

Strategy for Naming and Co-naming of public buildings and facilities

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1 Statement of Intent

This strategy gives effect to the principles of the Queensland Government's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework* (Framework).

The Government's strategic vision is that Culturally Capable agencies, statutory authorities and government owned corporations will provide efficient, effective and responsive services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by ensuring their perspectives are an inherent part of the government's core business.

Demonstrable and visible actions that highlight the Queensland Government's commitment to reconciliation are considered to be a practical application of cultural capability. The CAL group supports the naming and co-naming of public buildings and facilities as a highly visible act of reconciliation.

The Strategy outlines the best practice processes for agencies and statutory authorities to consider, evaluate and consult in regard to proposals for naming and/or co-naming of public buildings and facilities. It gives effect to the Queensland Government's values and aims to enhance the quality, level and delivery of government services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

All agencies are encouraged to implement the Strategy for Naming and Co-naming and wherever possible to embed naming and co-naming as an activity in their Cultural Capability Action Plans. It is understood that some agencies may not own building or facilities which are suitable for application of this strategy but the Principles and Guidelines could also be applied to facilities within tenancies.

2 Background

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) was tasked by the Cultural Agency Leaders (CAL) to lead an Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG) to develop whole of government principles and guidelines for naming and co-naming of public buildings and facilities.

The project is an initiative that aligns with the Queensland Government's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework* (the Framework). The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP), in collaboration with the Public Service Commission, developed the Framework.

The purpose of the Framework is to enhance the quality, level and delivery of government services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Framework is underpinned by the public service values and the following principles:

- Valuing culture – recognising, respecting and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is fundamental to improving our services;
- Leadership and accountability – All leaders are accountable for demonstrating and promoting cultural capability within the sector;
- Building cultural capability to improve economic participation – Building the sector's cultural capability to improve services and facilitate sustainable employment outcomes will lead to greater economic prosperity;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and stronger partnerships – Sustained, respectful and inclusive engagement is essential to gaining an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- Culturally responsive systems and services – embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the design, delivery and evaluation of policy, programs and services will lead to better outcomes.

These principles complement the rationale and intent of the Queensland Government's Strategy for Naming and Co-naming. In particular, the Strategy gives effect to the principles of valuing culture and facilitates opportunities for engagement to build stronger relationships.

In progressing this work it has become apparent to the IWG that there is broad interest in this initiative both across government and the broader community. For example, recently the Electoral Commission of Queensland approached the project officers in DNRME to discuss processes for re-naming existing electorates. Similarly, the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) announced the theme for 2017 as *Our Languages Matter*.

As a consequence of this widespread interest, the aim of the IWG has been to develop guidelines and principles which complement the State's existing place naming processes but which are sufficiently flexible to be applied to a variety of contexts.

While not mandatory all agencies are encouraged to embed the adoption of the naming and co-naming strategy in their Cultural Capability Action Plans and wherever appropriate seek to implement this strategy.

3 Existing legislative frameworks for naming

Both Australia and New Zealand have developed legislative or regulatory procedures for the systematic approval and recording of place names. Within Australia, each State and Territory of the Commonwealth has such procedures. A number of other government agencies also have naming responsibilities.

The principal naming authorities are represented on the Permanent Committee on Place Names (PCPN) which is a standing committee of the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping (ICSM). This committee was established to coordinate place naming in Australia and New Zealand.

The terms of reference of the PCPN include to:

- ensure consistency and accuracy of use of correct names by map, chart and electronic applications;
- promote greater community awareness of geographical names; and
- support initiatives for the appropriate use and preservation of geographical names and for the recognition of their heritage and cultural importance.

3.1 Australian context

Within Australia, States and Territories are guided in their approval and recording of place names by the *Principles for the Consistent Use of Place Names* prepared by the PCPN.

In Queensland the *Place Names Act 1994* provides a process for naming, including the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names, for places or geographical features, but excludes a range of things including roads, canals, buildings, dam walls and electoral districts. Processes for naming these things are outlined in other pieces of legislation, including but not limited to, the *Electoral Act 1992*, the *Local Government Act 2009*, and the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management Act) 1995*.

