programs, refereeing and courses for technical officials.

6. Monitor and inform

To make sure we are on track and narrowing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians, we will regularly monitor data, and continue to liaise with partners and stakeholder groups. Periodically we will report on our progress to basketball and other key partners and stakeholders and the impacts we have had.

UNDERSTANDING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags

History of the Aboriginal flag

The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas, a Luritja man from Central Australia, in 1971. The flag was designed as a symbol of unity and identity for Aboriginal people.

In 1995 the Australian Government proclaimed the flag as an official 'Flag of Australia'. The symbolic meaning of the flag colours is:

- Black: represents the Aboriginal people of Australia
- Red: represents the earth and a spiritual relation to the land
- Yellow: represents the sun, the giver of life and protector.



History of the Torres Strait Islander flag

The Torres Strait Islander flag was designed in 1992 by Bernard Namok, a student from Thursday Island. The flag was created as a symbol of unity and identity for the Torres Strait Islander people.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission recognised the flag in 1992, where it was given equal prominence to the Aboriginal flag.

In 1995 the Australian Government proclaimed the flag as an official 'Flag of Australia'. The symbolic meaning of the flag colours is:

- Green: represents the land
- Blue: represents the sea
- White: represents peace
- Black: represents the Indigenous peoples
- The 'dhari' (headdress) represents the Torres Strait Islander people
- The five-pointed star represents the five major island groups and is a reference to the seafaring culture of the Torres Strait Islander people.



Terminology and Language⁷

The terms 'Indigenous', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' are commonly used today. It is important to understand these terms are labels that have remained as a result of European settlement and colonisation of Australia.

Before colonisation, the 'First Nations' people identified themselves by their individual country with some examples such as Wurundjeri, Watha or Gunai. The terms 'Indigenous', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' are colonial labels that have been imposed on a range of people with diverse cultures and languages.

Outdated terms such as 'full-blood' or 'half-caste' are entirely offensive and are never to be used when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Also, acronyms such as ATSI, TI, TSI or abbreviations such as 'Abos' are also extremely offensive and should never be used.

The first letter of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous are always written in capitals. Not doing so is regarded by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a form of racism, offensive and a way of negating identity and nationality.

Family and Community Connections

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have strong family values and use extended family structures, which in many cases is different to the structure of most traditional 'Western' society families.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people believe that children are not only the concern and responsibility of the biological parents, but also of the entire community.

The raising, care, education and discipline of children is the responsibility of everyone in the community – male and female, young and old.

An extended family is based on a number of factors including:

- Blood relatives: mum, dad, brother, sister, grandparents, cousin, aunty, uncle
- Marriage: aunt, uncle, cousins
- Community: Elder, neighbour, friend, organisation
- Kinship: Aunty, Uncle, cousins or Elders
- Non-related family: Elder, friend, community member
- Mutual respect
- A sense of belonging
- Acceptance and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship ties
- Mutual obligation and support



Kinship:

Kinship systems define where a person fits into the community. Kinship systems may vary across different communities and nations but the principle is the same across Australia.

Kinship defines the roles and responsibilities for raising and educating children as well as the structures of moral and financial support within the community.

Source: dreamtime.net.au



Be aware and respectful of relevant extended family and kinship structures when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Ensure that the extended family is included in important meetings and in making important decisions.

⁷Working with Aboriginal People and Communities – A Practical Resource, NSW Department of Community Services

WHY SHOULD WE WELCOME ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE?

Opening your doors to the wider community allows people to enjoy all the benefits that come from joining a basketball club or team. It also allows new people to contribute and grow basketball and provide a solid legacy for the next generation.

Participation in basketball is more than just playing. It also includes officiating as a referee or as a scoreable representative, serving as a coach, team manager or volunteer, as well as serving as an administrator or on association boards and committees.

Benefits for your association include:

- Expanding your membership base
- Increasing the amount of volunteers to spread the work and explore new opportunities (including the participants family and friends)
- Fresh ideas from a wide range of people from different backgrounds and with diverse experiences
- Greater respect and recognition from the wider community. This recognition could come from the local community, local council, media as well as potential sponsors and corporate supporters
- Additional competition and league participation opportunities (growth)
- A wider talent pool of athletes and coaches to select from to represent the association in the Victorian Junior Basketball League, Country Championships or Big V competitions.

By providing an environment that is welcoming and inclusive you could find people who normally would not participate in basketball will join the association and become actively involved members.

The community expects that all clubs and associations have a moral and ethical responsibility to plan the welcoming and access of programs and services by a wider range of participants – regardless of age, gender, background or ability.



ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION WITH THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY⁸

Engaging in effective consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities on issues that affect them is an important process that must occur.

Consultation should start early on in the decision-making process and continue throughout. This will require openness about how, why and when they are being consulted and the level of influence they will have over the decisions being made.

To ensure effectiveness of the consultation process, there is a need to identify the sort of representation required in the first instance, as well as working with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to find suitable people or groups for those tasks. It is important to get this right to ensure there are no divisions in the community.

Any consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is generally held with a representative group of the community. This includes key family groups and not the whole population within a specific area.

Using the expression 'we have consulted with the Aboriginal community' implies that 100 per cent participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the consultation process, when in fact, only a small number of community members participated.

It would be more transparent and truthful to state 'a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members have participated in the consultation process'.

Offer and earn respect

As with most productive and genuine relationships, engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities need to be based on respect. Elders and community leaders not only possess knowledge, they also hold influence over when, how and if a community will work with those from outside.

Not all Elders are older people. An Elder could also be a younger person who is well connected and respected within the community.

Many people refer to Elders and community leaders as Aunty or Uncle, even if the person is not a blood-relative. This is a sign of respect in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

⁸ Working with Aboriginal People and Communities – A Practical Resource, NSW Department of Community Services

FIVE STEP ACTION GUIDE

Step 1: Look Inwards - Create a welcoming environment

One of the biggest challenges new participants face when joining a basketball program or team is how they feel welcomed and included. This is particularly important when different cultures and backgrounds are involved.

Most of the time, we have the best intentions and think we are being culturally sensitive and welcoming. In reality, our actions could mean we are actually having the opposite effect without realising it.

A good tool for self-reflection when considering how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community feels when connecting with your association is to:

- Look with another's eyes
- Listen with another's ears
- Empathise with other people's feelings

There are a couple of small, but significant steps that associations can take to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel welcomed and included.

Identify drivers and champions

The best people to lead and drive the environment to welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the association, are people who are directly involved and have an interest within the community. This could mean that the person is Aboriginal, is respected within the Aboriginal community or through their work is already engaged with the Aboriginal community.

They could be parents or wider family members who are already involved, they could be from the local school or a local community organisation. Chances are they are already involved with your association and you just need to find them.

It is also beneficial to establish an advisory or working group of identified drivers and champions that can lead the welcoming and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the association.

The group can provide guidance to the committee on major decision making and provide a voice to the committee on the feelings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on challenges they may be facing.

Make your intention known

An easy way to breakdown initial barriers is to tell people they are welcomed into your association. This can be done by making a simple statement.

The statement publicly outlines the intention of the association and reflects the values that the association and its members strive to achieve. The statement should be accessible and available on the association website, publicly announced on social media and distributed through partner organisations.

Sample Statement

The Fletton Basketball Association is committed to welcoming and including members of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to participate in the competitions, teams and programs we conduct.

Our committee members, staff, volunteers and members have been involved in cultural awareness training and use our own experiences and the experiences of others to develop a better model that will serve the entire community.

We have a zero tolerance of racism and racist behaviour and work with Basketball Victoria and the local community to ensure that experience on offer is free from subconscious bias and racism.

Additionally, the committee has established a local advisory group that consists of community leaders and Elders to ensure we remain on task.



John Doe
President, Fletton Basketball Association



Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags

Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags demonstrates recognition of First Nation people, promotes a sense of community partnership and a commitment towards reconciliation.

The flags are a visible sign of respect and can be used to promote a sense of community, create a welcoming environment and can demonstrate a commitment towards closing the gap.

How should the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags be displayed? ⁹

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags should be flown and displayed in a dignified manner. They should not be used as a curtain to unveil a monument or plaque, or used as table or seat covers. Flags should not be allowed to fall or lie on the ground.

Where flag poles are used, each flag should be flown on a separate pole. Each flag should be the same size and on flag poles that are the same height. Tattered or torn flags should not be flown, and may be destroyed privately.

It is important that flags are flown in an upright position. For the Aboriginal flag, this means the black half is above the red. For the Torres Strait Islander flag, this

means that the star is positioned below the dhari (headdress). Both flags are of equal importance and individual circumstances determine which flag, if not both, should be flown.

In what order should the flags be flown?

The Australian flag should take a position of precedence over other flags. This means that if all flagpoles are of the same height, the Australian flag is positioned on the extreme left hand (as seen by those facing it). The Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag may be flown in either order as they are both of equal standing in the order of precedence.

