

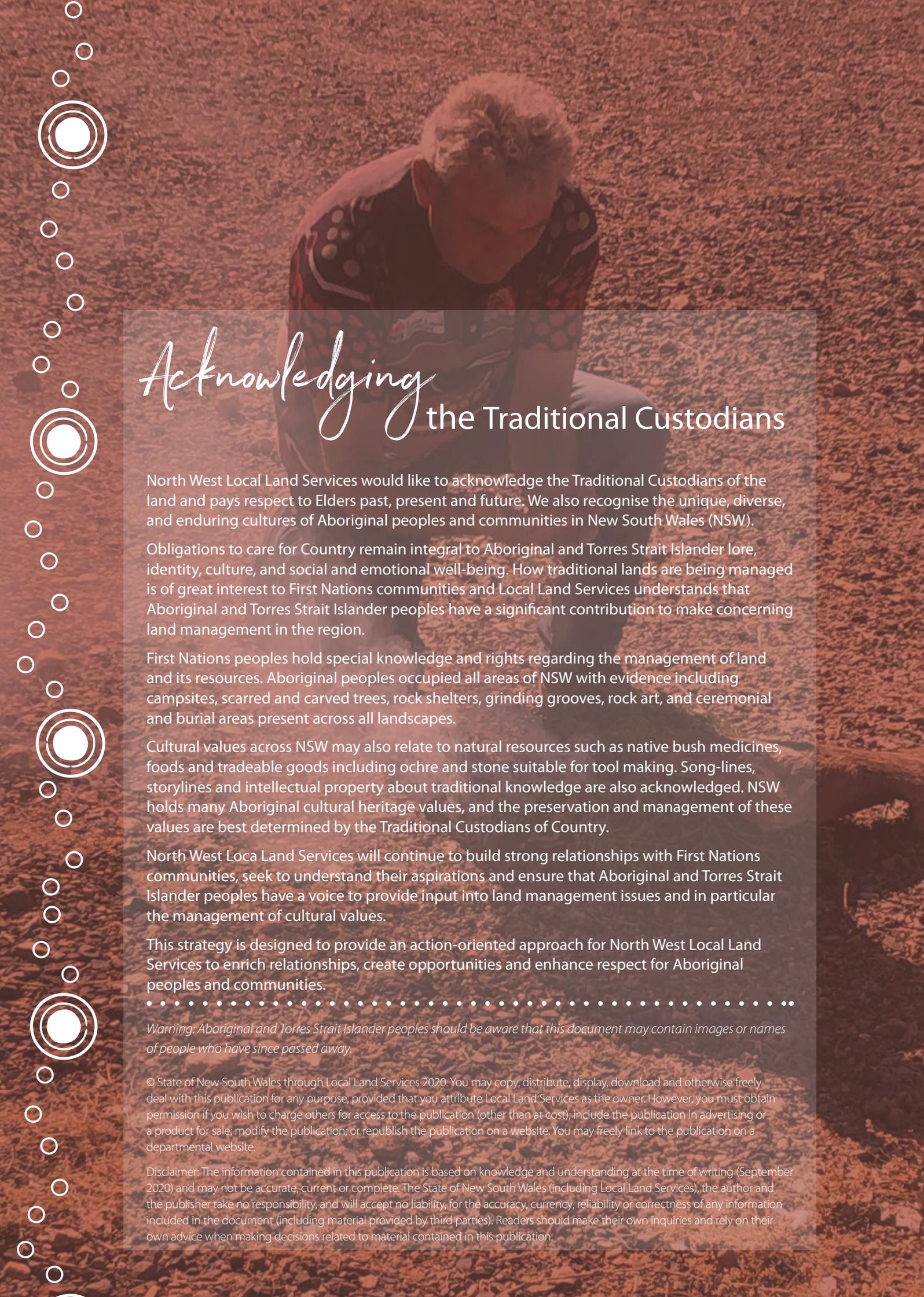


North West

**Aboriginal Engagement
Strategy**



Local Land
Services



Acknowledging the Traditional Custodians

North West Local Land Services would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We also recognise the unique, diverse, and enduring cultures of Aboriginal peoples and communities in New South Wales (NSW).

Obligations to care for Country remain integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lore, identity, culture, and social and emotional well-being. How traditional lands are being managed is of great interest to First Nations communities and Local Land Services understands that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a significant contribution to make concerning land management in the region.

