



New South Wales
Aboriginal Land Council

Strategic Plan

2022-2026

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Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council
acknowledges the Traditional Owners
of the land where we work and live.
We pay respect to Elders past, present
and emerging and extend that respect
to all Aboriginal people.



Chair's Foreword

With this Strategic Plan (the Plan), the Council of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) acknowledges our role as the democratically-elected voice to empower the Land Rights Network and all Aboriginal peoples of NSW, by providing strong leadership, support, advocacy and opportunity.

We continue our commitment to build on the Network's achievements and work for economic independence and prosperity for Aboriginal communities.

Our greatest strength lies in every Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) in NSW, that in turn connects us to our members and to all Aboriginal communities across the state.

Many of you marched for Land Rights when the NSWALC was formed at the Black Theatre in Redfern in 1977, or your parents or grandparents joined together to begin a movement. Those Land Rights warriors then strengthened our movement across the second wave of Land Rights, consolidated our places in our communities and continue to inspire us today.

It is our commitment and our duty to honour what they began and to build on our successes as we continue the third wave of Land Rights in NSW.

I know how much expertise, experience and dedication there is in our communities, in every LALC Board, every CEO and every member. We must walk forward with unity of purpose, to continue to leverage our gains and increase the Aboriginal estate, protect our culture and heritage and support our people to realise their life aspirations for themselves and future generations.

Land and water rights are the inheritance we leave our children, our grandchildren and great-grandchildren across our nine regions. This Plan looks to the future with carefully designed strategic priorities and goals that we seek to attain over the life of the Plan and beyond.

There are opportunities everywhere around us, and this Plan continues our agenda of acquiring and activating our land. Diversifying our revenue streams will focus on our key assets of land, people and culture.

We will secure our right to our Country, and our right as self-determining people, to unlock the benefits of both for the betterment of our communities, now and into the future.

Councillor Danny Chapman
Chairperson
NSW Aboriginal Land Council

CEO's Foreword



The NSWALC Strategic Plan 2022-2026 positions NSWALC to continue the progress we have made since 1977.

In 1977 when NSWALC formed, we worked tirelessly to build membership, and campaigned for the passage of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (ALRA) through NSW Parliament. Since then, we have consolidated our founders' decades of effort, through claiming land and building a strong network of Land Councils across NSW.

In 2018 NSWALC began a series of new and ambitious initiatives to deliver outcomes and opportunities to strengthen and secure our three greatest assets: our culture and heritage; the land we've re-acquired; and our people.

This Plan builds on those initiatives and will guide our work over the next four years as we continue our progress. It serves as NSWALC's required Community, Land and Business Plan in accordance with Part 7, Division 5 of the ALRA.

The Plan is informed by five important goals: to protect our culture and heritage; to pursue our full Land Rights and economic independence and prosperity for our peoples; while supporting our people and securing our Land Rights system for the generations who will follow us.

It also identifies the vision and values that guide how the elected Council works in collaboration with LALCs, members, Aboriginal communities and the NSWALC team members.

Our collective size, our experience and commitment to working together for our communities will see us deliver social, economic and cultural outcomes within a framework of good governance and accountability.

Ultimately, this Plan will help us continue to leverage our gains and continue to build a successful future, by creating more economic, business, education, and cultural opportunities for our peoples.

We look forward to continuing the Land Rights journey with you.

Yuseph Deen
Acting CEO
NSW Aboriginal Land Council



The context for this plan

NSWALC is the largest member based Aboriginal organisation in Australia, with a network of 120 LALCs and 23,000 members. Through our membership, NSWALC also serves the needs of 230,000 people in NSW, Australia's largest Aboriginal population.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Rights network is the key vehicle to delivering social, cultural and economic outcomes to Aboriginal communities, and is the framework for achieving self-determination in NSW.

Our vision for Aboriginal Land Rights continues to build on the aims of NSWALC when it was established in 1977 – land acquisition and activation, building on the strengths of our communities, protecting and promoting our culture and heritage, and securing our future.