Some jurisdictions such as Victoria, South Australia and Northern Territory, extend the application of their place names legislation to buildings and facilities. However, these legislative approaches are also burdened with administrative boards and committees.

The proposed co-naming Principles and Guidelines complement and are consistent with the existing process in the *Place Names Act 1994*. Importantly, the Strategy for Naming and co-naming will provide each agency with the flexibility to apply the Principles and Guidelines as appropriate for its business priorities and any specific management issues associated with the building or facility. For example, some agencies may be restricted in their application of the Strategy due to legislation, legal contracts or commercial interests but scope might still exist for part of that facility to be co-named (e.g. forecourt, park/garden, within the precinct).

3.2 International context

The New Zealand and Canadian jurisdictions are similar to the Australian context, however, New Zealand is unique in that it recognises two official languages - English and an official Māori language. The Frameworks of the *New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, Version 7, April 2015* facilitates the naming of places and provides for naming in both official languages.

Canada has numerous traditional owner groups and languages and also recognises the use of Indigenous languages in their *Principles and Procedures for Geographical Naming 2011*. The Canadian framework is devolved from the national government to the provinces for administration.

Research indicates that there is much similarity in the processes followed by jurisdictions. For example, in British Columbia, under the *Land Act [RSBC 1996]* responsibility for naming is delegated to the *Geographical Names Office* whilst in some scenarios the responsibility is shared with local and federal agencies.

The British Columbia *Geographical Naming Principles, Policy and Procedures* note that geographical names are more than labels on maps and road signs, they convey aspects of the history and promise of an area that might otherwise be overlooked or forgotten by visitors and later generations. They are also an indispensable tool for navigation and location, forming reference points even in historic transportation and communications systems.

Throughout the jurisdictions there is much similarity in the process with key goals being to ensure:

- the integrity of data recorded in spatial data bases
- consistent naming conventions for spelling, capitalisation, fonts etc.
- the preservation and acknowledgement of the significance of language to culture
- appropriate consultation processes for engaging with the relevant Indigenous people.

4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australia

In contrast to the New Zealand context, Australia has several hundred known indigenous languages and dialects. The structure of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies reflects the connection to country via a series of clan estates which link directly to story lines, song lines, family groups and interlinked language groups.

A language group will cover a larger geographic area than that of any specific traditional owner group and will most likely be comprised of numerous distinct languages as well as discrete dialects. Consequently, it is not possible to recognise any one Aboriginal language as the official Aboriginal language in Australia.

The viability of languages across Australia varies considerably. A significant amount of linguistic research has been done over the years and deposited in institutions such as the

State Library of Queensland and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

There is growing interest and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' languages and culture and increasingly institutions are working with traditional owner groups to capture and record more of their languages to assist with their survival and revival.

Recently the NSW government announced it will develop a bill that will explicitly recognise that Aboriginal people are the owners of their traditional languages while giving higher priority to government efforts to support the protection of these languages for future generations.

DNRM members of the IWG have consulted with senior linguistic experts and librarians at the State Library with the aim of documenting a reliable process for desktop research to identify the relevant language for an area and appropriate word lists to facilitate consultation with the Traditional Owners.

5 Principles underpinning the best practice Guidelines

The following principles support the naming and co-naming Guidelines.

Naming or co-naming with Aboriginal words and Torres Strait Islander words:

- Will assist in recognising the unique position of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our culture and history as the first people of this land.
- Will raise awareness of the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our communities and promote the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander words so that they are recognised as part of our heritage.
- Acknowledges that language/words are an important aspect of the relationship between Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples, and their history, culture and identity.
- May be used as a management and educational tool to acknowledge the significance of a public building or facility to the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community or indeed the significance of the land itself on which the building or facility is located.