Where one flagpole is taller than others, the Australian flag should be placed on the tallest flagpole, with the other flags below it. Other flags should once again be ordered by precedence from left to right.

Protocols exist for flying the Australian flag¹⁰ regardless of how the flag is displayed – against a surface (horizontally or vertically) or on a flag pole, the Union Jack should be in the top left quarter of the flag. Even when the flag is displayed vertically the rule must be followed.

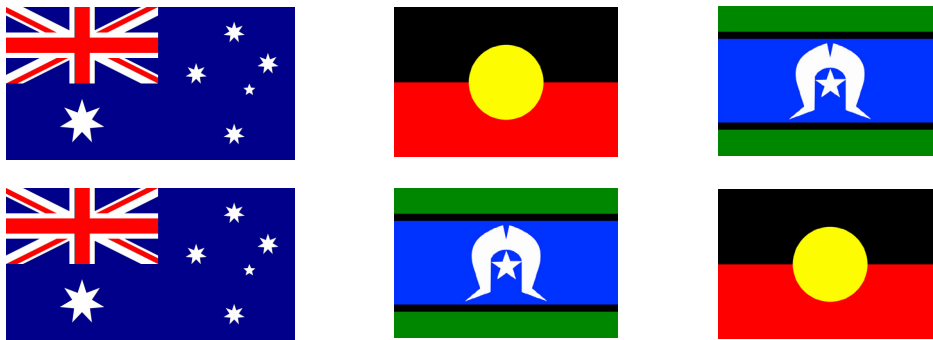
Although to the observer the flag appears to be back to front. The reason for this placement is that the Union Jack is a position of honour on the flag.



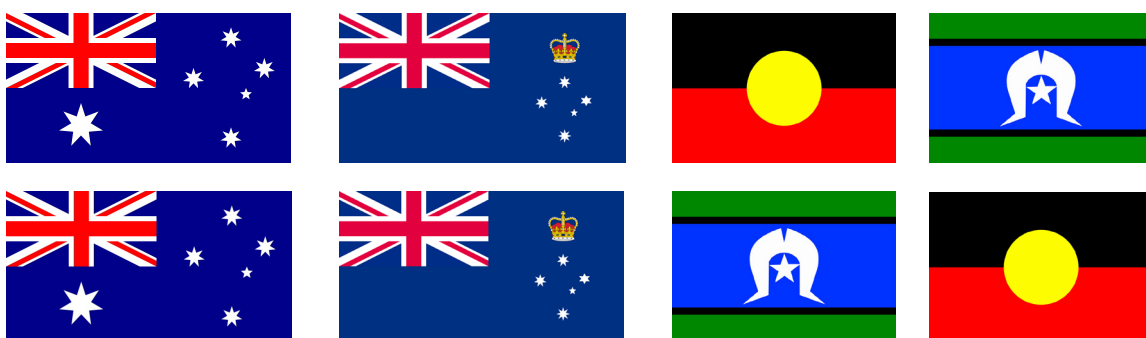
⁹ Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags, Reconciliation Australia

¹⁰ Australian Flags, Australian Government [2006]

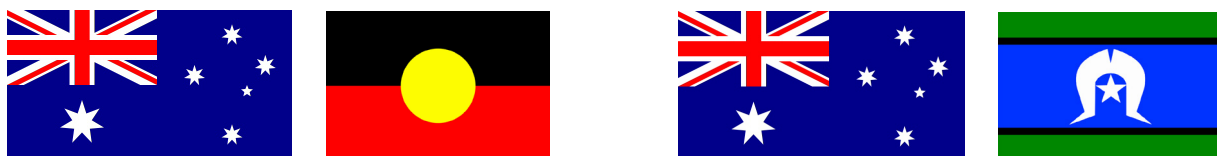
How the flags are positioned¹¹



The Australian National Flag should be the prominent flag and is placed on the extreme left. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are of equal standing and can be placed in either order.



The Victorian State Flag is placed in a position to the right of the Australian National Flag. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are of equal standing and can be placed in either order.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags can be flown individually alongside the Australian National Flag.



When flags are hung vertically, the order of flags remains the same as when they are flown horizontally. The Union Jack is flown in the top left corner, even if the flag appears to look incorrect. The black half is the most important part of the Aboriginal flag and needs to be placed in a place of prominence as is the top of the head dress on the Torres Strait Islander flag.

¹¹ Australian Flags, Australian Government [2006]



Step 2: Build understanding and competence in leaders

Perhaps the most important element of ensuring the creation and long-term sustainability of including Aboriginal people into your association is ensuring key decision makers have an understanding and empathy of Aboriginal culture and the barriers to participation that are faced.

