

Country Protocols Guide

Last revised September 2021

About this guide

As part of the Queensland Law Society's Cultural Outreach Strategy one of the first lessons the organisation learnt was to reflect on the historical treatment of the First Peoples of Australia through a Reconciliation Action Plan. Our journey has emphasized on approaching our tasks and work in a culturally appropriate manner, in particular when we engage with First Nations Peoples and community. We understand that Cultural protocols are a significant mechanism to recognising the existence and continued resilience of First Nations cultures.

A Welcome to Country and/or Acknowledgement of Country is vitally important to be included in events or other high priority gatherings/meetings. To incorporate into these settings the Queensland Law Society seeks to do business in a way that will not aid in the continued oppression of First Peoples' but will uphold and recognise day to day core business functions on the lands of traditional custodians who have cared for and maintained for the last 65,000 years or more.

The Society in this vein seeks safe passage in our dealings with the law, and in good faith commits to advancing the rights and interests of First Nations people in Queensland. We work together towards a common objective and where possible ensure our vision of good law good lawyers for the public good applies wholeheartedly with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.

Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this guide is to assist the Society's staff and its members to understand when it is appropriate to engage Traditional Owners to deliver a Welcome to Country. In addition, to assist staff to deliver respectful and meaningful Acknowledgements. It is not an exhaustive list of area names of cities or regional towns, it is a list that areas where QLS and its members may travel and practice.

We always welcome feedback, updates or amendments from time to time and invite them to be emailed through to cos@qls.com.au

Please note this Guide will be reviewed and updated every two years.

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When should we have a Welcome to Country?

A Welcome to Country should be delivered before any such event that is significant to the Queensland Law Society and its members. That may include functions, symposiums, launches, awards nights and other public events or gatherings.

Please note:

Upon a Welcome to Country, it is appropriate for the first speaker to initially acknowledge the Elder or whoever has delivered the Welcome to Country, and then continue with an Acknowledgement of Country, Traditional Custodians and their Elders.

For Example:

Thank you Aunty/Uncle ____ for that heartfelt welcome, I too would like to extend my respect by acknowledging the traditional owners and custodians and also recognise those who are from other Nations with us here today (or use own Acknowledgement of Country)

When should the Queensland Law Society include an Acknowledgement of Country?

Essentially similar as Welcome to Country but in a different context, an Acknowledgement of Country (including referencing Traditional Custodians and Elders) should be delivered at the commencement of any event and/or gathering in a genuine and meaningful manner.

Examples may include:

NAIDOC events NRW events Sports functions Yarning Circles

Conferences Symposiums Awards nights Gala Nights

Fees:

Generally there are fees involved by the Traditional Custodians and/or their representative Elder whom would require a nominal fee, which should be processed and arranged prior to the Welcome to Country ceremony. If there is a Traditional dance or smoking ceremony this may attract a higher payment.

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Please note below:

If the First Nations Peoples pronunciation are not supplied or you are not confident, alternatively you may use “*Traditional Owner/Custodian*” on its own.

A ‘**Welcome to Country**’ can only be delivered by an individual or group who has the cultural authority to do so or who has been given that authority by the traditional custodians and/or Elders of the community in which the gathering is taking place. That person would usually be an Elder with an Ancestral connection to the land and community which is generally spoken in English or could be in a First Nations language and can be performed by song and dance by the appropriate dance group.

Please note:

If a Traditional Custodian/s are unavailable to deliver a Welcome to Country it is generally a practice for a nominated representative to provide an Acknowledgment of the Traditional Custodians and their Elders. This should be arranged prior to any event.

An ‘**Acknowledgement of Country**’ can be delivered by any person at any time and does not need cultural authority. This is a means by which **all** people can show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, as ‘*First Nations peoples*’ or ‘*Traditional Custodians*’ and their ongoing connection to culture and the land. The Acknowledgement of Country should be delivered in a genuine manner towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the beginning of a ceremony or an official meeting preferably as the first item and therefrom. An ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ is to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and Elders and would be used at public events or ceremonies. On such occasions, a Chair or Speaker may begin by Acknowledging that the meeting is taking place in the Country of the Traditional Custodians.

For example:

‘I would like to acknowledge the peoples who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. I would also like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other First Australians who are present.’