The Principles and Guidelines also recognise:

- The *Place Names Act 1994* can be applied to defined things. The principles and guidelines for naming and co-naming complement existing legislation but are flexible enough to be suitable for a variety of contexts. For example, agencies such as Education or Health might take the opportunity to name or co-name a single building within a much larger campus.
- Members of the public as well as government agencies may make proposals for naming and co-naming.
- The naming and co-naming Principles and Guidelines do not require special legislation.

6 Guidelines for implementation

When a government agency is considering naming or co-naming a public building or facility, the following actions should occur and matters be considered:

- The relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people/groups must be consulted and their clear endorsement obtained about the most appropriate name/words for a building or facility.
- The purpose of, or the activities undertaken in the building or facility, considered when proposing appropriate names for the building.
- Words from languages connected to the area/location of the building or facility should be chosen when and where appropriate.
- Local historical and cultural information relating to the meaning and origin of the name/words chosen should be collated whenever possible e.g. there may be existing research by anthropologists, linguists, land councils, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owners.
- When naming a building or facility for the first time, consideration be given to only using an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name rather than co-naming.
- Where alternative spellings of a specific Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name exist, only one official spelling should be used following consultation with the relevant community.
- Information about the name should be provided so that people have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and history associated with it.

For agencies which do not in their own right, own or lease any public buildings or facilities, it is recommended that when reviewing their Cultural Capability Action Plan (CCAP) the following clause be included to demonstrate the agency's commitment to improving its Cultural Capability by implementing the Strategy for naming and co-naming:

The Queensland Government recognises the special relationship that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and natural resources.

Wherever possible officers of the Department of XXX will work with native title holders and Traditional Owner groups to facilitate implementation of the Queensland Government's Strategy for Naming and Co-naming of public buildings and facilities.

6.1 Process

The detailed process is outlined at **Attachment 1**.

Broadly the process for considering a proposal for naming or co-naming is consistent with the process outlined in the *Place Names Act 1994*.

Attachment 2 provides information to guide agencies' integration of the chosen name into general use and how to develop communication processes that will maximise opportunities to inform the broader community of the name chosen, its significance to the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community and its suitability for the naming of the building or facility.

7 Definitions

Agency/agencies	Any department of the Queensland government, a Queensland government owned corporation (GOC) or Statutory Authority.
Co-naming	The use of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander words as names for public buildings that are owned or leased by Queensland government agencies. The name may be the sole name or in addition to an existing English language name.
Facility	Includes transport infrastructure as defined in the <i>Transport Infrastructure Act 1994</i> .
Public Building	Generally, public buildings refers to buildings owned by the State, however, in the context of this document the term also includes leased buildings occupied by Queensland government agencies which are frequented by the public.
NTA	<i>Native Title Act (Cth) 1993</i>
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal

8 Resources

Queensland

Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy

Protocols for Consultation

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/people-communities/protocols-consultation>

Cultural Capability

<http://datsip.govnet.qld.gov.au/about-cultural-capability>

Cultural Heritage

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/people-communities/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-cultural-heritage>

Land Holding entities

<https://www.qld.gov.au/atsi/environment-land-use-native-title/land-trusts/index.html>

Regional Centres

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/people-communities/regional-centres>

Department of the Premier and Cabinet – Protocol Queensland

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Protocol

<https://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/policies-and-codes.aspx>

Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

Place Names <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/place-names/>

State Library of Queensland <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/>

Indigenous Language Centres <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages>

Interstate - South Australia

Geographical Names Guidelines

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/planning-and-property/planning-and-land-management/suburb-road-and-place-names/geographical-names-guidelines>

National

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Consultation Guide

<https://www.dpmc.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/communicating-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-audiences>

National Library of Australia <http://www.nla.gov.au/>

Trove research portal <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>

National Native Title Tribunal www.nntt.gov.au

International

Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping

<http://www.icsm.gov.au/index.html>

Consistent Use of Place Names: including Principles for the Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names

<https://www.icsm.gov.au/what-we-do/permanent-committee-place-names/pcpn-publications>

New Zealand

New Zealand Geographic Board

<http://www.linz.govt.nz/regulatory/place-names/about-new-zealand-geographic-board>

Frameworks of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

<http://www.linz.govt.nz/regulatory/place-names/propose-place-name/nzgb-naming-policies-principles-and-guidelines>

Attachment 1

Process for Naming and Co-Naming of public buildings and facilities

Step 1 Agency identifies building or facility

1. Proposal for co-naming may be made by member of the public or generated by agency.
2. Assess the proposal to ensure your agency has authority to proceed and that the proposal is consistent with existing policies and guidelines.

