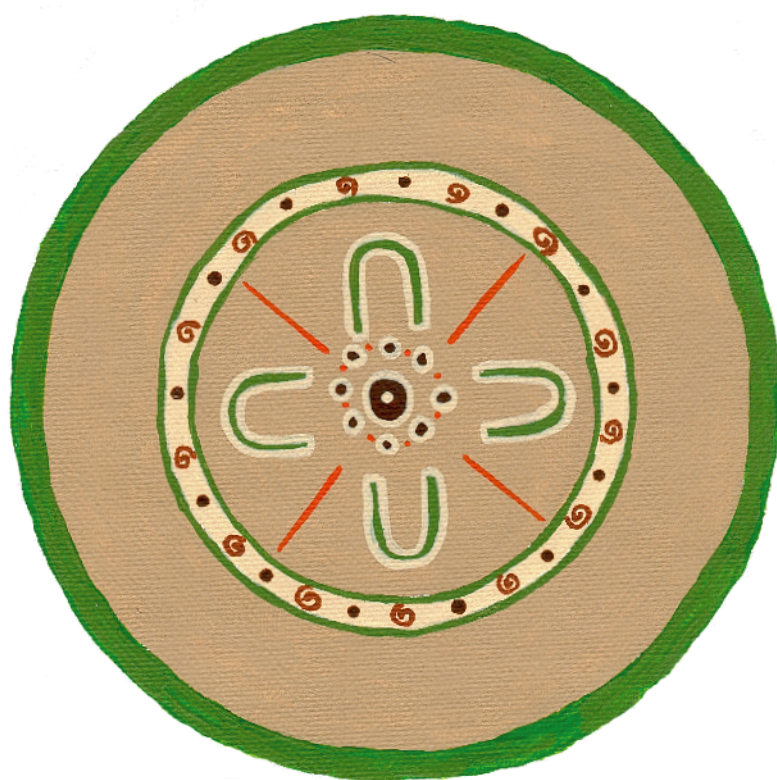


ABORIGINAL CULTURAL RESPECT TRAINING FRAMEWORK



for the
Illawarra – South East
Regional Coordination Management Group

March 2007

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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Framework

The purpose of this framework is to assist NSW Government Agencies to ensure all government employees have the knowledge, skills and positive motivation to effectively work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Background and History

I-SE Regional Coordination Management Group

The Illawarra – South East Regional Coordination Management Group (I-SE RCMG) brings together the Regional Managers of about 30 NSW Government Agencies who have a presence in the Illawarra and South East Regions.

The area covered extends from Wollongong, along the South Coast to the NSW/Victorian border and west to Bombala, Queanbeyan, Young, Yass and Goulburn.

The Regional Managers meet three times a year to identify and manage initiatives that require multi-agency responses, develop and manage regional strategic initiatives, evaluate and monitor project outcomes and enhance interagency networks and exchange.

The I-SE RCMG has developed two cluster groups, which bring together different agencies with similar focus. There are the human services cluster group, and a combined natural resources and economic development cluster group.

At the I-SE RCMG meeting in Thredbo, November 2005, it was agreed that the I-SE RCMG and Aboriginal Government Employees Network (AGEN) would form a joint working party to develop an I-SE Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework.

This document is the outcome of the working group.

Aboriginal Government Employees Network

The AGEN was initiated in 2004 by the I-SE RCMG as part of its cross-agency commitment to improve service delivery and community outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

The purpose of AGEN is to increase support, networking and opportunities for collaboration for Aboriginal workers in NSW Government Agencies. It brings together Aboriginal employees of the NSW Government in the Illawarra and South East Regions. The first major Gathering of Aboriginal workers was held at Murramarang on the 30th November and 1st December 2004. This Gathering developed a framework for the establishment of AGEN as an annual event, supported by a working group to operate in between the annual Gatherings. Members of the working group, known as the Cross Agency Working Party (CAWP) are appointed each year at the AGEN Gathering.

The second Gathering (and first AGEN Gathering) of Aboriginal workers was held in September 2005. This Gathering built on the work already undertaken in 2004 and resulted in the formation of three working parties to progress the development of an *Illawarra- South East Regional Aboriginal Employment Strategy, an AGEN Website and Contact Database and the Illawarra – South East Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework*.

