

Welcome to Country Video Clip

PROTOCOL

A Welcome to Country is a protocol where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners welcome others to the land of their ancestors.

The Welcome to Country ceremony is carried out at significant events, formal functions and meetings. This practice shows respect for the Traditional Owners and Elders of the Country on which the event, formal function or meeting is taking place.

Engaging an Elder to conduct a Welcome to Country is a way of recognising and paying respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as well as acknowledging their ongoing connection to Country.

An Elder will be engaged to perform a formal Welcome to Country whenever possible at events and formal functions held throughout the Gannawarra Shire.

Each Elder's Welcome to Country is unique as it reflects the experiences and beliefs of the attending Elder. A Welcome to Country should occur at the opening of an event or formal function, preferably the first item.

Where an Elder is not available to conduct a Welcome to Country to open an event or formal function, the Gannawarra Welcome to Country Video Clip will be used.

The video clip will also be used in the following ways:

- At monthly Gannawarra Shire Council, Council meetings and other significant meetings.
- By partner organisations at formal events, functions and meetings where a local Elder is unable to attend. The partner organisations are Mallee District Aboriginal Service, Northern District Community Health and the Kerang Elders Group.
- On the Gannawarra Shire Council's website and the websites of partners involved in the development of the video clip, namely Mallee District Aboriginal Service, Northern District Community Health and the Kerang Elders Group.
- At educational sessions within Gannawarra schools and communities.
- At Cultural Awareness Training sessions.
- To open Kerang Elders Group meetings.
- For other purposes that the Kerang Elders authorise.

PROTOCOL REVIEW

Council will review this Protocol as required but always within two years after a general election of the Council.

The wording of this Protocol was developed with permission of the Kerang Elders Group and the same wording will be adopted by Mallee District Aboriginal Service and Northern District Community Health.

At the time of development, this Protocol was compliant with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council's Kerang and Cohuna office or online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries in relation to this Protocol should be directed to the Director Community Wellbeing on (03) 5450 9333.

