

Resetting the relationship with the Aboriginal community

2018 – 2019 AUGUST UPDATE

In 2018-2019 the Tasmanian Government is continuing to deliver on its commitment to reset the relationship with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, including the review of the Aboriginal and Dual Naming Policy.

Work continues across Government to improve access to Aboriginal specific programs and services such as for Family Violence, and to increase employment and career development opportunities for Aboriginal people, including the Aboriginal Trainee Ranger Program.

The State Service Management Office is also finalising the Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

Moving forward, the key focus will be joint land management and land return arrangements that support the Aboriginal community to connect to country and culture.

Key Priority 1 - A new approach to Aboriginal Eligibility

A new approach to eligibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific programs and services commenced on 1 July 2016.

All Tasmanian Government agencies are working collaboratively to ensure a streamlined approach for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Tasmania when accessing programs and services.

This work has included several operational improvements such as the introduction of Agency Guidelines; introduction of a more user friendly Eligibility Form; changes to acceptable forms of communal recognition; the expansion of organisations

that may provide communal recognition; and all relevant agencies accessing and using the Aboriginal Eligibility Register by early January 2018.

Key Priority 2 - Focus on Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture in the delivery of the Australian curriculum

The Department of Education is leading the development of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Histories and Cultures Framework. The Framework is underpinned by an online multimedia platform, which provides teachers with a bank of resources to deliver Aboriginal histories and cultures in Tasmanian classrooms.

The multimedia platform, known as the 'Orb' (www.theorb.tas.gov.au), is a culturally safe resource that features Aboriginal voices sharing knowledge of people, community, identity, living culture, country, and place. The Orb was officially launched on 15 August 2018.

Supported by \$520,000 funding over 2016-17 and 2017-18 additional teaching resources for delivering the Tasmanian

Aboriginal Histories and Cultures Framework have been developed and include classroom videos, and a teaching and learning guide.

The multi-media curriculum resources, specifically ochre, stone tools, mutton birding and fibres form part of The Orb website launch.

Key Priority 3 - Constitutional recognition of Tasmanian Aboriginal people

An historic amendment to Tasmania's Constitution to recognise Tasmanian Aboriginal people received Royal Assent on 15 December 2016.

This symbolic recognition of the First Tasmanians has been consolidated by practical support for the Reconciliation Council of Tasmania.

Now called Reconciliation Tasmania, the council was supported by the Tasmanian Government in its establishment in August 2017. Reconciliation Tasmania is working to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Tasmanians together in the spirit of reconciliation.

Key Priority 4 - Explore joint land management arrangements and review the current land return model

The review of the land return model commenced in late 2017. The release of a Discussion Paper to guide community

consultations was put on hold in early 2018 on the advice of the Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner, until conclusion of the 2017-18 Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT) elections.

During this time work continued to progress the review including a jurisdictional analysis on land return and management models in other jurisdictions.

Following the conclusion of the ALCT elections on 30 June 2018, the Department of Communities Tasmania released the Discussion Paper on 9 August 2018 for public comment. The consultation period closes on 20 September 2018.

The Tasmanian Government is continuing to progress Aboriginal joint management of reserved lands in Tasmania. A key objective of this work is close collaboration with Tasmanian Aboriginals to ensure their ancestral knowledge, and past and current cultural practices are integral to informing the contemporary management of the Tasmanian landscape. The Aboriginal Heritage Council plays a key advisory role in this work.

Working on Country Aboriginal trainee rangers working for the Parks and Wildlife Service are undertaking six month placements within Aboriginal

Heritage Tasmania. Trainees are acquiring the technical skills required to identify and record Aboriginal heritage sites, and to more fully participate in the joint management of reserves.

This priority area is supported by:

- \$800,000 over four years from 2016-17 for joint management of reserved land, including a focus on the Aboriginal cultural values of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area; and
- \$660,000 over four years from 2016-17 to employ two additional people under the Parks and Wildlife Service Aboriginal Trainee Ranger Program.

Key Priority Area 5 – Closing the Gap

The Government is continuing to invest in activity that supports COAG's Closing the Gap agenda, including the following projects:

The **Aboriginal Family Safety Initiative** with Family Safety Workers employed at the Bridgewater, Ravenswood, and Burnie Child and Family Centres delivering support to Aboriginal families, including referrals to specialist services.

The Initiative will also see the delivery of a pre-employment training program in Southern Tasmania that will equip

participants with skills to gain employment in human services.

The Initiative is supported by \$333,340 over three years, from 2016-17 to 2018-19.

An **Aboriginal Employment Strategy** for the Tasmanian State Service is being finalised.

The Strategy will support improved recruitment and retention practices, including raising cultural competence across the Service and working in partnership with Aboriginal communities to identify stronger pathways for young people to engage with employment opportunities.

The Strategy will be released in late 2018.

An **Indigenous Procurement Policy** is being developed, that will take the distinctive nature of the Tasmanian economy into account. It will also drive stronger awareness by suppliers of local benefits, including Aboriginal employment and community engagement when tendering for government business.

In 2017-18 the Tasmanian Government provided further financial support to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania for the **wukalina Cultural Walk** from *krakami lumi* in Mt William National Park to *larapuna* / Eddystone Point.

This signature tourism experience has completed its first season, showcasing the cultural and natural values of North-Eastern Tasmania and delivering strong benefits to the Tasmanian tourism sector and pathways to employment for Aboriginal people in the areas of hospitality, guiding, heritage, and land management.

The project reflects the aspirations of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to develop the cultural tourism sector and recognition of the community's traditional and continuing custodianship of *lutruwita/Tasmania*.

Additional activities

An Issues Paper on the review of the Aboriginal and Dual Naming Policy was developed and released for public consultation in November 2017. A subsequent Consultation & Stakeholder Feedback Report is now publicly available. It is anticipated the Review will now progress to a second round of targeted consultation.

Within the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE), additional activities undertaken by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania in 2017-18 included:

- commencement of the new amendments to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975 (Tas)*,

including the establishment of the statutory Aboriginal Heritage Council, development of the Aboriginal Heritage Standards and Procedures, the Aboriginal Heritage Property Search website, and the Dial Before You Dig referral services; and

- establishment of the Cultural Management Group, responsible for the delivery of the key desired outcomes of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) Management Plan 2016. Major achievements include:
 - the 'Assessment of Aboriginal Cultural Values (AACV) Project, a multi-year project commissioned by DPIPWE that aims to fulfil the Tasmanian and Australian Governments' commitments to provide the World Heritage Committee with more detailed information on the Aboriginal cultural values of the TWWHA and their relationship to its Outstanding Universal Value;
 - two components of this project have been completed resulting in the 'Aboriginal Heritage of the TWWHA: a literature review and synthesis report' and the 'Detailed Plan for a Comprehensive Cultural

- Assessment of the
TWWHA'; and
- the final component of
this project, the 'Cultural
Values Assessment of the
2013 Extension Area of
the TWWHA Project is
scheduled for completion
in December 2018.