A Common Starting Point

Aboriginal workers in the Illawarra - South East Region unanimously agree that provision of Cultural Respect Training to non-Indigenous workers is vitally important to improve service delivery and service outcomes for Aboriginal people. Many Agencies already focus considerable effort and resources on some form of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training. There is unanimous agreement between Regional Managers and Aboriginal workers about the importance of this matter.

Agencies currently deliver Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training through a number of means. Some Agencies outsource training to external training providers while others deliver their training internally through their existing Aboriginal workforce.

During the 2004 and 2005 AGEN Gatherings, workers discussed the strengths and weaknesses of both methods of delivery, and agreed that regardless of how an Agency delivers its training, there are certain principles that should underpin all Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training.

This Framework articulates those principles, and provides Agencies with an easy tool to assist with designing, assessing or outsourcing Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training for their workforce.

2. What is Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training?

Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training for NSW Government workers must be seen in the context of NSW Government policy, as one means of improving service delivery outcomes for Aboriginal people (Dench McClean, 1999). The following information has been adapted from the Dench McClean *Report to NSW Health Regarding the Effectiveness of Cultural Awareness Training (1999)*. A copy of this report is provided in **Section 9** of this Framework.

The Dench McClean report highlights that education, awareness and training are terms often used interchangeably, but actually mean different things.

Awareness is an end state concerned with knowing something (acquiring knowledge), which is education, not training.

Training is the process by which people acquire the skills needed to perform a specific task or range of tasks.

In order to be effective in delivering appropriate services to Aboriginal people, all NSW staff need:

- **AWARENESS** of the important issues, including cultural differences (often usefully expressed as different value orientations), and the specific aspects of Aboriginal history, and its impact on Aboriginal people in Australia today;
- the **SKILLS** to interact and communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal clients, and
- the desire or **MOTIVATION** to be successful in their interactions with Aboriginal people, to improve access, delivery and service outcomes.

The Dench McClean report argues that all three components are critical to ensure appropriate behaviour in staff working with Aboriginal people.

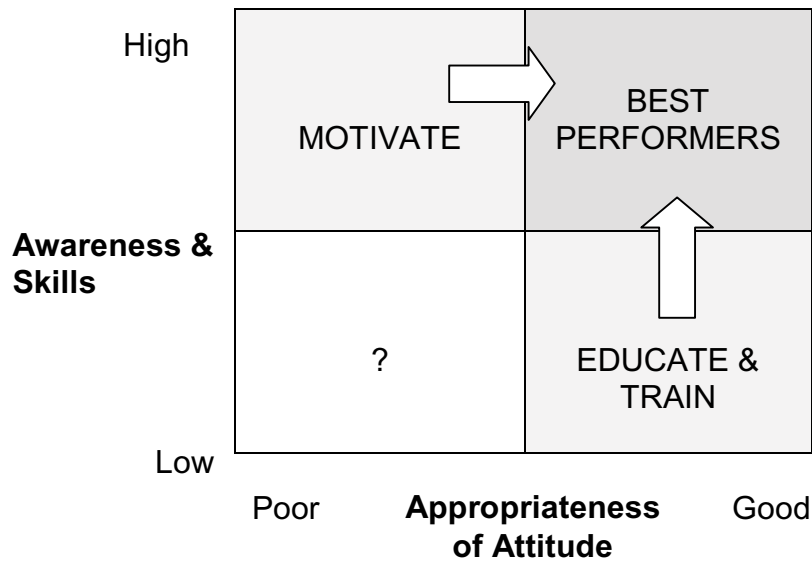
Similarly, the report finds that the changing of deep seated attitudes is difficult and clearly beyond the scope of short term Cultural Respect Training packages. Culturally appropriate and effective **BEHAVIOUR** by non-Aboriginal staff, is however clearly **WITHIN** the scope of reasonable expectation and performance management of non-Aboriginal staff.

Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Programs in the Illawarra – South East should therefore aim to achieve appropriate **BEHAVIOUR** by non-Aboriginal people, so that service delivery is facilitated and improved outcomes for Aboriginal people are achieved.

3. Establishing Training Needs

NSW Government employees possess varying levels of knowledge about Aboriginal people, history and cultures, and varying levels of confidence, commitment or success in interacting effectively with Aboriginal clients. An approach to analysing individual training and development needs is shown in the diagram below. This approach can be useful in helping to assess whether workers need education and/or training to increase their **skills** and **awareness** or whether they need a major change in **attitude**, or both.

