



## Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country does not replace a Welcome to Country. Usually an Acknowledgement of Country is done at smaller gatherings. It is carried out to show respect to the Traditional Owners of the land in which we meet.

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing respect and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owners of the land on which a meeting or event is being held, and of recognising the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to their Country. It is a demonstration of respect dedicated to the traditional custodians of the land or sea where the gathering of participants is being conducted.

It is important to note that an Acknowledgement of Country is different to a Welcome to Country – which can only be done by the traditional owners or custodians of the land.

In order to offer an Acknowledgement of Country it may be helpful for people to know that:

- There are no set protocols or wording
- It does not need to be long, but at minimum does acknowledge the country you are on, and the traditional custodians of that land
- It is offered at the beginning of a meeting, speech or other occasion
- It is the minimum standard protocol for any meeting or gathering

To make an Acknowledgement of Country meaningful and not a token gesture, it is important to find out the name of the Aboriginal group and nation who are the Traditional Owners of the area, and learn how to properly pronounce their names.

Below we provide some examples of how you might structure an Acknowledgement to Country.

Remember there is no one correct way – the important thing is to be genuinely respectful of what Traditional Owners have given up as a consequence of sharing their lands with non-Aboriginal people, their ongoing and profound connection to that land and the work that

needs to be done in Australia to make sure we are all doing our part to ensure equal rights, opportunities and reconciliation in this country.

**Examples of Acknowledgement of Country:**

*I would like to acknowledge the ..... people who are the traditional custodians of this land.*

*I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present of the ..... nation, and I extend that respect to other Indigenous people who are present.*

*Or:*

*I would like to acknowledge that we meet on Aboriginal land, the land of the ..... people of the .....nation. I would like to pay respect to their Elders past and present.*

NB: If you don't know, are uncertain or can't find out who the Traditional Owners are, it is better NOT to name any specific peoples and instead use the acknowledgement below:

*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present.*

More information can be found at the following website:

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

[https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/welcome\\_acknowledgement\\_v4.pdf](https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/welcome_acknowledgement_v4.pdf)