

Aboriginal Affairs

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# Strategic Plan

2023 - 2027

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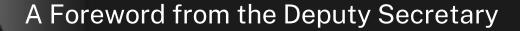
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### Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal Affairs NSW acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal Peoples who are the custodians of Country. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and we acknowledge the leaders of today, those who continue to carry Language, Culture and Truth for their People.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are resilient people. We are survivors. Over many millennia, Aboriginal people have occupied these lands, with deep spiritual connections to Country. As a collectivist culture, we cared for each other, our families and our Country, our land, waters, and natural resources.

This is why we have reset our vision and purpose as set out in this plan. Our vision is that every Aboriginal person and community is thriving and celebrated. Our purpose is to connect, listen, advocate, and enable Aboriginal communities, and to lead accountability and change across government. Put simply, this is about putting the voice of Aboriginal people at the centre of decision-making. Our focus is on truth-telling and healing, supporting self-determination, strengthening Aboriginal culture, and bringing the voice of Aboriginal people within government.

We are at a unique time in history, the opportunity to really stand on the shoulders of our ancestors to influence government and make sustainable change for the better. I believe we will do this through the mechanisms government are committed to establishing over the coming years. We must start with truth telling, allowing the stories of Aboriginal people to be told. We are positioned uniquely in the centre of government in order to do just that.

Our strategic priorities and goals outlined in this plan, demonstrate our commitment to representing community voices, leading reform and most importantly healing. We will work across these priorities in everything that we do and drive government to do the same. We will lead, influence and collaborate to ensure that we incrementally but systematically shift the dial.

#### Shane Hamilton Deputy Secretary Aboriginal Affairs

### About the Artwork



'In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors' Amy Allerton From the beginning of the journey, travelling along the paths that have been forged, we move forwards in the footsteps of our Ancestors and carry the legacy that they fought for. They are forever with us and within us; the past, present and future united in one story, reminding us of our history, grounding us in purpose and driving us towards our vision.

Walking hand in hand, side by side, we partner, collaborate and connect with community, culture and Country. Every step is planted firmly in truth, giving us strength to speak, wisdom to educate and opportunity to heal along every path we tread.

We care for, come from and belong to community. Strengthened by our diversity, we come together to listen to, advocate for and empower each other to lead and create change.

On the journey ahead, travelling along the paths we forge, we move forwards in the footsteps of our Ancestors to see that every person and community is thriving and celebrated.

## Our History

1962: All Indigenous people are given the vote in Commonwealth elections. 1967: Referendum held to count Indigenous Australians in the census – 90.7% of Australians voted YES 1969: Abolishment of the Aborigines Welfare Board (AWB)

1983: Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW) recognises dispossession and displacement. 1982: Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs established in NSW

1975: Racial Discrimination 1972: Tent Embassy established outside old Parliament House. It adopts Harold Thomas designed Aboriginal flag. 1972: White Australia policy abolished. Department of Aboriginal Affairs established in Federal Government.

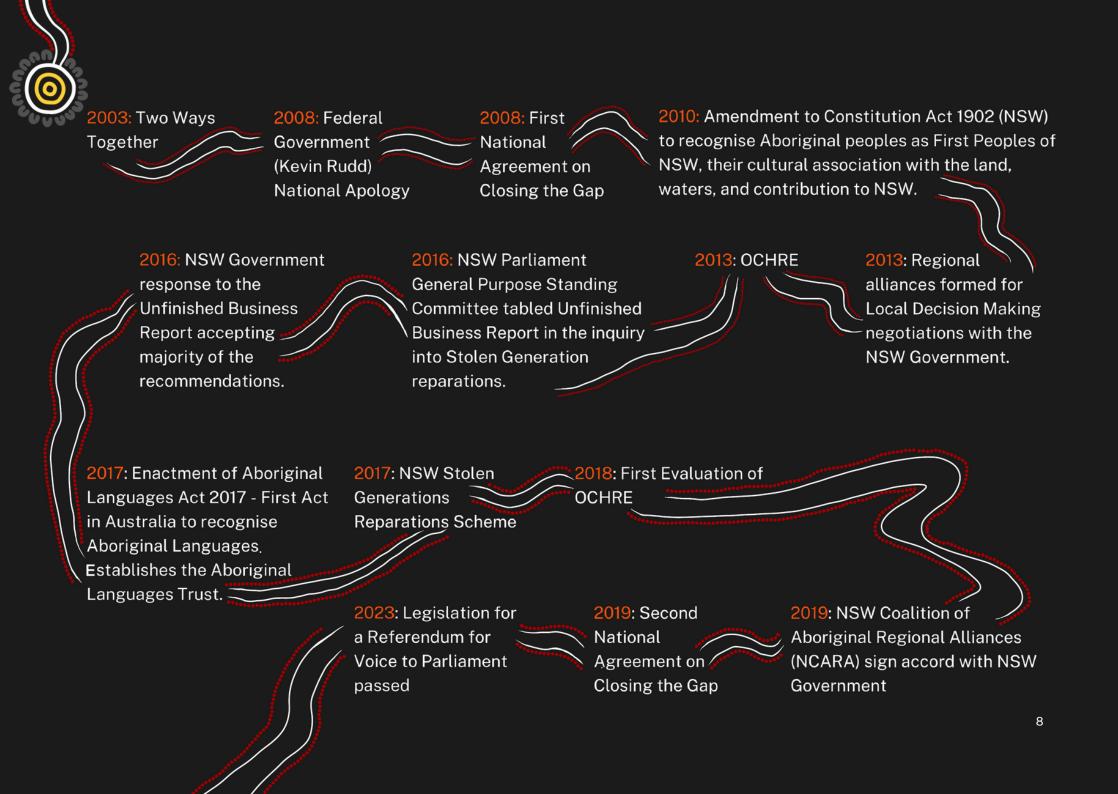
1988: Office of Aboriginal19Affairs created in NSWintInterviewIntInterviewIntInterviewInt