Over many decades, the Aboriginal Land Rights network has, and continues, to achieve significant outcomes – building on our strong foundations, supporting our people, growing our economic prosperity, including in the regions, and protecting and promoting our culture and heritage.

We have much more to achieve and deliver to support our people to flourish and deliver community, cultural and economic outcomes. The Plan reflects NSWALC's aspirations and our objects - to improve, protect and foster the best interests of Aboriginal peoples in NSW.

ALWAYS WAS. ALWAYS WILL BE.

Who we are and what we will achieve

Our Destination

As the peak Aboriginal representative organisation in NSW, we build on our cultural knowledge, economic independence and we are politically strong to support Aboriginal peoples in NSW to thrive.

Our Purpose

Our actions are for the benefit of our people. We have been elected by our peers to provide leadership and stewardship. Our responsibility is to support our people today, and to strengthen the land rights system for future generations.

Our Values

Culturally-strong – we embrace our living tradition and gain strength from it

Integrity – we act honestly and ethically in line with legislation and our Cultural Lore

Service – we serve our people and community in line with our Strategic Plan

Accountability – we are transparent and act for the betterment of the Aboriginal Land Council network and Aboriginal peoples in NSW

Respect - we acknowledge and value the contribution that the Aboriginal Land Council Network, Aboriginal peoples and partners can make in our shared vision

Collaboration - we are inclusive

Our Goals

The goals we will advance through this Strategic Plan are:



Goal 1: Secure Our Land and Water Rights to Country



Goal 2: Protect and Promote Our Culture and Heritage



Goal 3: Pursue Economic Independence and Prosperity for Our Peoples



Goal 4: Support Our People and Local Aboriginal Land Councils



Goal 5: Secure Our Future

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GOAL 1

Secure Our Land and Water Rights to Country

Why this goal is important

Realising the full social, cultural and economic outcomes of our land and water is critical to a successful Land Rights system. With 250,000ha of land successfully claimed, it is essential we build on our success and unlock and activate the benefits of our land.

What we aim to achieve

We will:

- Pursue the acquisition of land for specific activation and for land banking by the Network through Aboriginal Land Claims, Aboriginal Land Agreement, through partnerships and by other means.
- Advocate and support LALCs to maximise ownership, control and management of National Parks, water, fisheries and other natural resources.
- Maximise compensation for the relinquishment of any rights based on informed consent.
- Maximise social, cultural, and economic outcomes.

ALWAYS WAS. ALWAYS WILL BE.



GOAL 2



Protect and Promote our Culture and Heritage

Why this goal is important

Aboriginal Culture and Heritage is vital for us to thrive as distinct and self-determining people. Our cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and practices must be respected, protected and revitalised for future generations.

What we aim to achieve

We will:

- Advocate for better protections for Aboriginal culture and heritage.
- Support LALCs and Aboriginal communities to promote and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage.



GOAL 3

Pursue Economic Independence and Prosperity for Our People

Why this goal is important

Pursuing diverse business opportunities, economic independence and prosperity within our Network and communities is essential to us as distinct and self-determining people.

What we will aim to achieve

We will pursue the:

- Diversification of our business activities and revenue streams to provide greater prosperity to our future generations, focusing on our key assets: our land, our people and our culture.
- Activation of land, securing the highest and best use returns and ongoing revenue streams for LALCs.
- Pursue new and culturally appropriate social and affordable housing stock; improved existing stock; and support reforms for a more sustainable sector, through our advocacy and support.
- Support Aboriginal employment and LALC and other Aboriginal businesses.



GOAL 4

Support Our People and Local Aboriginal Land Councils

Why this goal is important

Social wellbeing is integral to Aboriginal Land Rights. Connection to initiatives that support cultural, family and community programs, nurture and strengthen the social wellbeing of our people.

What we aim to achieve

We will:

- Advocate for the rights of our people, through the participation and support of community sector coalitions and partnerships and other sector-wide reform and delivery processes.
- Provide support for LALCs to effectively deliver community development outcomes.
- Develop a compliance and regulatory framework which actively recognises and responds to performance.
- Build the capacity of our members and the broader Aboriginal communities of NSW.
- Provide support for our people in need.



