

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians of Land 2019

Department/Unit: <i>Governance Unit</i>	First implemented: <i>March 2003</i> Review date: <i>30 June 2019</i> Effective From: <i>Immediate</i> Version: <i>4</i> Trim Reference: <i>E513/2</i>	Responsible Officer: <i>Governance and Risk Co-ordinator</i> Authorising Officer: <i>Endorsed by Council 16 April 2019</i>
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PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

It is customary to acknowledge that various Aboriginal communities throughout Australia are the traditional custodians of the land. Such acknowledgement is generally provided in the form of a short statement in recognition of the local Aboriginal community whose ancestors originally inhabited the place upon which an event is occurring.

It is a practice which is now widely adopted as public policy, and is used at official functions and events as a show of respect for the cultural significance of the locality.

The traditional custodians of the Mansfield Shire municipality are the Taungurung people.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Council reflects a consistent acknowledgment of the traditional custodians of land at Council events, functions and significant events.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy acknowledges that the Taungurung people originally inhabited and are the traditional custodians of the lands within Mansfield Shire. The Taungurung territory encompasses the land north of the Great Dividing Range in the watersheds of the Broken, Delatite, Coliban, Goulburn and Campaspe Rivers.

This policy relates to Council functions, events and significant activities. The extent to which this policy may apply will vary depending on the nature of the function or event. The policy is intended to include Council sponsored or funded functions, events or activities.

DEFINITIONS

Traditional Custodians: The indigenous people recognised as the traditional custodians within the Mansfield Shire are the Taungurung people.

Function/Event: Notable occurrence which showcases Mansfield Shire and Mansfield Shire Council, its Councillors, staff and community, including Ordinary meetings of Council, Special meetings of Council, festivals, and official openings and launches.



SCOPE

This policy applies to all Mansfield Shire Council employees and Councillors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All Mansfield Shire Council employees and Councillors are responsible for adhering to and implementing this policy.

Adherence to this Policy will be overseen by managers and supervisors, with any associated procedures implemented by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Governance and Risk Co-ordinator is the owner of this Policy. Any reviews of this Policy must be made in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and Governance Unit.

Acknowledgement of Country

Mansfield Shire Council will acknowledge the Taungurung people as the traditional owners of the land upon which all Council meetings and civic ceremonies/events/functions take place.

The acknowledgment as prescribed in this policy for 'official' Council functions shall be as follows:

'Our [meeting/conference/workshop] is being held on the lands of the Taungurung people and I wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners. I would also like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today.'

This acknowledgement shall be presented by the Mayor, Councillor or other Council officer presiding at the meeting or event.

Welcome to Country

A "Welcome to Country" ceremony is performed by Aboriginal Traditional Owners for people visiting their country. These ceremonies vary from speeches of welcome to traditional dance and smoking ceremonies. It is suggested that a welcome ceremony be arranged for major public forums and functions. Naturally, if the function has broad impact on or significance for Aboriginal people, a welcome ceremony will be appropriate.

A "Welcome to Country" ceremony can only be performed by a representative of the Traditional Owner group, in this case the Taungurung people.

Flag Flying

The flying of the Aboriginal flag is governed by Council's *Flag Flying and Display Policy*.

As part of its commitment to recognising the contributions of indigenous Australians, Council will fly the Aboriginal flag on a permanent basis in accordance with the Australian Government's *Australian Flags Protocol* and Council's *Flag Flying and Display Policy* on all Council flagpoles.



REFERENCES / RELATED POLICIES

- Gadhaba Local Indigenous Network (GLIN)
- Taungurang Clan Corporation (TCC)
- Department of Planning & Community Development Protocols for Recognising Traditional Owners (Aboriginal Affairs Department)
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Australian Flags Protocol
- Mansfield Shire Council Flag Flying and Display Policy 2019

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is effective from 27 March 2019.

REVIEW DATE

This Policy is to be reviewed by 27 March 2023.

AUTHORISATION TO IMPLEMENT POLICY

Signed: 

Councillor

Witnessed: 

Chief Executive Officer

Approval dated: 16 April 2019

Mansfield Shire Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this Policy at any time.