Table 1: Assessing Current Performance Problems (adapted from Dench & McClean, p9)



The report suggests that if new employees have significant needs in both areas, the agency may need to review its recruitment methods to include criterion that address appropriateness of attitude (which is difficult to change) and awareness and skills (which is easier to influence) as indicators of a capacity to work effectively and appropriately with Aboriginal people.

4. Key Principles for Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training

All Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training undertaken in the Illawarra – South East Region should be based on the following principles:

Recognition

Recognition that all non-Aboriginal workers are expected to possess the skills, awareness and motivation to work effectively with Aboriginal People.

Correct Information

Information provided in Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training should be factually correct, and of high quality.

Delivery

Cultural Respect Training should be:

- provided in an environment that is appropriate, safe and comfortable for both participants and trainers;
- tailored and packaged to meet the specific training needs and geographic location of participants; and
- delivered by appropriately trained and qualified trainers.

Quality

Attention should be given to the quality of content and delivery.

Duty of Care

Managers have a special duty of care to the Aboriginal staff that perform Cultural Respect Training as part of their duties. This includes ensuring that Aboriginal Trainers have the appropriate training, skills, resources and ongoing support to perform this difficult role. Managers must realise that working directly with the ignorance or racism of non-Aboriginal staff can be especially difficult for Aboriginal trainers, and appropriate supports must be established.

Local Content

All Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training delivered in the Illawarra-South East Region should involve Local Knowledge Holders, regardless of whether Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training is provided by internal or external trainers. This means that external contractors should be required to make contact with Local Knowledge Holders to assist in the delivery of regionally relevant information and content. A list of recognised Local Knowledge Holders is provided in the section “Register of Local Knowledge Holders” in this Framework.

5. Key Components of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Packages

While Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training is important for everyone, packages should be developed with consideration given to the different roles that staff may have in their Agency. For example, the Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training needs of administration staff may be different to those of front line workers.

In order to provide the awareness, skills and motivation required for effective work with Aboriginal people, Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training must cover a range of topics or components. Some components lend themselves to generic curriculum resources; however some components must be tailored to include local content, and be delivered by or with people with recognised local knowledge. A list of recognised Local Knowledge Holders is provided in the **“Register of Local Knowledge Holders”** section of this Framework.

When developing a Cultural Respect Training package for this Region, Agencies might give consideration to including components on:

- **Learning about Aboriginal History in Australia**
- **Learning about the history of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra – South East**
- **Impact of Legislation on Aboriginal People**
- **Understanding Aboriginal Culture**
- **Understanding Aboriginal Protocols**
- **Challenging Racism**
- **Learning and Practicing Appropriate Behaviours**
- **Communicating and Building Relationships with Aboriginal people**
- **Learning about the Aboriginal communities in the Illawarra – South East through involvement of appropriate Local Knowledge Holders in aspects of training**

6. Delivery of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training – things to consider

Who Should Receive Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training?

The AGEN members strongly believe that all NSW Government employees at all levels should undertake some form of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training, and that this training should be carefully designed according to a workers role in an organisation. Front line workers and managers of Aboriginal staff should be particularly targeted for Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training.

Who Should Provide Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training?

Careful consideration should be given to whether Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training should be undertaken internally or externally. Regardless of whether Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training is provided by internal or external trainers, all Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training delivered in the Illawarra-South East Region should involve Local Knowledge Holders. This means that external contractors should be required to make contact with Local Knowledge Holders to assist in the delivery of regionally relevant information and content. A list of recognised Local Knowledge Holders is provided in the “Register of Local Knowledge Holders” section of this Framework.

Aboriginal Employees as Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Providers

Where an Agency requires their own internal Aboriginal Employees to deliver Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training, Agencies have a special duty of care to those workers. Internal Aboriginal Cultural Respect Trainers will inevitably come face to face with various forms of ignorance or racism in their non-Aboriginal work colleagues and other managers as a part of their training responsibilities. AGEN members would like managers to understand having to train one’s peers carries special risks and stressors. Managers should be aware that requiring Aboriginal workers to train immediate peers or managers is not the ideal arrangement.

It is vitally important that Regional Managers who choose this approach provide strong leadership and support for their Aboriginal trainers, and clear organisational policy directives about expectations of culturally appropriate behaviour from their staff.

What Knowledge, Qualifications and Skills are needed to provide Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training?

