

Aboriginal Advisory Group Meeting

Minutes

14th ACAG Meeting

Date:	16 and 17 June 2021
Time:	10.00 am to 4:00pm
Location:	Scone Motor Inn, 55 Kelly St Scone

Attendees

Chair	Suzie Worth – Co-Chair	
Members	Tara Dever, Mindaribba LALC (via TEAMS)	John Clark, Community
	Arthur Fletcher, Community	Deb Swan – Alternate Co-chair
	John Thorpe, Community	Elizabeth McEntyre, Hunter LLS Board member (via TEAMS)
	Aleshia Lonsdale, Mudgee LALC (via TEAMS)	Tony Hegarty, Hunter LLS Chair
LLS Staff	Toby Whaleboat – Aboriginal Communities Officer	Clare MacDougal – Manager Healthy Landscapes (via TEAMS)
	Eva Twarkowski – Team Leader Community Engagement	Kath McLoughlin – Upper Hunter Community Engagement Officer
	Sue Rowland – Healthy Landscapes Officer	
Apologies	Kerrie Brauer, Community	David Feeney, Co-Chair
	Rob Russell, Awabakal LALC	Warranha Ngumbay, Community
Visitors	Graham Kelly – LLS Business Partner Aboriginal Cultural Engagement	*Brett Grogan, Training Services NSW, Hunter Region
	*Laurie Perry, Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation	Kate Wood-Pahuru, Keeper Keeper Elders

*Renee Gillane, Upper Hunter Cultural Burn Coordinator, Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation	
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**In attendance for part of the meeting*

Minutes

Item 3. Report back on key items from closed session.

Chair nominated 16/06/2021: Suzie Worth

Co-chair: Deb Swan

ACAG members nominated preferred providers for Aboriginal Cultural Awareness services for HLLS. A motion moved by Arthur Fletcher and seconded by Deb Swan.

Carried unanimously.

2. Reconciliation morning teas – it was noted that there isn't enough information going out to the ACAG members to come along.
3. Provide the opportunity for board members to attend the three-day cultural burn at Morrissett as part of the Reconciliation process.
4. HLLS need to improve timing for events such as during NAIDOC week

Item 4 Welcome to Country

Laurie Perry from Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation gave a Welcome to Country
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Item 5 Report on progress against actions from the 13th Aboriginal CAG meeting and out of sessions meetings 2020

Deb Swan – Provided an overview the action summary table from the out of session meetings held from September to October 2020. There are still a number of ongoing actions that need to be addressed.
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Item 6 HLLS Aboriginal Program 20-21 and Aboriginal Culture and Communities Statewide Advisory Group (SWAG)

Toby provided an update and overview of the Conservation and Ecosystem Management Cultural burning training program. Including the cultural burns that were completed at Morrissett and North Rothbury. There are 30 students enrolled in the Certificate III course. The students are very engaged in both theory and practical components of the course.
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Other events including the Rising from the Embers Land and Culture festival which coincided with Reconciliation Week events was successful two days. Three internal Reconciliation events were organised at each of the district offices, which included Welcome to Country, Reconciliation theme and raising of the flag.

Item 7 State LLS Aboriginal Program update, including state cultural awareness training

Presentation by Graham Kelly – LLS Business Partner Aboriginal Cultural Engagement

The Reconciliation Action Plan has now been replaced with the Aboriginal Engagement Strategy. This is a guiding document to ensure LLS adopt a consistent approach to cultural awareness and due diligence obligations. Stage 1 involves mandatory online training which covers the basic due diligence code of practice and cultural awareness. This training will be required to be completed by all staff on an annual basis. The second component of the training which is not mandatory is a field component.

A staff member has been engaged to cover all the regions to deliver the practical on-ground component of the training. The Regional staff will liaise with local Aboriginal groups, LALCS and TOs prior to undertaking the practical training.

Tara: made a point about the importance of identifying who will be consulted to ensure cultural spaces are protected. Mindaribba covers 6 Local Government Areas. It is important to consult and work with all communities and respect Elders on this country.

Liz: highlighted that NSW Health have an online cultural awareness training program similar approach to LLS and an on-ground component which has been successful.

Second outcome is to deliver a cultural immersion field workshop for staff, which is currently being developed. These workshops will be face to face and not mandatory

Action – Invite feedback on the development of the second stage of training.

Item 8 – Hunter LLS Cultural Burn Program

Toby gave a presentation on the Cultural Burn Program and provided an overview of all the completed cultural burns at North Rothbury and Morrissett.

Item 9 Smart Skills – funding opportunities for Aboriginal Land Management students

Presentation by Brett Grogan, Training Services NSW - Hunter Region

Specialises in funding and delivering a range of short courses.

Look at reskilling in different areas. There is available Smart and Skill training funding across 9 regions.

Examples of the types of training made available include working at heights, traffic control, Work Health and Safety, Horticulture, Cultural burning. Course and course units can be adapted depending on the demand and interest.

The program has 1500 to 2500 employers. The program involves setting up an apprenticeship/traineeship, working on and developing skills and then interview stage as job opportunities are made available.

See link to NSW State Training Services - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/apprentices-and-trainees/support-and-services/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples>

Item 10 – Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corporation Upper Hunter activities

Laurie Perry provided an overview of the 3-year Fire and Flood resilience program – We Rise Together -Lifting Australia to be the global leader in fire and flood resilience by 2025 program funded by Mindaroo Foundation.

As part of the program Wonnarua has engaged 2 coordinators one in the Upper Hunter and one in the Lower Hunter. The role will involve developing and coordinating cultural burn programs, which has already started. Including supporting post fire recovery and hazard reduction programs. The project will assist with the regional implementation of cultural fire knowledge

The program will align with Local Land Services cultural burn training program and will involve meeting regularly with Hunter Local Land Services.

It was recognised that knowledge needs to go back to country, but skills and business knowledge is also required.

LLS's role is to provide recognition and respect for Indigenous Fire Practitioners, this would be a good outcome.

Discussion about the type of licences required to undertake the burn is seen as a risk. It was noted that insurance is a big issue for businesses. Further discussion about impact on insurances – the flip side if you are not managing your property for fuel loads then it becomes a greater risk and increasing insurance costs.

Deb: mentioned that Ozgen is an organisation which focuses on water restoration and land restoration. They will camp on your land and undertake the works.

Deb highlighted some other benefits from cultural burning including fire credits and carbon credits.

Toby: with cultural burning you can demonstrate minimised risk through prescribed burn plans identifying containment lines. Fire agencies will see this a reduced risk.

There is a role for LLS to liaise with other government agencies about insurance including NPWS, RFS.

Graham: As the lead agencies there is an overarching DPIE body to organise these talks

Suzie: indicated that Forestry are currently developing a Fire Strategy Plan and should also be invited.

Action – Organise a meeting with Hunter Local Land Services and Wonnarua Nations to review all aspects of the program and how the program will align with HLLS cultural burn program over the next 3 years.

Action – Identify on a map where Wonnarua Nations are planning cultural burns in the Hunter – Renee to provide the information.

Action – Deb to circulate information about Ozgen and what they do.

Action – Graham to investigate possible talks with agencies about cultural burn program and insurance implications.

Item 11 Talking Circle

This item will be included in the next agenda.

Item 12 General Business

- ACAG Terms of Reference review – to be undertaken at the commencement of the new term
- The ACAG membership 2-year term will end on the 30 June 2021, an expression of interest process will be initiated in July 2021.
- Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme – update provided as an attachment.

Dates for the next two ACAG meetings:

15/16 September – Location to be confirmed.

Closed on 4pm