Step 2 Identification of relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Group

1. Agency to identify/verify the appropriate Traditional Owner group for the location of building or facility by researching the following registers and portals.

Note: It is recommended that you check all registers below in the order they are listed as more than one group may exist for the location of the building or facility.

National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT)

<http://www.nntt.gov.au>

- i. Search the registers of native title claims and native title determinations.
- ii. Search results will show contact details for native title claim groups and/or the registered corporation for determined native title holders.

Cultural Heritage Portal – Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/>

- i. Search register for contact details of registered Cultural Heritage Bodies.

Indigenous land held by Land Trusts - Department of Natural Resources and Mines

<https://www.qld.gov.au/atsi/environment-land-use-native-title/land-trusts/index.html>

- i. This page includes a map locating the entities holding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land. A form must be completed to request contact details of the entity from either the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Entity Register.

Department of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Partnerships – Regional contacts

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/>

- i. Seek assistance from Regional Directors or regional office staff about contacts with Traditional Owner groups who are known in the area of the proposed building or facility.
- ii. Request any known additional information about the building or facility and/or the group that may be applicable or assist in any consultation process.

Office of Register of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)

<http://www.oric.gov.au/>

- i. Search register for the Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC) noting contact details including Chairperson and list of Directors.
- ii. Note that the list of Directors will most likely represent the family groups who constitute the determined native title group.

Indigenous Language Centres

<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages>

- i. Search the website of the State Library of Queensland for contact details for Indigenous Language Centres (5 centres across Queensland) and to identify the language group for the location of the building or facility to be co-named. Some of the associated language centre websites also include word lists.

Step 3 Research

1. Complete desktop research about the history of the location of the building or facility (e.g. any known or nearby geographic features) and the Traditional Owner groups as identified from the searches at Step 2. Suggested sources for identifying languages and word lists include:
 - a. online catalogues from Trove (National Library of Australia), state libraries, university libraries and local libraries/history associations.
2. If necessary, request assistance from library (e.g. State Library of Queensland, Indigenous Language Centres and other libraries if necessary).
3. Collate research results and identify questions or gaps in information where possible (prior to commencing consultation).

Note:

As part of the research process each agency should identify the activity or theme that the building/facility will be used for. Consider the proposed use, core business or primary activities and associated outcomes (i.e. what the activity of the business achieves) of the building or facility. This will help facilitate discussion around the words which the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group might consider suitable.

Step 4 Consult with Traditional Owner group

1. Based on results of Step 2 contact the relevant group/s and seek feedback on most appropriate method for consultation.
2. Consult with the Traditional Owner group and allow them to make a decision according to their processes:
 - a. The people you consult with may need to go away and consult with Elders and other members of the group;
 - b. Refer to the Naming principles outlined on the DNRM Place Names webpage at <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/place-names/naming/principles/> to ensure consistency of names adopted.

3. During the consultation process each agency should ensure that the group is aware of any proposed implementation and publication process after a decision is made. These might include:
 - a. Discuss how the department might use the chosen word including signage, publication and brochure material (e.g. as a geographic reference),
 - b. If the co-naming outcome is included in any future promotional material or awareness campaign supporting issues such as engagement and community awareness that might include Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
4. Request documentation (e.g. minutes or a letter) noting the decision agreeing to the name.