First Nations peoples hold special knowledge and rights regarding the management of land and its resources. Aboriginal peoples occupied all areas of NSW with evidence including campsites, scarred and carved trees, rock shelters, grinding grooves, rock art, and ceremonial and burial areas present across all landscapes.

Cultural values across NSW may also relate to natural resources such as native bush medicines, foods and tradeable goods including ochre and stone suitable for tool making. Song-lines, storylines and intellectual property about traditional knowledge are also acknowledged. NSW holds many Aboriginal cultural heritage values, and the preservation and management of these values are best determined by the Traditional Custodians of Country.

North West Local Land Services will continue to build strong relationships with First Nations communities, seek to understand their aspirations and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a voice to provide input into land management issues and in particular the management of cultural values.

This strategy is designed to provide an action-oriented approach for North West Local Land Services to enrich relationships, create opportunities and enhance respect for Aboriginal peoples and communities.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

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Our strategy

Our vision is to enrich, enhance and foster respectful relationships that create opportunities for First Nations peoples and other Australians to work and walk together toward reconciled, resilient communities in productive, healthy landscapes.

The “Our Place on Country – Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy 2020-2023” which was co-developed with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Department of Regional NSW has the vision to advance the aspirations of Aboriginal people of NSW through the work we do. This vision is also shared by Local Land Services.

Principles

The Our Place on Country Strategy has six key principles which will also apply to the North West Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy.

- ⦿ Acknowledge, value, and embed Aboriginal cultural knowledge and world views in program delivery and business as usual
- ⦿ Respect Aboriginal people’s rights, obligations, and roles as Traditional Custodians of the land, sea, and waterways.
- ⦿ Promote and strengthen connections to culture and identity.
- ⦿ Prioritise economic independence for Aboriginal people through increased employment and enterprise development.
- ⦿ Establish and maintain meaningful ongoing relationships with Aboriginal people and Country
- ⦿ Recognise appropriate engagement and connection with Aboriginal people and Country as core to our service delivery.

Why is it so important?

Country is at the core of every Aboriginal person's identity and sense of belonging. It is the place from which Aboriginal language and culture are derived and Aboriginal culture and language groups determine families and kinship.

Aboriginal communities are often busy prioritising the immediate needs of the community within the outer circle of issues. These issues are symptomatic of the dispossession of Aboriginal people's lands and a lack of clear voice and contribution to managing Country.

This Strategy will help North West Local Land Services do a better job of delivering our core business by developing a better understanding of Aboriginal communities and integrating this knowledge into our work through creating partnerships based on co-design and collaboration.

Influences

The North West Aboriginal Engagement Strategy goals, outcomes, objectives and key results were based around the following business and documents created within those businesses to build relationships whilst working with Aboriginal communities.

- ⦿ Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy.
- ⦿ Our Place on Country – Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy 2020-2023 - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Department of Regional NSW.
- ⦿ Department of Regional NSW - Aboriginal Outcomes Plan.
- ⦿ Opportunities, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment (OCHRE) (2013) - NSW Government Plan for Aboriginal Affairs: Education, Employment & Accountability.
- ⦿ The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy NSW Working Together for a Better Future 2019–2025.
- ⦿ Reconciliation Australia – Reconciliation Action Plans “Local Land Services Innovate RAP, 2018-2020”.
- ⦿ “Walking in Both Worlds” – Local Land Services Senior Executive Leadership Development Program Report.

on Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, achievements, challenges and learnings, to both internal and external stakeholders.



Review

North West Local Land Services will report against the actions of the North West Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy. Highlighting achievements, challenges, and learnings internally and externally. We will review and update the North West Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy every 12 months, in line with our investment planning in May.

Consultation

North West Local Land Services has consulted with the North West Local Land Services Board, Senior Management Team (SMT), Community Advisory Group (CAG), NWLLS staff and key Aboriginal stakeholder businesses or groups for endorsement and feedback of the North West Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy.

Refer to Appendix 1 – for proposed Aboriginal stakeholder businesses Consultation List and engagement strategy.

Structure of the Engagement Strategy

The structure of the North West Local Land Services Aboriginal Engagement Strategy is based around three main goals:

1. Enriching Relationships
2. Creating Opportunities
3. Enhancing Respect

Within each goal, there is an:

- ⦿ Outcome – The outcome is a result or action that we will aim to achieve.
- ⦿ Objectives - Talks about the key result that the objective is aiming to achieve from the outcome.