Participation in education sessions such as cultural awareness training and spiritual walks with the Aboriginal community are a great starting point to understanding Aboriginal culture and traditions and also gain empathy over some of the social challenges faced by Aboriginal people.

Step 3: Look outwards: partner and communicate

When looking to welcome and include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community it is important to identify local community organisations and groups and understand who the local Elders and community leaders are.

Remember Elders and community leaders are influential over how and when the community will participate.

A good place to start is with the local Aboriginal Health Co-operative. These are key organisations within the local community to engage due to their links and networks within the community.

A list of contacts is provided at the end of this guide. However, for more updated information, please visit the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) at www.vaccho.org.au.

Local councils are also a great starting point for engaging with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The majority of

If the committee members are not on board with the creation of welcoming environments or the inclusion of Aboriginal people into the association, the likelihood of successful integration is significantly reduced.

The adoption of policy and strategic plans is another step to support the building and understanding of decision makers. There are a number of good resources and reference material that explore strategic approaches to influencing boards and committees.

local councils employ a person to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and regularly publish a local community directory.

Local councils will have a Reconciliation Action Plan or RAP established that clearly communicates a plan on how the council plans to welcome and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The RAP is usually driven by a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory group that is made up of local Elders, leaders and organisations.

It is also recommended that you understand the local community. This includes demographical data such as age, income and population breakdowns. This information is available through your local council or the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

One of the best websites to use when looking for demographical data is www.id.com.au. This website allows you to search for data on your own local government area (LGA) and compare data with other areas.



To find your local Aboriginal Health Co-operative organisation, please visit www.vaccho.org.au



To find out demographical information on your local community, please visit www.id.com.au

Step 4: First engagement¹²

First impressions are essential when meeting with new groups. This is even more important when dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are a number of practical strategies that can be used to make as good a first impression as possible.

a.) Getting started

- Firstly, seek out and talk to someone who ideally is from or who knows the community you wish to include. This person will be able to provide you with some background such as Elders, leaders and key family groups
- When identified, it is important to meet with the community Elders prior to meeting with the wider community
- When holding a meeting with the wider community, ensure that as many Elders, leaders and key family groups are in attendance as possible. This will allow a bigger cross-section of the entire community to provide their thoughts and have a 'voice' during consultation
- In some communities, there will be family tension present. It is important to ensure you are not drawn into it. Be objective, don't take sides and try to include all family groups

b.) Greetings

- Always allow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person assisting your engagement with the community to introduce you to the community and follow their lead
- If a handshake isn't offered, do not be offended. Handshakes are not generally used as a greeting by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Accept a verbal greeting as the formal introduction
- If a handshake is offered, shake hands with one hand, using a firm but not an overly firm grip and be aware that eye contact may not occur at this point

c.) Meetings

- Ask when and where people or the community would like to meet with you. Meetings should occur where they feel most comfortable
- Use an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of meetings
- When attending meetings, wait to be seated. If you are not shown a seat ask where you may sit, or choose a seat that is a respectful distance back
- When leaving the meeting, do so quietly and without drawing attention

d.) Non-verbal cues/presentation

- When meeting be aware that direct eye contact may not be made with you
- Prolonged eye contact can be interpreted as staring, confrontational and disrespectful
- If a person is comfortable with eye contact that is fine, but if not then notice and respect this
- When meeting wear respectful covering clothing – miniskirts, plunging necklines and tight-fitting or transparent clothing is not appropriate
- In traditional communities, it is respectful for women to wear full long skirts. Be guided about dressing appropriately before you visit
- In all communication ensure sufficient personal space is available

e.) Networks, contacts and following up

- Establish a network of male and female contacts within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Once good contact with community is established, ensure it is maintained and follow up soon after a meeting. Distrust and cynicism towards non-Indigenous people and service providers can occur so it is vital to be sensitive, to have regular contact and to keep your word
- If you give your word on anything ensure that you follow up through with it. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will take you at your word and your credibility depends on keeping it

¹²Enhancing the planning and delivery of services to Aboriginal people, WA Department for Child Protection [2007]



f.) Talking, listening and hearing

- Silence may indicate people are finding what you say hard to follow so encourage discussion amongst themselves then go back and talk and listen.
- In meetings do not raise your voice, instead listen carefully. Check by paraphrasing that you have understood their intent and been understood
- Present your verbal messages simply and clearly; try to get to the point quickly
- Use a normal tone of voice and listen very carefully because:
 - The spoken accent can vary from district to district
 - The language spoken can in some cases be delivered quickly and/or quietly

g.) Taking time

- It is critical to allow plenty of lead in time for consultation and meetings
- Do not expect immediate answers or decisions – plan for several visits and meetings
- Allow people to make their decisions in their own time
- Do not force issues. Go back at a later time for an answer if required
- Be aware that meeting may be cancelled at the last minute if other community precedence has taken place. Respect this and set an alternate time to meet

Step 5: Retain and champion

People give their best when they see themselves among friends working together towards a common cause. Volunteers are the backbone of all basketball associations – without their contribution associations would not be able to achieve the significant outcomes they do.