OR

‘We acknowledge the Traditional Owners on whose Country the meeting is taking place. We thank them for allowing us to meet on their Country and acknowledge their Elders past and present.’

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Standard QLD Government Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the ^[Name of the Group if known] Traditional Owners of the land ^[and/or sea] on which this event is taking place and Elders both past and present. I also recognise those who's ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures will leave a lasting legacy for future Elders and leaders.

QLS Acknowledgement of Country is utilised in many different ways. We adopt the view that the delivery and message is to be fit for purpose, meaningful and reflective of the progress in knowledge and cultural acceptance.

TIPS AND KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Practice Acknowledgements if you are unfamiliar or have not performed it in a professional setting
- Try to find out some local area information, Aboriginal place names, historically important sites etc to incorporate into the Acknowledgement
- If you are aware of the surrounding Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander nations or clans, it is respectful to note them in your speech also
- It is also optimal but prudent to recognise other people in the audience who come from different countries and acknowledge their contributions in your speech

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In this section you will find a listing of the Traditional Owners in the respective regional areas. Please note, we recommend you conduct your own due diligence prior to the issuing of names and pronunciation in your deliveries.

1. Queensland Acknowledgements by DLA region

Geographical Region (DLA)	First Nation Peoples	Welcome
Brisbane and surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan/ Nathan/ Mt Gravatt - Yugarabul (Yu-gar-bul), Jagera (Jag-er-ra) and Yugambeh (Yu-gam-beh) . • North Lakes – Jagera (Jag-er-ra) and Turrbul (tour-a-bull). • Redcliffe – Turrbul/ Turrbal (tour-a-bull). 	<p>Before we kick off, and in keeping with our reconciliation commitment, it is culturally appropriate and important to acknowledge the First Nations people as the original inhabitants of the land on which this presentation is taking place, here in Meanjin (mee-an-jin), and recognise the remarkable country north and south of the winding Brisbane River, home of the Turrbul (tour-a-bull) and Jagera (Jag-er-ra) nations. Following cultural protocol, we pay our deep respects to all Elders past and present as well as our emerging leaders of tomorrow, and thank them for their wisdom and guidance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>In keeping with our reconciliation commitment it is culturally appropriate and important to acknowledge the First Nations people as the original inhabitants of the land on which this ceremony is taking place here in Meanjin (mee-an-jin), and recognise the remarkable country north and south of the winding Brisbane River, home of the Turrbul (tour-a-bull) and Jagera (Jag-er-ra) nations. Following cultural protocol, we pay our deep respects to all Elders past and present as well as our emerging leaders of tomorrow, and thank them for their wisdom and guidance.</p>
Bundaberg Law Association	Gooreng Gooreng (Goo-rang Goo-rang) and Gurang people	I would like to acknowledge the (Goo-rang Goo-rang) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.

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<p>Central Queensland Law Association</p>	<p>Woorabinda: Wadja Wadja/Wadjigu people.</p> <p>Rockhampton (Randu/ Wura Nhami): Dharumbal (Da-room-bull) people.</p> <p>Keppel Islands: Woppaburra (Wopp-a-burra) people.</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (_____) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Downs & South Western Law Association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charleville - TOs – Bidjara (Pit-jara) • Cunnamulla: TOs - Kunja (Koun-yah), Guwamu/Kooma (Coo-ma), Kullilli (Cul-lil-lee), Budjiti (Budge-it-ee), Mardigan peoples. • Mitchell (west of Roma) TOs – Gunggari (Goon-gah-ree) • Toowoomba: Giabal (Guy-a-bul), Jarowair (Jar-da-wa) 	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Pit-jara) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p> <p>I would like to acknowledge the (Koun-yah) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p> <p>I would like to acknowledge the (Goon-gah-ree) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p> <p>I would like to acknowledge the (Guy-a-bul) and (Jar-da-wa) peoples, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma/Surat - TOs - Mandandanji (Man-an-dang-ee) 	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Man-an-dang-ee) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Far North Queensland Law Association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cairns Djabugay (<i>Ja-purkai</i>) and Yirrijandji (Irri-kand-ji) and Gimuy Yidinji (Goom-eye Yi-din-ji) • Port Douglas Port Douglas is the northern most part the Yirganydji (Ir-ra-kan-ji) saltwater Djubaki (Ja-pur-kai) people would traverse. It was also a shared area between them and the Kuku-Yalanji (Gugu-yal-an-ji) people. 	<p>I would like to formally acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this reputable part of Queensland that we are all meeting on, the beautiful country where rainforest meets the sea. I am advised that Port Douglas is the northern most part the Yirganydji (Ir-ra-kan-ji) saltwater Djubaki (Jab-a-kai) people would traverse. It was also a shared area between them and the Kuku-Yalanji (Gugu-yal-an-ji) people. I would like to respectfully recognise them as the original Nations from these lands, the keepers of culture and strong traditional practices of law and governance to these areas. We pay our respects to the elders past present and future and ask the Ancestors of this area for safe passage for all of us who are visitors to these lands as we conduct our business over the coming days.</p>
<p>Fraser Coast Law Association</p>	<p>Fraser Island – TOs - Batchulla/Batjala/Badtjala (Batch-u-lla)</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Batch-u-lla) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Gladstone Law Association</p>	<p>Bailai (Bal-ai) and Gurang (Gu-rang) people</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Bal-ai) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>