Regional Engagement Plan

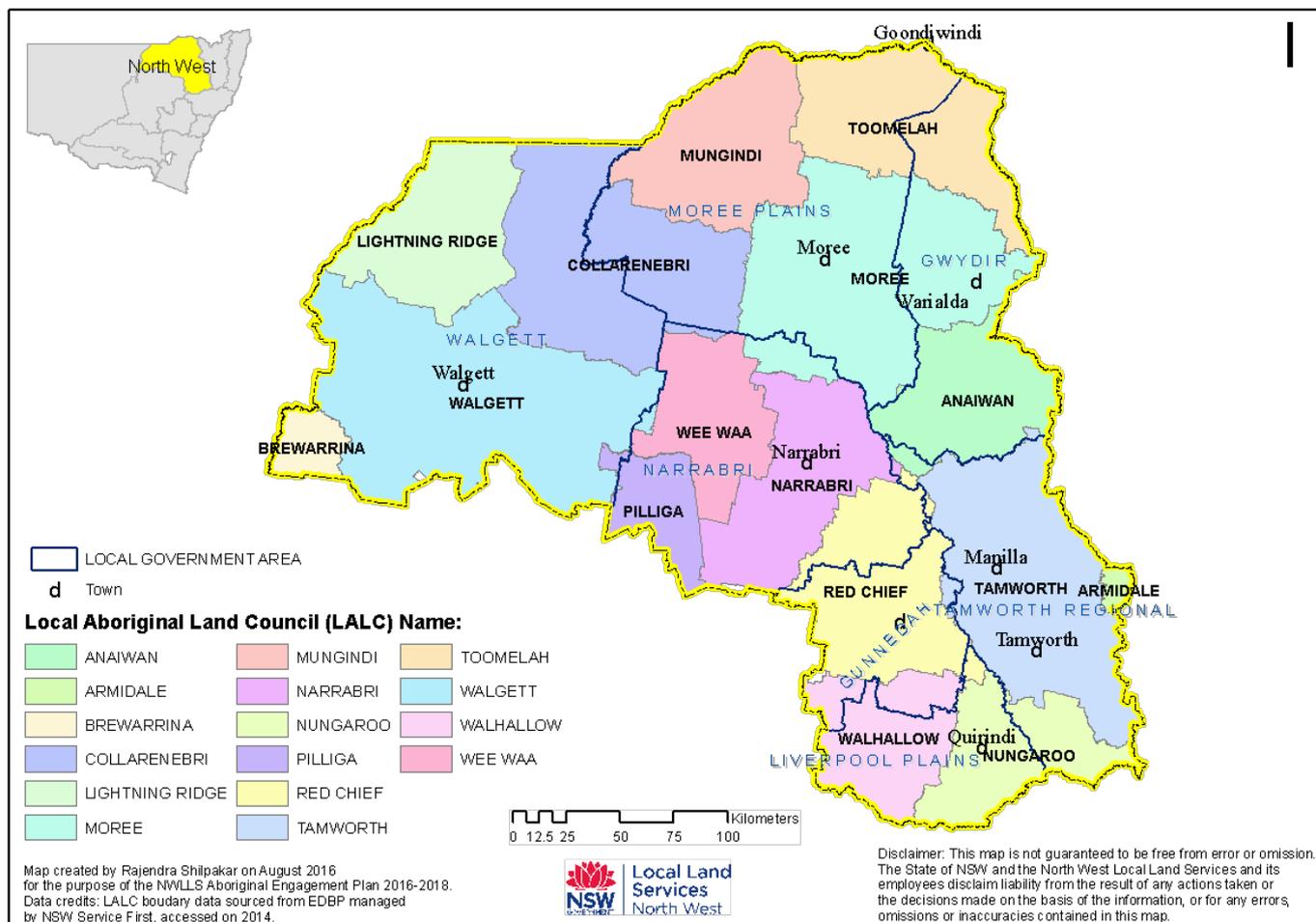
The North West Local Land Services Regional Engagement Plan details our actions to support the State Aboriginal Engagement Strategy and for the North West Region, it will show our commitment to work with and build relationships with the North West Aboriginal communities.

Within the North West Local Land Services Regional Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, we have listed how North West Local Land Services will support the state-wide actions.

