



**Two Ways Together
Regional Action Plan**

Hunter Region

July 2007 – June 2009



26 June, 2007

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1 Purpose of the Plan

This Regional Action Plan focuses on actions to improve the well being of Aboriginal people and which are cross-agency (i.e. require the participation of more than one agency) or are genuinely new.

The Plan has been developed by the *Two Ways Together* Regional Engagement Group (TWTREG), chaired by the Regional Manager of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, based on a workshop held in late February, 2007. The Plan is a joint agreement between the key parties in the region.

The Plan identifies:

- a small number of significant goals for the region over a rolling two-year cycle, commencing 1 July, 2007 (to be reviewed and updated annually);
- the lead agency to lead the work against each goal, in collaboration with other agencies and local Aboriginal peak bodies;
- priority actions and responsible agencies to achieve the goals within the timeframe of the plan;
- the barriers to success where interagency projects or existing initiatives are not progressing as intended against the goals in the plan
- the need for new resources where there are gaps in service delivery; and
- monitoring and reporting processes to track the implementation of the priority actions and track performance against the goals. Monitoring and reporting arrangements are included in Section 7.

2 Goals

The Regional Engagement Group has identified five goals for the next two years (July 2007 to June 2009):

- Aboriginal children are ready for school
- Improved prevention and access to early treatment of high impact diseases
- Aboriginal people are employed in sustainable jobs
- Better housing
- Aboriginal people have a stronger identity and culture

The initial planning workshop in February, 2007 only explored the scope of the goal around Aboriginal children being ready for school, and did not cover the other four. These goals were further developed in consultation with key agencies and a further teleconference of the REG.

There are two targets specifically for Aboriginal people in the NSW State Plan which must be addressed in this Regional Plan:

- *Close the gap between Aboriginal and all students in primary school numeracy and literacy rates by 2016*
- *Over 5 years, reduce by 15 per cent hospital admissions for Aboriginal people who have conditions that can be appropriately treated in the home*

These two targets are largely within the core business of the Department of Education and Training

and the Greater Southern Area Health Service respectively. The Regional Engagement Group will be a forum for monitoring and reporting progress against these two goals and will develop any supplementary programs to support the core business activities of DET and the Area Health Service as required. Table 1 shows which goals in this Regional Action Plan link to the State Plan targets.

Table 1 – Link between the State Plan targets and the Regional Plan goals

State Plan targets	Relevant goals in this Plan	Comment
Close the gap between Aboriginal and all students in primary school numeracy and literacy rates by 2016	Close the gap in literacy and numeracy	The Regional Engagement Group identified getting Aboriginal children prepared for school as: an important precondition for making a difference to reading, writing and numeracy skills; a current weakness in the service system; and an area where a joint response across a number of agencies is required
Over 5 years, reduce by 15 per cent hospital admissions for Aboriginal people who have conditions that can be appropriately treated in the home	Reduced hospital admissions and incidence of major diseases	The planning workshop did not deal with the issue of the role of the REG in supporting programs for Aboriginal health. The Actions identified in this plan have been scoped in further consultation with key agencies and stakeholders.

3 Context

The Hunter region extends from Lake Macquarie at its southern boundary as far north as the Manning River and inland to the upper reaches of the Hunter Valley. The region covers eleven Local Government Areas: Cessnock; Dungog; Gloucester; Great Lakes; Lake Macquarie; Maitland; Muswellbrook; Newcastle; Port Stephens; Singleton; and Upper Hunter.

There are 11,605 Aboriginal people in the Hunter (2001 Census) who represent 2.2% of the total population of the region. The DAA office for the region is in Coffs Harbour, which also services the North Coast of NSW.

4 Community engagement in the Hunter

Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) facilitated a meeting in Newcastle on 29 November 2005 with Aboriginal Community organisations within the Hunter valley region, to commence regional implementation of TWT, and identify a criterion for the regions 'partnership community'.

Informal meetings were conducted throughout the Hunter region in April 2006 in major centres with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal community groups including Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council in Muswellbrook, Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation at Singleton, Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council within Maitland/ Greenhills region and representative from Karuah, Nelson Bay and Forster.