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<p>Gold Coast Law Association</p>	<p>The Kombumerri (Coom- bim- merry) people; (Yugambeh language group- (You-gum-be))</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Coom-bim-merry) people of the (Yu-gum-be) language group, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Gympie Law Association</p>	<p>Gubbi Gubbi (Ga-bee Ga-bee) people</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Ga-bee Ga-bee) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Ipswich and District Law Association</p>	<p>Yugarabul (You-gu-ru-bul) Yuggera (You-gu-ra) peoples</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (You-gu-ru-bul) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Logan and Scenic Rim Law Association</p>	<p>Yuggera (You-gu-ra), Turrbal (Tour-a-bul), Yugarabul (You-gu-ru-bul), Jagerra (Jar-gera) and Mununjali peoples (Yugambeh language group)</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (_____) peoples, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>Mackay District Law Association</p>	<p>Yuibera/ Yuwibara (You-berra) people</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (You-berra) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>

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<p>Moreton Bay Law Association</p>	<p>Goenpul & Jandawal people</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (_____) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>North Brisbane Law Association</p>	<p>Turrbal (Tour-a-bull) people</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Tour-a-bull) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>North Queensland Law Association</p>	<p>Thursday Island: Kaurareg (Car-ra-reg)</p>	<p>I would like to acknowledge the (Car-ra-reg) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.</p>
<p>North West Law Association</p>	<p>Mt Isa - Kalkadoon (Kalka-doon)</p>	<p>I would like to formally acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this reputable part of Queensland that we are all meeting on, the beautiful country where rainforest meets the sea. I am advised that Port Douglas is the northern most part the Yirganydji (Ir-ra-kan-ji) saltwater Djubaki (Jab-a-kai) people would traverse. It was also a shared area between them and the Kuku-Yalanji (Gugu-yal-an-ji) people. I would like to respectfully recognise them as the original Nations from these lands, the keepers of culture and strong traditional practices of law and governance to these areas. We pay our respects to the elders past present and future and ask the Ancestors of this area for safe passage for all of us who are visitors to these lands as we conduct our business over the coming days.</p>

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South Burnett Law Associations	Wakka Wakka (Wa-ka Wa-ka) people	I would like to acknowledge the (Wa-ka Wa-ka) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
Sunshine Coast Law Association	Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi (Ga-bee Ga-bee) people	I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners, the Kabi Kabi/Gubbi Gubbi (Ga-bee Ga-bee) people of the land on which we live and work. I pay respect to local indigenous Elders past, present and emerging and recognises the strength, resilience and capacity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to advancing human rights within a tolerant and inclusive environment, in which respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is fundamental.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maroochydore: Gubbi Gubbi (Ga-bee Ga-bee) and surrounding nations including the - Nalbo Kabi Dallambara.¹ 	In furtherance of our commitment to Reconciliation, it is important to recognise and acknowledge the Gubbi Gubbi (Ga-bee Ga-bee) First Nations people, the Traditional Custodians of the beautiful coastal lands of which we are meeting here today. I pay my deep respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.
Southern District Law Association	Yuggera (Yu-gu-ra) people	I would like to acknowledge the (Yu-gu-rah) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
Townsville District Law Association	Bindal (Bin-dul) and Wulgurukaba (Wulga-Rooka-Ba)	I would like to acknowledge the (Bin-dul) and (Wulga-rooka-ba) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.