For the regional actions, North West Local Land Services has addressed them in further detail.

- ⦿ What we are going to do regionally
- ⦿ The frequency
- ⦿ Responsibility.

Aboriginal Stakeholders of the North West



List of Local Aboriginal Land Councils and key Aboriginal organisations in the North West Region:

- ⊙ Anaiwan LALC (Tingha)
- ⊙ Collarenebri LALC
- ⊙ Nungaroo LALC (Quirindi)
- ⊙ Red Chief LALC (Gunnedah)
- ⊙ Tamworth LALC
- ⊙ Walhallow LALC
- ⊙ Lightning Ridge LALC
- ⊙ Moree LALC
- ⊙ Mungindi LALC
- ⊙ Narrabri LALC
- ⊙ Pilliga LALC
- ⊙ Toomelah LALC
- ⊙ Walgett LALC
- ⊙ Wee Waa LALC
- ⊙ Brewarrina LALC
- ⊙ Dharriwah Elders Group (Walgett)
- ⊙ Terry Hie Hie Co-Committee (Moree)
- ⊙ Gomeri Native Title Group.

Enriching relationships

Local Land Services is committed to and accountable for meaningful engagement with Aboriginal peoples and communities across NSW. Relationships with our customers and staff are founded on mutual respect, trust, and integrity. Our approach to working with Aboriginal people in NSW will be consistent with the principles of self-determination and co-design. Through this Strategy, we will continue to develop, strengthen, and enhance our relationships to mutually achieve and celebrate cultural, social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Outcome 1

Aboriginal peoples and communities have greater choice, access and control over their country and its resources. Local Land Services will collaborate with Aboriginal communities to garner broader respect for Aboriginal cultures through the sharing of Traditional knowledge to enhance contemporary land management practices in sustainable productive landscapes.

Objective 1.1	Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal people, organisations and local communities to further relationships with Local Land Services.
Key Result	Increase the number of Aboriginal community partnerships and participation within Local Land Services.
Objective 1.2	Acknowledge country and participate in and celebrate significant Aboriginal events by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal people and other regional Australians.
Key Result	All Local Land Services business units acknowledge country as part of all regular events, have welcome to country at public events and have participated in and celebrated significant Aboriginal events.
Objective 1.3	Raise internal and external awareness of our organisation's Aboriginal programs to maximise participation and build relationships and partnerships with regional NSW stakeholders and Aboriginal peoples and communities.
Key Result	Increase the number of specific programs that involve Aboriginal peoples and communities and increase participation in existing Local Land Services program



Outcome 1			
Statewide actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of Aboriginal members on Local Land Services Boards and advisory committees and support improvements to consistency of governance and operations across Local Land Services Aboriginal Community Advisory Groups (CAG). Ensure Local Land Services meets its statutory obligations to consult when negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements. 		
Regional Support of Statewide Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute any information regarding opportunities to be a part of the Local Land Services Board and community advisory committee. North West Local Land Services has two identified roles within the North West CAG committee. Senior Land Service Officer (SLSO) – Aboriginal Communities Officer to engage with key stakeholders and participate in Indigenous Land User Agreement (ILUA) discussions when needed. 		

Regional Actions	What are we going to do regionally?	Frequency	Responsibility
3. Ensure all regions and business units have in place a Local Aboriginal Engagement that outlines its commitment to:			
Meeting with local Aboriginal organisations to develop guiding principles to support the development and implementation of Aboriginal community plans and aspirations through Local Land Services programs leading to suitable opportunities to partner with Aboriginal people on programs across Local Land Services.	Annual meeting with organisations and incorporating input from the Aboriginal representation from the North West Local Land Services CAG.	Ongoing Annually	SLSO – Aboriginal Communities