Providers of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training in the Illawarra – South East Region need a combination of:

- **Knowledge of Aboriginal history,**
- **Local Knowledge, and**
- **Training Skills & Experience.**

Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training should only be provided by trainers that can demonstrate expertise in all three areas. This will almost definitely require trainers to include or partner in some way with recognised Local Knowledge Holders.

Providers of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training need to have appropriate training qualifications and practical experience in providing training.

Supporting New or Younger Aboriginal Employees

Aboriginal staff should also be supported to access Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training to develop their own Cultural Knowledge.

Evaluation of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training

Agencies should introduce or examine ways of measuring the effectiveness of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training.

Training outcomes and capacity to integrate new skills into practice should be linked to individual performance management processes.

Follow Up Activities

Agencies should consider incorporating follow up activities as part of Cultural Respect Training. For example, to continue to strengthen relationships between non-Aboriginal workers and the Aboriginal community, managers could encourage participation of all staff in annual NAIDOC events or celebrations.

7. Register of Accredited Trainers

8. Register of Local Knowledge Holders

I-SE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY PROFILE

Disclaimer: This profile was developed by the Aboriginal Government Employees Network as a guide only. It is a work in progress, it is not definitive and it will need to be updated regularly. Managers should check with their existing Aboriginal staff for accuracy and relevancy. Please forward any additions or suggested changes to RCMGillawarraSthEast@dpc.nsw.gov.au. Decisions about changes will be made by the AGEN Cross Agency Working Party.

Region	Aboriginal Country	Local Aboriginal Language	Aboriginal Sites within Community	Local Aboriginal Organisations	Local Aboriginal Elders	Notes
Batemans Bay						
Bega	Djirringanj			Bega LALC	Aunty Margaret Dixon	
Cooma	Monaro	Ngarigo				
Eden						
Goulburn	Gundungurra This area covers from the coast all the way into mountains near Katoomba	Ngunnawal	Corroboree Hill Taralga Kenmore Hospital (Ceremonial) Rocky Hill (Initiation) The Railway Station (Meeting Place)	Pejar Local Aboriginal Lands Council Ulla Mulla Pejar Housing	Evelyn Little Joan Medway	Gundungurra and Wiradjuri clans are more widely recognised. Goulburn wasn't inhabited by just one group of people, it had many
Narooma				Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Council		

8. Register of Local Knowledge Holders

Region	Aboriginal Country	Local Aboriginal Language	Aboriginal Sites within Community	Local Aboriginal Organisations	Local Aboriginal Elders	Notes
Nowra (Shoalhaven)	Local land in Nowra is part of the Yuin Nation. The clan north of the Shoalhaven River is the Wodi Wodi and below the River are the Wandj Wandjian people	Dharawal	The Shoalhaven River Coolangatta Mountain Red Hand Cave Cambewarra Mountain Mundi Mia	Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council Nowra Local Aboriginal Land Council Sth Coast AMS SCDAC CDEP South Coast Aboriginal Culture Centre Waminda Womens Centre Shoalhaven Safe Community Aboriginal Partnership (SSCAP)	Uncle Ben (Reuben) Brown Nola Campbell Ethel Little Sonny Simms Aunty Iris Mcleod	There are three different Elders Groups with differing opinions. There is a number of different communities and because of the diversity they are trying to stick as close as possible to the people who work together
Queanbeyan	Ngunnawal	Ngunnawal	London Bridge Burra (Burial Site) Showground (Corroboree)	Ngunnawal LALC Munjwa Health and Welfare Gunangarah Housing A/C	Matilda House Ethel Baxter Agnes O'Shea Louise Brown	The ACT Aboriginal Advisory Council has a register of Aboriginal elders.
Shellharbour	Wodi Wodi	Dharawal	Mt Keira, Mt Kembla, Windang Island, Killalea, Puckeyes Estate	Shellharbour Aboriginal Community Youth Association (SACYA) Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation. Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council. Illawarra AMS. IAC CDEP. Illawarra Aboriginal Mens Group Illawarra Dubays	Uncle Reuben Brown Gerald Brown Roy Kennedy Paul & Mary Murray Dorothy Tungai Dawn Bell	As a form of respect the Elders of the Illawarra should be addressed as Aunty or Uncle

