



# ABORIGINAL AND DUAL NAMING POLICY

## Question & Answer Sheet

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As part of preserving the history of Tasmania, it is important that we, as a community, acknowledge the history and continued existence of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. In formally acknowledging the continued existence, connection to the land and the survival and adaption of the Tasmania Aboriginal culture we recognise the Aboriginal history and connection to our landscape, as well as the European history and connections. Recognising Aboriginal names for Tasmanian geographical features will assist in the wider preservation of Aboriginal heritage, language, and culture.

The Aboriginal and Dual Naming Policy (ADNP) provides a consistent guide to how we approach naming of areas that have significance to our Aboriginal history and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community of today. A copy of the ADNP can be found at the following link [www.dpac.tas.gov.au/oaa](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/oaa)

**Q: Why change perfectly good names?**

**A:** This is not about changing names. It is intended to provide the opportunity for an additional Aboriginal name to be assigned to a place as an official name. This will mean that both names (dual names) will have the same status and that there is recognition of both Aboriginal and European connections to a place.

**Q: Will these name changes just create confusion?**

**A:** This does not mean that there will necessarily be changes to existing official names. We are not talking about re-writing of Tasmania's place names. While it may take some time for the community to become accustomed to the use of the dual names these will only be applied to some natural topographic features. Features will be dual named, not re-named.

**Q: Will it create confusion for the Emergency Services?**

**A:** While either name could be used where dual names are applied, these would be for natural topographic features. Addresses will not be affected. The policy is focused on features that have significance to the Aboriginal people not towns, suburbs, roads, highways or bridges.

**Q:** Will the community have a say in the assignment of Tasmania's place names?

**A:** Yes. Naming proposals submitted to the Nomenclature Board must demonstrate that there is community support for the proposal and if Aboriginal names are proposed there must be consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. Members of the community can also comment on proposed names published in the Tasmanian Government Gazette.

**Q:** Will people have to use any of the new names?

**A:** No. Where there are dual names assigned to a feature, either or both names may be used as the official name. Using dual names will provide people an opportunity to become familiar with the feature's significance in Aboriginal and European history. People may choose to use either or both names.

**Q:** How do you expect people to be able to pronounce the Aboriginal names?

**A:** The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) can provide phonetic information for those interested in pronunciation of Aboriginal place names.

**Q:** There were several Aboriginal languages in Tasmania and they disappeared a long time ago – how do you know that these names are the correct names?

**A:** The names will be drawn from the *palawa kani* language. This is a reconstructed language resembling the languages once spoken by Tasmanian Aboriginal people. The TAC will provide advice about Aboriginal names as the recognised representative Aboriginal language organisation. The TAC has been conducting research into Aboriginal language for over 20 years.

**Q:** There are several Aboriginal groups in Tasmania – what makes the TAC the authority?

**A:** The TAC is acknowledged both within and outside the Aboriginal community as the body responsible for extensive historical and linguistic research. The TAC's *palawa kani* Language Program has been involved in retrieving and reviving Tasmanian Aboriginal languages since the mid 1990's. The TAC is a member of the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture Corporation (FATSILC), the national peak body for community based Aboriginal language programs in Australia.

**Q:** Is there support within the Aboriginal community for the TAC being the representative authority?

**A:** There was general support from those groups responding to the draft policy during consultation. The TAC will consult with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, to confirm that each Aboriginal name is accepted by the community.

**Q:** By changing existing names, aren't you undermining Tasmania's European history?

**A:** Any Aboriginal names will be added to the existing names so that there will be dual names for the feature. This will not change the existing name. This will ensure recognition of both Aboriginal and European history.

**Q:** Why should Tasmania follow other states? Unlike other states, Tasmania has a very small Aboriginal community.

**A:** Experience in other states has shown that the use of Aboriginal names for features provides a valuable insight into Aboriginal history. Aboriginal history in Tasmania is as rich as it is in any other state. It is important that this is recognised and preserved.

**Q:** How much money is going to be spent on changing signs and maps?

**A:** Changes to signs and maps are not expected to incur significant additional costs. Changes to maps and tourism products would occur when they are normally due for updating and re-publication. There are likely to be some costs associated with changed signage, but in most cases this would be factored into normal maintenance and operational programs.

**Q:** How will the Aboriginal names be decided?

**A:** The TAC will identify features for Aboriginal naming. They will consult with the Aboriginal community to confirm community acceptance of the names. The TAC will propose the names to the Nomenclature Board. The Board will consider the proposals and manage the assignment of names in accordance with the *Survey Coordination Act 1944*.