The retention of volunteers is a challenge. In today's world there are a number of different work, lifestyle and monetary pressures. There are some strategies that can be used to retain volunteers:

- **Reward:** provide a reward for the time given. This can take on many forms: a party to celebrate a positive outcome, giving volunteers a trip to the cinema through a volunteer recognition program or even provide them with specifically designed merchandise
- **Recognition:** recognise the contribution volunteers make. This can be done by listing their names in a report, on an honour roll or in a public forum. Thank the volunteers in speeches or personally thank them through a simple phone call, email or letter
- **Respect:** provide training and development opportunities to help them learn new skills. Another way to demonstrate respect is to consult with volunteers on decision-making and seeking their advice when introducing new programs or strategies within the association

Another strong strategy is to champion existing program participants by developing them into leaders. This is achieved by creating an environment that thrives on communication; individuals can voice their opinions and share their ideas, which in turn guides individuals towards becoming leaders.

This environment will allow individuals to develop in accordance with their strengths and talents. Champions do not only recognise their own strengths and have the ability to capitalise on them, but also the strengths of those around them.



How to welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

“Indigenous Rounds” and themed home games

An “Indigenous Round” is a great opportunity to highlight the significant contribution Indigenous people make to associations, to clubs and to the sport of basketball as a whole. They also provide opportunities to work towards better understanding and reconciliation.

When considering an “Indigenous Round” or themed event, it is important to have a clear reason for holding the event as your decision-making and promotion of the event will be based on these reasons.

Some ideas on why to hold an “Indigenous Round” or themed event include:

- Cultural awareness and reconciliation
- Increasing participation and club involvement
- Recognition of contributions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members

Advise the league

When planning your event, it is important to check with the league (for example Big V, MUVJBL) before starting extensive planning. Special permission may be needed to change pregame protocols and logistics.

- Advise the league of all game day activities
- Participate in any league-wide promotion of an “Indigenous Round” or game
- Invite league officials to be guests on the day
- Advise opposition clubs of activities and invite them to be active participants. It is a great opportunity to recognise any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players from both clubs and potentially serves as a good story for local media as well as your own social media and website

Permission may be needed for:

- A change of game time - you may need to allow time for ceremonies and activities between or before games
- Wearing uniforms designed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or use of an alternate game ball

Engage the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community:

It is essential to include and liaise with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community from the beginning and throughout the planning process.

- Identify and invite any local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to be involved in planning and running activities on the day
- Request input and seek advice on cultural activities and ceremonies
- Identify current and past players and acknowledge their contribution
- Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players and members to be actively involved

Start simple:

Events don't need to be huge, a simple ceremony that connects people together may be all that is needed and provides a starting place for future events. It doesn't need to be over-complicated or cost a lot of money.

- Flag raising ceremony
- Commencing with a Welcome to Country by an Elder or an acknowledgement by a club official or community member
- A speech about what the event means to the club or association and to recognise any current or past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, committee members, officials or members

Getting started:

Getting your club or association members involved is important to making sure the event is a success. Involving members will ensure the reasons you are holding the event is known, why the event is important and how it will benefit both the club and the community.

- Invite key players, coaches, committee members and supporters to be part of the planning
- Provide good communication to your members so people know what is happening and why
- Invite current and past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players and/or members, officials and committee members to have an active involvement
- Ensure all teams across the club or association have an involvement in celebrations (junior and senior teams alike)
- Prepare a speech about what the day means to the club and to recognise any current or past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, committee members, officials and members

What more can you do?