8. Register of Local Knowledge Holders

Region	Aboriginal Country	Local Aboriginal Language	Aboriginal Sites within Community	Local Aboriginal Organisations	Local Aboriginal Elders	Notes
Ulladulla				Ulladulla Local Aboriginal Land Council	Aunty Vic Carriage	
Wollongong (Illawarra, Yallah, Dapto, West Wollongong,)	Wodi Wodi	Dharawal and dialects	Mt Keira, Mt Kembla, Windang Island, Killalea, Puckeys Estate	Aboriginal Culture Centre Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation. Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council. Illawarra AMS. IAC CDEP. Illawarra Aboriginal Mens Group Illawarra Dubays Dapto/Koonawarra Youth Connect (Dapto area)	Ruben Brown Gerald Brown Roy Kennedy Paul & Mary Murray Dorothy Tungai Dawn Bell	As a form of respect the Elders of the Illawarra should be addressed as Aunty or Uncle
Wreck Bay						
Yass	Ngunnawal	Ngunnawal	Hollywood Reserve Oak Hill St Augustin Catholic Church (Corroboree)	Onerwal LALC Ngunawal Housing	Eric Bell Cecil Dickson Jean Merrit Helen Wallace	

9. Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training - Packages & Resources

10. Maintenance & Evaluation of this Framework

Maintenance

This framework is designed to assist members of the RCMG in the planning and implementation of Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training. Agencies should endeavour to ensure their activities fit within the principles of the framework.

Agencies can contribute to best practice in the Illawarra – South East by sharing their resources and learnings, and by assisting with the upkeep of current knowledge

From time to time, AGEN will need to update sections of the Framework.

Regional Managers have agreed to identify a person or position to be the Regional Action Officer for their Agency's copy of the framework. This person will be responsible for receiving and replacing updated sections of the framework.

Contact details for your nominated Regional Action Officer should be provided to RCMGIllawarraSthEast@dpc.nsw.gov.au

Evaluation

From time to time, AGEN would like the RCMG's assistance to evaluate the framework. Key evaluation questions might include:

- **Has your agency used the framework? If so, how?**
- **Was the framework helpful?**
- **Did it work?**
- **How useful were the various sections?**
- **What could make the Framework more useful?**

11. Implementation

The I-SE RCMG Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework was endorsed by the RCMG on 6 March 2007. At the same meeting, it was agreed that the framework would be implemented as follows:

- Department of Premier and Cabinet and CAWP to finalise and print the framework as a loose-leaf folder
- Each RCMG Agency to identify a position that can serve as Regional Action Officer for the Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework and AGEN issues. This officer is to take responsibility for receiving updated documentation and maintaining the Kit.
- RCMG agencies to agree to participate, as an RCMG group, in Cultural Respect Training, starting with July 2007 RCMG.
- Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training using the Framework be rolled out through all agencies during 2007, 2008, 2009 so that every NSW Government employee has received basic Cultural Respect training by 2010.
- Agencies to report annually to March RCMG on progress and outcomes.

Contact details of your Agency's nominated Regional Action Officer can be forwarded to: RCMGillawarraSthEast@dpc.nsw.gov.au

Acknowledgements

The I-SE RCMG Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework was developed by a Working Group of the Aboriginal Government Employees Network. The Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework Working Group members were:

- June Lowe
- Marilyn Brown
- Iris White
- Graeme Moore
- Greg Christian
- Craig Taylor

The NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet would like to particularly acknowledge the work of this group, and would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal Government Employees Network members and Regional Managers who contributed to the thinking behind the Framework.

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the review of cultural awareness training commissioned by the NSW Department of Health in 1999. The “Report to NSW Health Regarding the Effectiveness of Cultural Awareness Training” submitted by Dench McClean Pty Ltd in September 1999 provided an important research base for the development of the Framework, and is highly recommended reading. A copy of the report is included in this Framework, and is downloadable from the NSW Health website.

The Working Group was resourced by the Project Manager, Department of Premier and Cabinet, South East, Simone Dilkara, and the Project Manager, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Illawarra, Denise McConnachie. Dr David Crawford, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Illawarra and Narelle Sargent, Department of Premier and Cabinet – South East provided proof reading and editing of the document.

The AGEN logo was designed by Patricia Margaret Maurer. Sadly Aunty Pat passed away on 15 December 2005, however her support for establishing AGEN and her gift of the logo will always be remembered.

The Aboriginal Government Employees Network would like to gratefully acknowledge the efforts and input of all who have contributed to the development of this I-SE RCMG Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training Framework.