Note: For guidance on how to undertake consultation go to <https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/people-communities/protocols-consultation>

Step 5 Brief decision maker with recommendations

1. Prepare relevant briefing notes for decision maker in accordance with agency's process.
2. Ensure all phases of the Naming/Co-naming process have been addressed and supporting documentation is attached including evidence of support from Traditional Owners.
3. Other relevant documentation to attach to the brief may include:
 - a. a copy of the initial proposal or recommendation for co-naming of the building or facility;
 - b. summary of research about building or facility name and history of location;

Step 6 Decision Making, Notification and Communication

1. If the proposal for naming or co-naming is approved, the agency should notify the naming in accordance with their existing processes for updating relevant datasets. If the naming is for a building notify DNRM of the new name so that it can be included in the Spatial Dataset for Building Names.
2. Communication of the naming is a good opportunity to educate and inform the broader community of the culture and history associated with the name chosen. Prior to any communication it is important to obtain the consent of the Traditional Owner group for any proposed event or communication. If agreed prepare a Communication or Event Plan in accordance with the agency's communications templates.

Attachment 2

Integration and Communication of new name or co-name

One of the key benefits of naming and co-naming is the opportunity it provides to educate the broader community about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture.

The *Strategy for Naming and Co-naming of public buildings and facilities* identifies that:

- using Aboriginal words or Torres Strait Islander words for naming and co-naming may be used as a management and educational tool to acknowledge the significance of a public building or facility to the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community or indeed the significance of the land itself on which the building or facility is located,
and
- information can accompany the name so that people have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and history associated with it.

To facilitate the benefits derived from such opportunities and to ensure that the names or co-names are integrated into general use, strategies for communication of the name and integration of the name should be considered as part of the process and in discussions with Traditional Owners.

Outlined below are a number of conventions which inform the practicalities of how to depict Aboriginal names or Torres Strait Islander names.

Conventions

To minimise confusion, error or discrimination caused by names, the following conventions are suggested:

Order of names

In Australia, when naming a **place or geographical feature** the practice is whichever of the two names for the place or feature is most likely to be used by the local community is to be used first in a sequence.

In New Zealand, the contemporary practice is to use the original Māori name as the preceding name in recognition of their rights of first discovery.

For consistency across Queensland the following practice is to be adopted:

If a building or facility is being given a name for the first time the name should be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name/word.

If Co-naming a building or facility the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name should precede the English language name in recognition of their long history of prior occupation of Australia.

Using Aboriginal Languages or Torres Strait Islander Languages

Names should be simple and concise and easy to recognise, spell and pronounce. They should be transcribed as accurately as possible to suggest a pronunciation as close to the Indigenous form, as possible. Although the names might appear complex at first, they will, over time, become familiar and easy to use within the community.

It is recommended that names be no longer than 50 characters. Only characters from the standard alphabet can be included (i.e. no special characters, diacritical marks or punctuation marks).

Discrimination

Names should not be offensive, racist, derogatory or demeaning.

Commercial names

Name that could be construed as advertising or promoting commercial enterprises should not be used.

Personal names

Naming a place in honour of a person should only occur after the person has passed away. The person commemorated should have contributed significantly to the area (ownership of land in itself is not sufficient). The spelling of the place name should follow the spelling of the personal name from which it is derived (e.g. 'MacRaes Flat' not 'McRaes Flat', where named after Mrs MacRae).

Style

Both the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name and the English language name shall be depicted in the same fonts, font type, font size, font style and colour.

Communication

If an agency decides it is appropriate and the Traditional Owner group agrees, an event or ceremony may be held to communicate to the broader community the new name or co-name for a building or facility. Such events should conform to the Communication policies and guidelines of the relevant agency as well as any cultural protocols of the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group.

A guide to protocols for acknowledging and consulting with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples has been produced by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and is available here:

<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/people-communities/protocols-consultation>

The Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet also has an *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocol - Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners* as part of the governance of State Affairs for Protocol Queensland available here: <http://premiers.govnet.qld.gov.au/policies/index.html>

At a minimum, any communication strategy, marketing program or launch event should:

- be cognisant of these protocols
- include how issues relating to culture and heritage should be acknowledged
- include culturally appropriate names, terminology, pronunciation, references and how to use them and
- be aware of inappropriate use of names and references (particularly in some cases for deceased people or sacred sites).