Uniforms and merchandise:

- Locally designed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander uniforms or socks
- T-shirts or polo shirts for committee members and game day officials
- Use local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art for raffle prizes
- Match ball – can you use an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed ball?
- Sell shirts to the public or make available through a pre-order system
- Auction player uniforms after the game

Decorations:

- Use banners from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups or organisations
- Cultural face painting and children's activities or crafts

Promote your day:

- Distribute posters, flyers and invitations prior to the event
- Promote the event on your website and social media
- Notify local media, utilise any opportunities to promote the game or event, cultural activities and feature any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players at the club or association (past or present)
- Link to major cultural dates on the calendar such as NAIDOC Week
- Invite Elders and any Aboriginal community members and groups

Deadly Sports Gippsland have produced an extensive information guide to hosting Indigenous Rounds and events. It can be downloaded by visiting: www.gippsport.com.au

- Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags
- Photo displays of past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, officials and members from club or association history

Catering:

- Celebration cake decorated in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colours or designs
- Traditional food on sale or free to try:
 - Emu, crocodile or kangaroo sausages
 - Lemon myrtle cake

Ceremonies:

- Smoking ceremony
- Hold a post-game celebration with the local community



Cultural awareness:

- Place information at the entry about the game or event to welcome events
- Include information in game day programs including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed covers and content
- Place key information around the venue with information on things such as ‘what is NAIDOC?’

Awards and shields:

- Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed medals for MVP performance award
- Compete for an annual shield and develop a rivalry with another club or association
- Develop relationships with the same club each year
- Have a shield named after a significant local Elder

What is a ‘Welcome to Country’?¹³

A Welcome to Country is important in the ongoing reconciliation between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Valuing and respecting appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ceremonies are essential to increasing the understanding and mutual respect in the wider community¹⁴.

A Welcome to Country occurs at the beginning of a formal event. The Welcome to Country can take a number of different forms including singing, dancing, smoking ceremonies or a speech in the traditional language or English.

The Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who have been given permission from the Traditional Owners to welcome visitors to their country.

What is an ‘Acknowledgement of Country’

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect towards Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to country.

The examples below are examples of an Acknowledgement to Country:

- Generic: “I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders both past and present”.
- Specific: “I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the [people] of the [nation] and pay my respects to Elders past and present”.



¹³ ‘Welcome to and acknowledgement of Country’, Reconciliation Australia

¹⁴ ‘Protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Traditional Ownership’, WA Department of Education and Training

Language

How we use language matters when talking to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We might be talking about historical events that bring back negative experiences. It is not just about the words, but it is about the people, their experiences and the experiences of their family members.

Using the correct terminology can be confusing for non-Indigenous people. This confusion can lead to not engaging in conversation, due to fear of unintentionally using inappropriate or offensive language that upsets the person.

Complexity

There isn't a rulebook when it comes to the correct terminology regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are diverse and have their own unique histories and experiences.

As a result, the information contained in this section is intended to be a guide of generally accepted terminology. Individual experiences may be different to those contained here.

Historical context

Since European settlement, some of the names used to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not appropriate. Many of these terms have a negative connotation and should be replaced with words that are more respectfully and less hurtful.

Other Keys for effective communication¹⁵

1. Demonstrate understanding

The negative impact of racial and economic disadvantage, as well as past government policies including segregation, displacement and separation of families have contributed to a lack of trust.

People's cultural beliefs, values and views influence their thoughts, behaviours and

interactions with others. It is important to reflect without judgement before, during and after interacting with people with different views and experiences to your own.

2. Rapport

A sense of value is placed on building and maintaining relationships. Taking a 'person before business' approach will help form this relationship and build rapport.

- Introduce yourself in a warm and friendly way
- Ask people where they are from, share stories about yourself or find other topics of common interest

3. Language

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not speak English as their first language. Some also speak English in different dialects such as Kriol, Aboriginal English and Torres Strait Creole.

Some general tips to overcome language barriers may include:

- Avoid using complex words and jargon
- Always check you understand the meaning of words the person has used and vice-versa
- Be cautious about using traditional languages or creole words unless you have excellent understanding.

A creole language is a stable natural language that is developed from a mixture of different languages. A creole is believed to arise when a 'pidgin', developed by adults for use as a second language, becomes the native and primary language of their children.

4. Time

Time is perceived differently in 'Western' culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture places more value on family responsibilities and community relationships.

- Consider allowing flexible meeting or program times
- Take the time to explain and don't rush the person

¹⁵Adapted from: Communicating Effectively with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people, Queensland Government [2015]



5. Non-verbal communication

Some non-verbal communication cues (hand gestures, facial expressions etc.) used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have different meanings in a 'Western' context. Be mindful that that your own non-verbal communication will be observed and interpreted. For example, feelings of annoyance may be reflected by your body language and are likely to be noticed.

6. Personal space

Be conscious about the distance to which you are standing near a person. Standing too close to a person that you are unfamiliar with, or of the opposite gender, can make a person feel uncomfortable.

