

TITLE:	Protocols for Acknowledging and Welcome to Country Policy		
DIVISION:	Corporate Policy		
ADOPTED BY:	Council		
DATE OF ADOPTION:	16 June, 2016	DATE OF REVIEW:	Every four years
MOTION NUMBER:	OC 169/16		
POLICY NUMBER	CP000048		
AUTHORISED:	Chief Executive Officer		

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees, Elected Members and Appointed Members of Local Authorities.

PREAMBLE

The aim of this policy is to set out arrangements for liaison with Traditional Owner organisations when booking a *Welcome to Country* and to detail when an *Acknowledgement of Country* is the appropriate cultural protocol to use.

SUMMARY

This policy sets out cultural protocols to guide liaison with Traditional Owner organisations and details the difference between a *Welcome to Country* and *Acknowledgement of Country* and the events at which both recognitions of Country are to be used.

A *Welcome to* or *Acknowledgement of Country* is an important recognition of the Traditional Owners connection with land covered by the Barkly Regional Council.

Australia has no treaty with its Indigenous people. And, like many Indigenous communities, Traditional Owners have experienced significant imposed upheaval from their Country. Despite this, they remain strongly connected to the Country of their ancestors and remain the traditional custodians of their land.

DEFINITIONS

Welcome to Country can be a short speech in English or in on one of the twelve (12) languages spoken in the Barkly region, or a mixture of both languages. It can also include; singing, dancing, music (both contemporary and traditional) and a smoking ceremony.

Acknowledgment of Country is given by a non-Traditional Owner who maybe Indigenous or Non- Indigenous, as a sign of respect for the Traditional Owners and recognises the special connection that Traditional Owners have with their Country.

POLICY STATEMENT

1 Welcome to Country

- 1.1 A *Welcome to Country* will be provided at the opening each Council meeting and at other formal events, sponsored by Council such as Citizenship ceremonies and LGANT Annual meetings.
- 1.2 A *Welcome to Country* is the first item of business and precedes all other items.
- 1.3 Local Authority Chairs may call upon Traditional Owner(s) who are members of a Local Authority to make a *Welcome to Country* statement at the beginning of a Local Authority meeting.
- 1.4 That, in accordance with a request of the Traditional Owner Organisation, staff will give one (1) weeks written notice of a request for a *Welcome to Country* and follow up with a reminder notice 24 hours prior to the event.
- 1.5 Payment of a fee for a *Welcome to Country* will be made by Council, if requested by the Traditional Owner Organisation.

2 Acknowledgement of Country

- 2.1 An *Acknowledgement of Country* will be provided by a senior officer of Council where an event calls for the gathering of the entire staff of Barkly Regional Council or at other events hosted by Council, such as a public meeting.
- 2.2 PATTA Aboriginal Corporation recommends the following wording;

'I respectfully acknowledge the past and present Traditional Owners of this land on which we are gathered today, the People. It is a privilege to be standing on Country.

I also acknowledge the contributions local Aboriginal peoples' make to and the Barkly Region.'

LEGISLATION, TERMINOLOGY AND REFERENCES

- PATTA Aboriginal Corporation
- The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment – Protocols for Acknowledging and Welcome to Country
- Council's Regional Plan
- Code of Conduct

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELEGATION

The CEO has delegated authority to implement this policy.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Policy should be evaluated every four years.