Members of the TWT Hunter REG including the Hunter Regional Co-ordinator, Ben Chard and the Indigenous Coordination Centre Regional Manager, Sharon Monahan, met on the 20th December 2005 to ratify the TWT Hunter REG terms of reference and the identification of three partnership

communities. The three communities selected are; Lake Macquarie, Gloucester & Purfleet-Taree thereby including representation of rural, urban and isolated communities within the region.

It is anticipated that each Partnership Community will progress towards the development of a Community Working Party as a key partner representing all of the community. Each CWP will be required to develop a community action plan for the priorities which were highlighted through the community Engagement Day.

Formal community engagement days were held in the 'Partnership' communities with attendance by 51 State and Federal government services providers in Taree-Purfleet on the 17th July 2006, Gloucester on the 18th July 2006 and Lake Macquarie on the 14 November 2006.

TWT Hunter REG also met in Newcastle on the 24th May 2006 and in Forster on the 31st October 2006, in Toronto on the 17th April 2007 and via teleconference 2 May 2007.

5 Actions to achieve the goals

Goal 1: Close the gap in literacy in numeracy Population: School aged children	
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and % of Aboriginal children receiving structured early learning • Literacy and numeracy rates
Baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Regional Data Currently Available On Preschool Attendance – Plan To Consolidate Existing Data (Health, Docs Data) • Literacy – 17.8% Of Aboriginal Students Were In The Two Highest Bands, Compared To 39.8% Of All Students In The Region(2003 Data) • Numeracy – 25.9% Of Aboriginal Students Were In The Two Highest Bands, Compared To 46.2% Of All Students In The Region (2003 Data)
Background to the baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited availability of places in pre-schools and child care centres • Not currently funded – direct cost to families (although DET is providing some free pre-schools) • Limited connections between Aboriginal communities and existing pre-schools, supported playgroups or mobile pre-schools • Early childhood development is an important contributor to overall development
Lead	NSW Department of Education and Training
Potential partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AECG • NSW Dept of Education & Training – provides some pre-schools; better management of transitions from pre-schools to school • Department of Community Services • DEST – funding for pre-school places and other supports • FaCSIA – funded programs • TAFE – training for Aboriginal child care workers • Pre-school/day care centre managers/auspices (e.g. Anglicare; Centacare; community groups) • NSW Sport and Recreation- links to sport and fitness industry programs & early intervention programs
Possible Actions	<p><i>Improve access to pre-school and related activities</i></p> <p>The Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy is targeting increasing access to pre-school and early learning activities. ACYFS to report to the REG and explore options for closer collaboration (e.g. through SRAs for particular programs).</p> <p>DoCS Communities Division and DoCS Operations are working with the DET - Biraban PS at Toronto - to develop a Preschool on site that will pilot the ACYFS Aboriginal Pre-School Project</p> <p>Budget: Through the ACYFS Steering Group's application to ICC that has funded 5 traineeships in the Children's Services for Aboriginal trainees.</p> <p>Measures: Report to next meeting of the REG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of programs # of centres where programs are available

2. Develop a proposal for an Aboriginal pre-school

Working Group to scope options for an Aboriginal pre-school in Awaba. Pre-school will serve multiple needs: provide pre-school places; be a focal point for the community; provide employment for trained staff, and an employment pathway for trainees. DoCS and Koombahtoo to lead; supported by the Local Aboriginal Land Council; DET; FaCSIA; ICC; DAA; Centrelink

Budget: None – budget to be identified in the scoping process

Measures: Proposal developed – 2007

Bids for funding submitted – 2008

3. Explore options to support Aboriginal Education Workers

33 positions for Aboriginal workers in schools are currently funded through CDEP and this funding will stop at the end of June 2007. REG to explore options to continue funding for these positions (DET to lead)

Budget: None initially – budget to be identified in the scoping process

Measures: Proposal developed – 2007

4. Developing more effective and culturally appropriate transition to school processes

Budget: The Families First Strategy has just allocated \$20,000 toward again undertaking a transition program and providing starting school packs "Big Stuff for little school" - previously funded through the Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy.