7. Silence

Extended periods of silence during conversations are considered normal and valued. Silent pauses are used to listen, show respect or consensus. The positive use of silence should not be misinterpreted as a lack of understanding, agreement or urgent concern.

Observe both silence and body language to gauge when it is appropriate to start speaking. Be respectful and provide the person with adequate time to respond and seek clarification that what was asked or discussed was understood.

8. Eye contact

Avoidance of eye contact is customarily a gesture of respect. In 'Western' culture avoiding eye contact can be viewed as being dishonest, rude or showing a lack of interest. Some people may therefore be uncomfortable with direct eye contact, especially if unfamiliar. Making direct eye contact can be viewed as being rude, disrespectful or even aggressive.

To show polite respect, the appropriate approach would be to lower your eyes in conversation.

- Observe the other person's body language
- Follow the other person's lead and modify eye contact accordingly
- Avoid cross-gender eye contact unless the other person initiates it and it is comfortable

9. Making decisions

Due to family kinship structures and relationships, decision making usually involves the input by other family members.

- Check with the person if the decision needs further consultation with family
- Allow time for information to be clearly understood
- Be respectful if you are asked to leave the room or meeting so matters can be discussed in private





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND KEY ORGANISATIONS

Registered Aboriginal Parties (Victoria)

Registered Party	Contact
Barengi Gadjun Land Council Aboriginal Corporation	127 Wall Nursery Road, Wall VIC 3401 [03] 5389 1921 www.bglc.com.au
Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation	16/395 Nepean Highway, Frankston VIC 3199 0499 222 331 www.bunuronglc.org
Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation	1/70 Powells Avenue, Bendigo VIC 3550 [03] 5444 2888 www.djadjawurrung.com.au
Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	36-38 Gipps Street, Collingwood VIC 3066 0423 959 022 www.easternmaar.com.au
Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation	27 Scriveners Road, Kalimna West VIC 3909 [03] 5152 5100 www.glawac.com.au
Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation [not currently registered]	4/48 Edgar Street, Heywood VIC 3304 [03] 5527 1427 www.gunditjmirring.com
Martang Pty Ltd	Po Box 20, Halls Gap VIC 3381 [03] 5356 6188 martang1362@bigpond.com
Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation	37 High Street, Broadford VIC 3658 [03] 5784 1433 www.taungurung.com.au
Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation	62 Morgan Street, North Geelong VIC 3215 [03] 5277 0044 www.wathaurung.org.au
Wurundjeri Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation	[03] 9416 2905 www.wurundjeri.com.au
Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation	56B Wyndham Street, Shepparton VIC 3630 [03] 5832 0222 www.ynac.com.au