1991: Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody presents report with 339

recommendations

1993: Native Title Act passed in Federal 1995: Department of Aboriginal Affairs

> 1997: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal Children <sup>4</sup> from their Families, Bringing them Home report tabled



The **Aboriginal Affairs NSW Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027** is a plan that is built on strength and is implemented to showcase self-determination. It aims to provide a clear picture of our strategic agenda over the next four years in working toward advancement for Aboriginal people in NSW. We want you to share our commitment and journey, to walk and see our way, through our cultural lens, how we operate and provide a culturally safe place for Aboriginal voices to be heard. It is our role to represent these voices and influence across NSW Government.

Our work is built on the legacy of our ancestors and grounded by telling stories of the oldest living culture known to man. With our voices at the centre of government, we bring the essence of Truth Telling. We continue to build and create whilst acknowledging Aboriginal people as sovereign to this land. We continue to advocate for the cultural space within Government to be able to appropriately reform policies and programs that brings the voice of Aboriginal people in NSW.

We connect to communities and listen intently to their song. We pride ourselves on respecting and reviving culture to provide our staff with a culturally safe space and sense of belonging. We recognise, our creation story is to connect Government and Aboriginal communities in recognition of who we are and reconciliation for our future generations.

Aboriginal Affairs NSW prides itself on being a leader in self-determination, policy reform, truth telling, and black excellence. We are central to the NSW government, and we use our position to continue to advocate for Aboriginal people and communities across NSW. We walk in truth, and we tell the story of the ancestors that left a legacy that will forever live on and stand the test of time.

We are Aboriginal Affairs

### Our Story

# Our Vision

#### Every Aboriginal person and Community is thriving and celebrated.

Our vision statement describes the future state or goal that the agency is working towards achieving. We want Aboriginal people and Communities to thrive and be celebrated by others and this is our guiding light for the work at Aboriginal Affairs. The statement will help guide decision-making and strategic planning, providing direction and focus for the agency's initiatives. By having a shared understanding of the visions, we can work together effectively towards achieving our goals.



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## **Our Purpose**

#### We connect, listen, advocate and enable Aboriginal Communities to lead accountability and change across Government

Our purpose statement is a succinct and inspiring statement that summarises our primary activities, values, and goals while emphasising our contribution to the broader community. Our role is to work in partnership with Community to influence government to ensure accountability of Government and drive positive change.

# Our Values

#### Leadership

At Aboriginal Affairs we all play a role as Leaders **Relationships** At Aboriginal Affairs we start with relationships

#### Community

At Aboriginal Affairs we value Community, Culture and Country Truth Telling

#### At Aboriginal Affairs we honour truth telling

Advocacy

At Aboriginal Affairs we advocate for one another **Strategic Priority One:** 

### Community & Culture

Informed by history, we partner with Aboriginal communities to empower self-determination that meets community needs and aspirations. Strategic Priority Two:

### Government Accountability & Collaboration

We listen to and acknowledge Community so that we can lead Government in truth-telling and influence prioritisation of Government policy and programs to drive change.

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### Strategic Priority Three: Transformation & Influence

From a foundation of evidence, we drive change through transformative policy development and program design to challenge and influence our Government partners.





# **Our Goals**

Empowering the voice of community to; guide research, evaluation and policy; showcase black excellence and expertise; and deliver on Treaty

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Goal 3 -

Healing

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Coordinate across NSW Government, to drive change informed by community, embedding self-determination; while we design and deliver culturally responsive reforms and evaluation.

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Goal 2 -

Reform

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Goal 1 -

Voice

Community

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Lead truth telling to embed healing, as we continue to uphold and celebrate culture

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Aboriginal Affairs

**NSW** GOVERNMENT