Regional Actions	What are we going to do regionally?	Frequency	Responsibility
Identifying opportunities to support and engage Aboriginal people who own and manage land.	North West Local Land Services Investment plans to address in May yearly planning. Annual meeting with organisations and incorporating input from the Aboriginal representation from the North West Local Land Services CAG.	Ongoing Annually	SLSO – Aboriginal Communities, Natural Resource Management (NRM) team, Agricultural team (AG), Sustainable Land Management (SLM) team.
Identifying opportunities to increase collaboration with Aboriginal people in the management of Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs).	North West Local Land Services TSR Plan of Management to address opportunities in the April yearly planning process and provide the summary documentation for a consultation to Land Use Agreements parties.	Annually	SLSO – Aboriginal Communities and Travelling Stock Route (TSR) team.
Protect sensitive and significant sites across all Local Land Services on-ground programs	The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) handbook provides responsibilities and guidance to assist staff.	Ongoing	All North West Local Land Services staff involved in any on-ground projects or activities.
Identifying opportunities for Aboriginal people and other land managers to promote, showcase and share traditional and contemporary land management knowledge and practices, including cultural fire practices, while ensuring the protection of cultural rights and knowledge.	Two case studies on identified opportunities. Create Knowledge Sharing Event opportunities. Support on Country workshops and activities.	Annually	Strategic team, SLM team, NRM team, Ag team, TSR team, Bio team, Communication Officer.
Ensuring all Local Land Services Aboriginal staff have the opportunity to participate in and promote significant Aboriginal events, which may include: The Apology Anniversary; Close the Gap Day; NAIDOC Week; National Reconciliation Week; National Sorry Day; and NSW Indigenous Veterans' Commemoration Service.	Advisement through internal communication. Participate in local community events.	Ongoing	General Manager, Managers, Team Leaders, Communications Officer.
Ensure all Local Land Services staff acknowledge Country at all regular events and organise Welcome to Country for public Local Land Services events.	Encourage the use of Acknowledgement to Country at the commencement of all meetings and Welcome to Country at the commencement of all North West Local Land Services important meetings.	Ongoing	SMT (Senior Management Team) and all North West Local Land Services staff.



Creating opportunities



Local Land Services is committed to providing an equitable work environment that reflects and celebrates diversity and inclusion. By providing external employment and procurement opportunities, Local Land Services can support Aboriginal people and businesses to encourage, local, regional, and remote opportunities across New South Wales. We aim to develop Local Land Services capacity to respectfully engage with Aboriginal governance structures and ways of working and to support Aboriginal communities in pursuing their aspirations in regional business, natural resource management and beyond.

Outcome 2

Aboriginal organisations and businesses are supported to succeed and grow NSW's first economy.

Outcome 2			
Statewide actions	<p>4. Publish guidelines and support each business unit to meet its obligations under the Aboriginal Procurement Policy, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a public commitment that Local Land Services will work with Aboriginal-owned businesses to grow the First Economy of NSW. • Explaining how Local Land Services is working with Aboriginal-owned businesses to identify and develop business and employment opportunities. • Setting measurable targets for Aboriginal participation that Local Land Services will adopt, including where appropriate, targets for specific categories of procurement and Aboriginal workforce strategies. 		
Regional Support of Statewide Actions	What are we going to do regionally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North West Local Land Services will support increasing their Aboriginal procurement opportunities with a target of at least 3%. • North West Local Land Services Investment plans to identify Aboriginal procurement in annual yearly planning (May). • Team Leader's and Senior Land Services Officer (SLSO) – Aboriginal Communities meet to review Aboriginal procurement bi-annually. • SLSO – Aboriginal Communities to promote Aboriginal Businesses available in our region, and the success stories of new business relationships. 	Frequency Annually, Ongoing	Responsibility SLSO, Team Leaders, Project Officers.

Enhancing respect

At Local Land Services, we are committed to a workplace culture that embraces and promotes mutual respect. We recognise First Nations peoples have the oldest continuous living culture and respect their cultural, spiritual, physical, and emotional connection with the land. Local Land Services will continue to collaborate with First Nations communities to garner broader respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the sharing of Traditional knowledge to enhance contemporary land management practices in sustainable productive landscapes.

Outcome 3

Our Aboriginal workforce increases across all divisions and at all levels as Local Land Services becomes an employer of first choice for Aboriginal people to grow career paths in the public sector, ensure Aboriginal employees feel culturally safe and understand drivers and barriers to employment success.