GOAL 5

Secure Our Future

Why this goal is important

We are stewards of an Aboriginal Land Rights system built by the Land Rights warriors and are responsible for supporting and strengthening that system for future generations.

What we will aim to achieve

We will:

- Continue to grow and exercise responsible stewardship of the Statutory Account.
- Continue to advocate for the re-instatement of the compensatory mechanism to support and grow the NSW Aboriginal Land Council Account.
- Work to achieve a Treaty or Treaties for Aboriginal people.
- Continue to engage our youth and membership.
- Continue to support and foster a culture and system of good governance and improvement.

ALWAYS WAS. ALWAYS WILL BE.

How this plan works

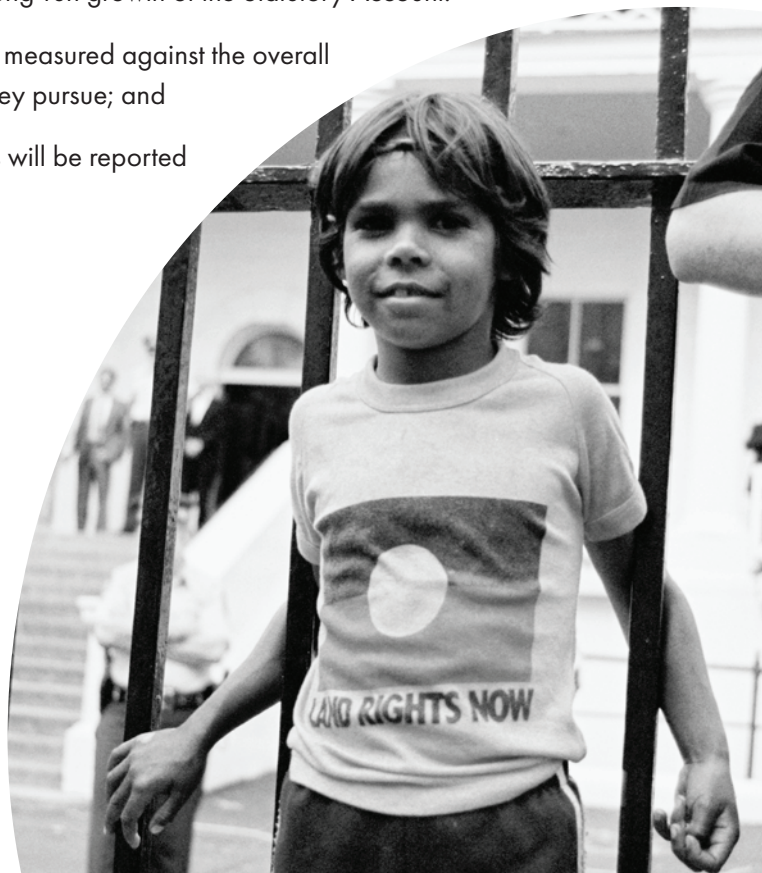
This Strategic Plan sets NSWALC's direction and priorities for the next four years.

The Plan details the high-level goals that NSWALC is working to achieve. It will sit alongside a planning and budgetary framework the Council has adopted that will:

- Regularly identify the best actions to achieve the Plan;
- Drive its ability to do more with what it has gained to ensure a strong and secure future; and
- Enhance its accountability and responsiveness to Aboriginal peoples.

Key features of the planning framework are:

- Annual Supplements to set out actions to be undertaken to advance the Plan. These Supplements will form part of NSWALC's Community Land and Business Plan and will be directly linked to the NSWALC budget;
- Preparation of Annual Supplements will incorporate consultation with members and broader Aboriginal communities on what they see as important priorities for the coming year;
- Actions will be prioritised for inclusion within an annual supplement by the Council taking into account how they:
 - Maximise achievement of the Plan's aims and objectives; and
 - Ensure that, at a minimum, they do not deplete the long-run growth of the Statutory Account.
- All actions will have indicators that show how success is measured against the overall aims of the relevant goals and specific objectives that they pursue; and
- The achievements against Annual Supplement strategies will be reported on annually.



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