List is correct of November 2017, via Aboriginal Victoria



Organisation	Address	Contact
Aboriginal Community Elders Services	5 Parkview Ave, BRUNSWICK EAST VIC 3057	Phone: (03) 9383 4244 Email: admin@acesinc.org.au Web Site: www.acesinc.org.au
Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-op	5 Market Street, BALLARAT VIC 3350	Phone: (03) 5331 5344 Email: reception@badac.net.au Web Site: www.badac.net.au
Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-op	13-15 Forest Street, BENDIGO VIC 3550	Phone: (03) 5442 4947 Email: reception@bdac.com.au Web Site: www.bdac.com.au
Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-op	20-22 Grampians Road, HALLS GAP VIC 3381	Phone: (03) 5356 4751 Email: ceo@budjabudjacoop.org.au Web Site: www.budjabudjacoop.org.au
Dandenong & District Aboriginal Co-op	62 Stud Road, DANDENONG VIC 3175	Phone: (03) 9794 5973 Web Site: www.ddacl.org.au
Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service	18 Wellington Road, PORTLAND VIC 3305	Phone: (03) 5521 7535 Email: reception@dwech.com.au Web Site: dwech.com.au
Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op	37-53 Dalmahoy Street, BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875	Phone: (03) 5150 0700 Web Site: www.gegac.org.au
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative	43 Hamilton Street, HORSHAM VIC 3402	Phone: (03) 5381 6333 Email: reception@goolumgoolum.org.au Web Site: www.goolumgoolum.org.au
Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative	135 Kepler Street, WARRNAMBOOL VIC 3280	Phone: (03) 5559 1234 Email: admin@gunditjmara.org.au Web Site: www.gunditjmara.org.au
Kirrae Health Services Incorporated	Kirrae Avenue, PURNIM VIC 3278	Phone: (03) 5567 1270
Lake Tyers Health & Children's Service	Rules Road, LAKE TYERS VIC 3887	Phone: (03) 5155 8500
Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association	18-26 Jemmeson Street, LAKES ENTRANCE VIC 3909	Phone: (03) 5155 8465 Email: admin@dn.org.au Web Site: www.djillayngalu.org.au
Mallee District Aboriginal Services	120 Madden Avenue, MILDURA VIC 3502	Phone: (03) 5018 4100 Web Site: www.mdas.org.au
Moogii Aboriginal Council East Gippsland	52 Stanley Street. ORBOST VIC 3888	Phone: (03) 5154 2133 Email: reception@moogii.com.au
Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation	21 Hovell Street, WODONGA VIC 3690	Phone: (03) 6024 7599 Email: reception@mungabareena.com Web Site: www.mungabareena.com
Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative	Lot 2 Latje Road ROBINVALE VIC 3549	Phone: (03) 5026 3353 Web Site: www.mvac.org.au
Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative	93 Wellington Street, ST KILDA VIC 3182	Phone: (03) 9510 3233 Email: reception@ngwala.org Web Site: www.ngwala.org
Njernda Aboriginal Cooperative	86 Hare Street ECHUCA VIC 3564	Phone: (03) 5482 6566 Web Site: www.njernda.com.au
Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Cooperative (Drouin, Morwell, Sale, Wonthaggi)	117 Foster Street, SALE VIC 3850	Phone: (03) 5143 1644 Web Site: www.ramahyuck.org
Victorian Aboriginal Health Service	186 Nicholson Street, FITZROY VIC 3065	Phone: (03) 9419 3000 Email: info@vahs.org.au Web Site: www.vahs.org.au
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative	62 Morgan Street, NORTH GEELONG VIC 3215	Phone: (03) 5277 0044 Email: admin@wathaurong.org.au Web Site: www.wathaurong.org.au
Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation	21 Scott Street, HEY-WOOD VIC 3304	Phone: (03) 5527 0000 Email: wmac@windamara.com Web Site: www.windamara.com

Organisation	Address	Contact
Boorndawan William Aboriginal Healing Service	289 Swansea Road, LILYDALE VIC 3140	Phone: (03) 9212 0200 Email: boornda-wanwilliam@each.com.au Web Site: www.bwahs.com.au
Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place	20 Agonis Street, DOVETON VIC 3137	Phone: (03) 9792 7378
Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association	1A Badger Creek Road, HEALESVILLE VIC 3177	Phone: (03) 5962 2940 Email: admin@hicsa.org.au Web Site: www.hicsa.org.au
Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place	3 Croydon Way, CROYDON VIC 3136	Phone: (03) 9725 2166 Email: administration@mmigp.org.au Web Site: www.mmigp.org.au
Western Suburbs Indigenous Gathering Place	200 Rosamond Road, MARIBYRNONG VIC 3032	Phone: (03) 9318 7855 Email: david@gatheringplace.com.au Web Site: www.gatheringplace.com.au

For a map of Registered Aboriginal Parties in Victoria head to:
www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage

Deadly Sport Gippsland

Phone: (03) 5135 8335
 Email: info@gippsport.com.au
 Website: www.deadlysport.com.au

Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation (MAYSAR)

Phone: (03) 9416 4255
 Website: www.facebook.com/MAYSARcooperative

Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd. (VACSAL)

Phone: (03) 9416 4266
 Email: reception@vacsal.org.au
 Website: www.vacsal.org.au



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Significant Dates:

13th February - Anniversary of the Apology [2008]

Anniversary of the formal apology made on 13 February 2008 by the government and the Parliament of Australia to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - in particular to the Stolen Generations.

March [Actual date changes annually] - National Close the Gap Day

National Close the Gap Day is an annual event held to raise awareness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health crisis.

26th May - National Sorry Day

National Sorry Day offers the community the opportunity to acknowledge the impact of the policies spanning more than 150 years of forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998 following the 1997 HREOC report Bringing Them Home which recommended that a national day of observance be declared.

May / June [Actual dates change annually] - Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week was initiated in 1996 to provide a special focus for nationwide activities. The week is a time to reflect on achievements so far and the things which must still be done to achieve reconciliation.

3rd June - Mabo Day

Mabo Day marks the anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgement in 1992 in the Mabo case. This is a day of particular significance for Torres Strait Islander Australians.

July [Actual dates change annually] - NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week is a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in various fields.

9th August - International Day of the World's Indigenous People

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is observed on August 9 each year to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population. This event also recognises the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.





Basketball Victoria

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