Outcome 3	
Statewide actions	<p>5. Ensure the Local Land Services Workforce Plan includes Aboriginal staff career paths and opportunities to strengthen career mobility and flexibility through location flexibility and offer professional development opportunities for employees. This will be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of recruitment and induction processes and practices, and staff development programs, tailoring these as needed to suit the cultural needs of Aboriginal employees to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal employees and future applicants participating in our workplace. • Engaging with existing Aboriginal staff and potential partner organisations to investigate options to develop and implement employment pathways including traineeships and cadetships across our key program areas. • Collecting information on our current Aboriginal workforce and undertake quarterly analysis of relevant human resource metrics and exit interview data to maintain effective rates of recruitment and retention of Aboriginal staff. • Ensuring all Aboriginal staff can access mentoring and coaching support that is culturally appropriate. • Participating in executive pre-qualification programs for grade 11/12 staff. • Develop 'Try-before-you-buy' approaches for career progression initiatives to address the lack of confidence that Aboriginal staff face when considering applying for higher-level (executive or non-executive) roles. A 'try-before-you-buy' approach would, for example, allow Aboriginal staff to temporarily work outside of their substantive role and have the opportunity to gain confidence in, and test, their ability to do a higher-level role before applying.
Regional Support of Statewide Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Community Officer to participate in the Nguluway Aboriginal Mentoring Program. • North West Local Land Services will encourage and support Aboriginal staff to have the opportunity to act in higher grades within all roles of the department.

Regional Actions	What are we going to do regionally?	Frequency	Responsibility
6. Ensure the NSW People Matter Employee Survey action plans for each business unit include:			
Support for Aboriginal staff to attend and participate in all Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Department of Regional NSW, Aboriginal Support Network events.	North West Local Land Services will support Aboriginal staff to attend ASN meetings and other important Aboriginal events.	Quarter	General Manager, Managers, Team Leaders.
Consideration of new ways to promote NSW public sector careers to Aboriginal peoples, particularly in regional areas.	Build relationships with the local Aboriginal employment agencies to promote public sector careers to Aboriginal people. Sharing opportunities with key Aboriginal organisations. Promote through social networks when roles become available.	Review annually	SLSO, Team Leaders, Communications
Response to issues identified as adversely affecting the attraction and retention of Aboriginal staff.	The North West Local Land Services SMT will proactively manage to improve the attraction and retention of Aboriginal staff as issues are reported.	Every six months	SMT.
All Aboriginal staff have an Annual Work Plan that identifies their career ambitions and support needed to achieve those ambitions.	Opportunities and ambitions identified in Personal Develop Plan with Team Leader	Annually	SLSO, Team Leaders.



Outcome 4

Senior Executive, managers and staff are aware and promote the importance of developing responses that address the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal peoples impacted by our work.



Statewide actions

- 7. Ensure the Local Land Services People and Culture Strategy includes:**
 - A program for cultural capability and trauma-informed workforce training to all employees through a three-stage process that engages local Aboriginal communities where appropriate:
 - Stage 1 - Mandatory online annual training for all LLS staff.
 - Stage 2 – Infield training to ensure all staff are aware of their legislative responsibilities and due diligence around cultural heritage.
 - Stage 3 – On country cultural immersion experience.
 - Professional development opportunities about Aboriginal cultural safety.
 - Support for cross-sector Aboriginal networks at all levels.
- 8. Review current corporate and regional branding of Local Land Services programs and services to identify opportunities to incorporate suitable graphics and designs by Aboriginal artists and appropriately acknowledge artists and stories.**
- 9. Ensure business processes in MyLLS reflect and fulfil Local Land Services’ statutory obligations to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.**

	What are we going to do regionally?	Frequency	Responsibility
Regional Support of Statewide Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All North West Local Land Services staff and Board Members will participate in the training. • Management will promote and enforce mandatory attendance at cultural awareness training and/or knowledge awareness events. • As part of the North West Local Land Services training register, attendance will be recorded to cultural events, to ensure availability and opportunities to all staff. • SLSO – Aboriginal Communities will support staff implementation of the Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Handbook and the understanding of the implementation guidelines and how these can become part of business units’ practices. 	<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>When occur</p>	<p>All North West Local Land Services staff.</p> <p>Senior Management Team.</p> <p>Team Leaders.</p> <p>SLSO, Team Leaders, Project Officers.</p>



