VicRoads
Acknowledgement of Country Policy

This policy is intended to encourage the incorporation by VicRoads employees of recognition of Indigenous traditional custodians of land into relevant VicRoads meetings and events.

The promotion of a greater appreciation of Indigenous culture in the wider community, together with gestures of respect for traditional custodianship of land can lead to better community relationships and assist the reconciliation process.

‘Acknowledgement of Country’ during Meetings

VicRoads employees are encouraged to acknowledge traditional Aboriginal country at the commencement of relevant meetings, including those that involve Indigenous participants or Indigenous issues.

An ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ at the beginning of meetings and functions is a way that all people can show respect for local Indigenous culture and heritage, and the ongoing relationship that Indigenous traditional custodians have with the land and sea.

Suggested wording for this acknowledgement is as follows:

- Where traditional custodianship is known:

  I would like to acknowledge the ________________ people who are the traditional custodians of this land. I would also like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous persons who are present today.

- Where traditional custodianship is not known:

  I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this meeting takes place, and to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

The first form of ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ should only be used when there is certainty as to the identity of the Indigenous traditional custodians of the relevant land. In areas where there is uncertainty or dispute as to the identity of the Indigenous traditional custodians of the land the use of the second form of ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ is appropriate.

‘Welcome to Country’ Ceremonies at Events

‘Welcome to Country’ ceremonies are another way that VicRoads employees may acknowledge Indigenous traditional custodianship of land at the commencement of relevant events, including launches and openings for projects and programs involving significant Indigenous involvement or consultation.

These ceremonies generally involve representatives of the relevant Indigenous traditional custodians welcoming people to their land. This formal process may consist of a single speech or may also include a song, dance, musical performance or smoking ceremony. Content, format and representation should be negotiated with the local Aboriginal community to ensure appropriateness.

Gary Liddle
Chief Executive

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