Protocol for Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country

Protocol for Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people consider the lands and waters they have traditional affiliation and responsibility for as their ‘country’. Throughout Australia, clan and family groups as well as individuals hold the responsibility to look after or ‘care for country’.

Senior people in the community, who are responsible for their traditional land and waters, are referred to as ‘Traditional Owners’. An ‘Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners’ is an important mark of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and can be given by anyone.

Two versions are provided below for use at Arrow Energy functions such as team and quarterly staff meetings, workshops and conferences. The longer version is primarily for those who are confident in the pronunciation of the Traditional Owner names.

**Short version**

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we gather today and pay my respect to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. I also acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within Arrow and the communities we work with.

**Long versions**

**Brisbane**

In keeping with Arrow’s commitment to reconciliation and respect I acknowledge the Turrbul People as the Traditional Owners of the land where we gather today and recognise that this land has always been under their custodianship. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. I also extend respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.

**Dalby**

In keeping with Arrow’s commitment to reconciliation and respect I acknowledge the Barunggam People as the Traditional Owners of the land where we gather today and recognise that this land has always been under their custodianship. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. I also extend respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.

**Gladstone**

In keeping with Arrow’s commitment to reconciliation and respect I acknowledge the Port Curtis Coral Coast People as the Traditional Owners of the land where we gather today and recognise that this land has always been under their custodianship. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. I also extend respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.

**Moranbah**

In keeping with Arrow’s commitment to reconciliation and respect I acknowledge the Barada Barna People as the Traditional Owners of the land where we gather today and recognise that this land has always been under their custodianship. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to emerging community leaders. I also extend respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.
The Traditional Owners of Arrow’s four key locations are:

- In Brisbane, the Turrbal People (pronounced TUHR-a-bull).
- In Dalby, the Barunggam People (pronounced BUHR-n-gum).

Please note: Arrow’s footprint in the Surat basin covers a number of Traditional Owner groups. We include the Barunggam People as they are the Traditional Owners of the land on which Arrow’s Dalby office stands. If you are outside Dalby, or are unsure who the Traditional Owners are, please use the short version of the acknowledgement.

- Moranbah, the Barada Barna People (pronounced buh-RAH-dah BAH-na).
- In Gladstone, the Port Curtis Coral Coast People comprising four Traditional Owner groups:
  - Gooreng Gooreng (pronounced goor-REN-g goor-REN-g )
  - Gurang (pronounced goo-RANG)
  - Bailai (pronounced BAL-ai)
  - Bunda (pronounced BUN-da).

Protocol for Welcome to Country

A ‘Welcome to Country’ is where the traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custodians (in most cases the Elders) welcome people to their land. Welcomes are used at major, formal functions where official guests and dignitaries are in attendance.

A ‘Welcome to Country’ may consist of a single speech by the representative of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community, or a performance of some description, which will vary according to region and locality. Performances can include a traditional welcoming song, a traditional dance, didgeridoo performance or a combination of these.

It is important to ensure that the appropriate representative is invited to perform the ‘Welcome to Country’. For more information about the Traditional Owners in your area, or to arrange for a Traditional Owner to perform a ‘Welcome to Country’ please contact the Indigenous Relations Team in Community and Sustainable Development at indigenousrelations@arrowenergy.com.au

The Aboriginal flag
Designed by Harold Thomas
The top half of the flag is black to symbolise Aboriginal people. The red in the lower half stands for the earth and the colour of ochre which has ceremonial significance. The circle of yellow in the centre of the flag signifies the sun.

The Torres Strait Islander flag
Designed by Bernard Namok
The green stripes represent the land, the black stripes represent the Torres Strait Islander people, and the blue the sea. The white dhari (headdress) is a symbol of Torres Strait Islanders. The white five pointed star beneath it symbolises peace, the five major island groups and the navigational importance of stars to the seafaring people of the Torres Strait.

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