Consultation Engagement Strategy

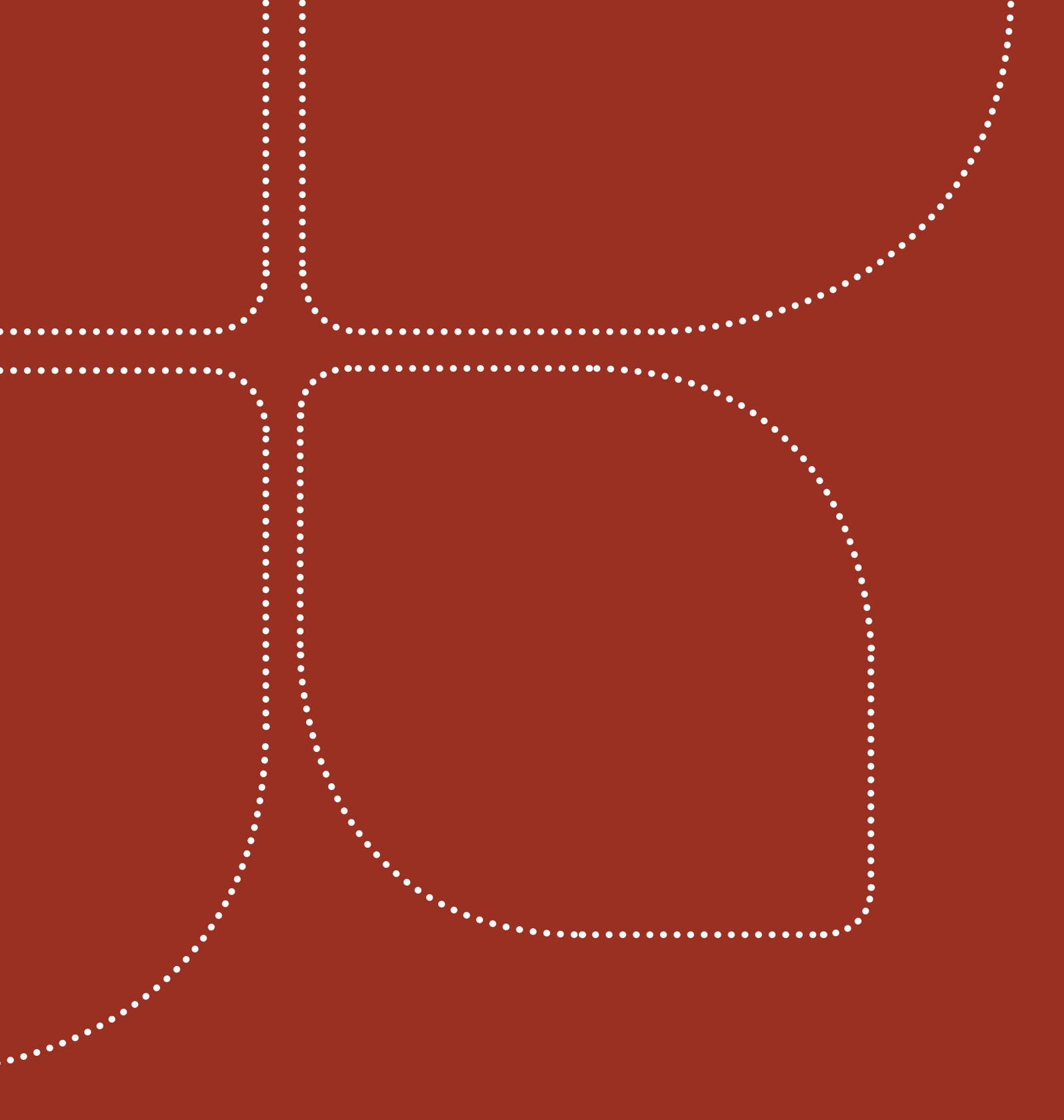
North West Local Land Services plans to seek consultation to all stakeholder via various communications mechanisms during the 3-month consultation period.

North West Local Land Services will also provide a brief survey that can be completed by the stakeholders, as well as seek face to face feedback that will be documented.

Action	Date
Regional Support of Statewide Actions	Email / Letter Follow up meetings – either via teams or face to face Offer to present at LALC Board Meetings
North West Local Land Services Board	Present draft at next board meeting (September)
North West Local Land Services CAG	Send out to members for feedback and present at the next CAG meeting in March 2021
North West Local Land Services staff	Workplace, Email
Greater North West Region	Website, Social Media Channels

Consultation timeline

Action	Date
Draft North West Aboriginal Engagement Strategy developed	Early October
Board Review and feedback of the Draft Strategy	October and December
Final State Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Released	23 October 2020
Draft updated with Board recommendations, and any updates from the Final released copy of the State Strategy	December 2020
Final Draft released for Consultation	December –April 2021
Updates made to document provided during the consultation period.	April – June 2021
Final Document	June 2021



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