¹ Undumbi, Gubbi Gubbi and the Dulingbara people were collectively referred to as Bungarnuba meaning Saltwater people by neighbouring clans.

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1. Interstate Acknowledgements by region

Geographical Region	First Nation Peoples	Welcome
New South Wales		
Byron Bay	<u>Arakwal</u> People (A-rak-wal)	I would like to acknowledge the Arakwal (A-ra-kwal) People, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.
Coffs Harbour	<u>Gumbaynggirr</u> (Goom-bang-gear)	I would like to acknowledge the Gumbaynggirr (Goom-gang-gear) People, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.
Sydney	<u>Gadigal</u> (Gath-ee-gal) people	<p>The City acknowledges the Gadigal (Gath-ee-gal) of the Eora (E-ora) Nation as the traditional custodians of this place we now call Sydney. Gadigal Country is bounded by Sydney Harbour in the north, from South Head to Petersham to the west.</p> <p>At the City when opening an event, or at the start of a speech, a statement like this can be used: “I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of this land and pay my respects to the Elders both past and present.”</p>
Tweed Heads	<u>Ngandowal</u> (nah-an-dawal) <u>Minjungbal</u> (Min-yun-bul) and Goodjinburra peoples	I would like to acknowledge the (Nah-an-dawal) (Min-yun-bul) and (Good-jin-burra) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.

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Newcastle	Awabakal people	I would like to acknowledge the (_____) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
ACT		
Canberra	Ngunnawal The Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples are the traditional owner groups. The Ngunnawal people are neighboured by the Nyamudy/Namadgi (who lived to the south on the Limestone Plains), Wiradjuri (Were-rad-juri) (to the west) and Gundungurra (to the north) peoples	I would like to acknowledge the (_____) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present. OR I would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners / Custodians of this, their homeland, on which we now live and work. As we Acknowledge country we are reminded to the importance of country for Aboriginal people. Country is the tangible gift from the Creator Spirit which supports and sustains us. Country brings Aboriginal people together to sing, dance and paint their stories of thanks giving to the Creator Spirit for the gift of life and of all living things. We acknowledge the Ancestors and Elders who were and continue to be the storytellers of this land and its people. They help us to know our country and people of the past and our present more clearly. Finally, we are reminded of the journey that began with the Aboriginal people in this land, but that now incorporates the larger family Australia people.

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Tasmania		
Hobart	<u>Muwinina (mou-wee-nee-nar) people</u>	I would like to acknowledge the (Mou-wee-nee-nar) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present. I pay respect to the traditional and original owners of this land the Muwinina (mou wee nee nar) people, - to pay respect to those who have passed before us and to acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community who are the custodians of this land.
Victoria		
Melbourne	<p><u>Kulin (Ku-lin) nation:</u> <i>The Kulin Nation consists of the five language groups who are the traditional owners and lived in the Port Phillip region:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Boonwurrung</u> (Boon-wur-rung) ▪ <u>Dja Dja Wurrung</u> (Jar-Jar-Wur-rung) ▪ <u>Taungurung</u> (Tung-ger-rung) ▪ <u>Wathaurung</u> (Wath-er-rung) <u>Woiwurrung</u> (Woy-wur-rung), commonly known as Wurundjeri (Wur-run-geri). 	I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the country of the Kulin nation, on which we are meeting. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.
Northern Territory		
Darwin	Larrakia (Lar-ra-kia) people	I would like to acknowledge the (Lar-ra-kia) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.

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Uluru	Anangu (A-nung-gu) people	I would like to acknowledge the (A-nung-gu) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
Alice Springs	Arrente (Arunda) people	I would like to acknowledge the (Arunda) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
Western Australia		
Perth	Noongar (Noong-are) people	I would like to acknowledge the (Noong-are) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.
South Australia		
Adelaide	Kaurna people	I would like to acknowledge the (_____) people, Traditional Custodians of this land we are meeting on and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and emerging as they hold the memories, traditions and culture of this land (Country/Nation). I extend my respect to all other First Nations Peoples who may be present.