The Families First Strategy has also allocated \$8,000 toward the refurbishment of early learning areas at Biraban PS into a culturally appropriate area for Aboriginal children and families.

5. Further scope other options

The workshop identified a range of other possible areas of activity for further development relating to the State Plan goal, including:

- Encouraging more children into more formal prior to school settings
- More effective transition to school processes
- Ways to increase the participation of Elders in activities e.g. 'story telling'
- Schools in Partnership program – roll out across the region; may need support from other agencies and will need links to the community – DET to lead; partners - DAA; TAFE; Centrelink; AECG; DoCS; Community Transport (Ministry of Transport)
- Reconciliation programs for children (in care centres or playgroups)

Budget: None initially – budget to be identified in the scoping process

Measures: Proposal developed – 2007

Data development – Extract ABS regional data on attendance at pre-schools or supported playgroups

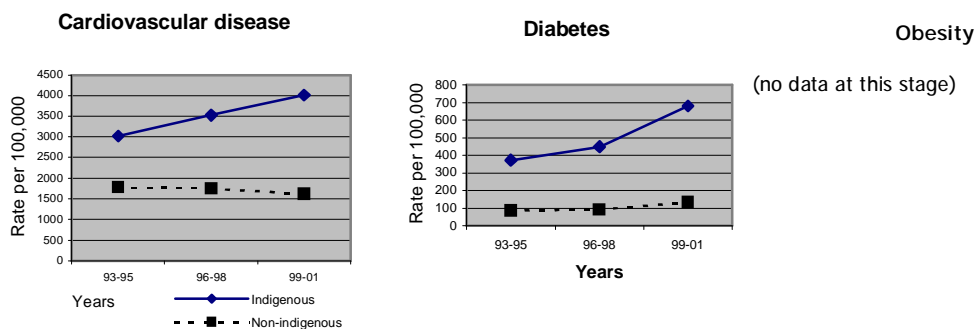
Links DoCS Early Intervention Strategy (Brighter Futures); Families First Strategy; Aboriginal Education Strategy; Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy

Goal 2: Reduced hospital admissions and incidence of major diseases

Population: Aboriginal people at risk

Indicators – Rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity

Baselines



Background to the baselines

- Lifestyle factors are impacting on individual health – inadequate diet and exercise are generating population level results, expressed as higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and kidney disease
- High rates of smoking in the Aboriginal population compared to the non-Aboriginal population
- Access to health service providers is variable in the region – some communities are not well connected to health services; access to mainstream health services in urban areas is reportedly mixed

Lead

Hunter-New England AHS

Potential partners and roles

- ICC – link to Australian Government agencies
- AH&MRC – link to communities in the region on health issues
- Australian Department of Health & Ageing
- Department of Sport & Recreation
- AMS – medical services – promotion of prevention activities
- Division of GPs – promotion of prevention activities

REG Chair to also approach Home Care (NSW Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care) in relation to support for prevention programs

Possible actions

1. Scope health priorities in more detail

- A key action for the REG at its next meeting will be to review the opportunities for interagency work in delivering health services. Two actions are included here (Actions 2 and 3 below) based on initial conversations with Hunter-New England Area Health Service.
- HNE participating in development of more responsive and integrated service networks, the strategy will build on the Families First approach, bringing together key stakeholders and key policies and initiatives for planning and service development purposes

Budget: None initially

Measures: REG Actions on health agreed and added to this Plan, including outcome measures

2. Promote and encourage Aboriginal people to access local Aboriginal Medical Services or other bulk billing medical services

- AECPC for health personnel working with Aboriginal people to increase cultural awareness and they become culturally competent.
- Provide Aboriginal people with services specific to their unique health needs.
- Provide accessibility to appropriate community based health services.

Budget: None

Measures: Report to next meeting of the REG

of programs

of centres where programs are available

3. Accessing primary health care funding

REG to explore opportunities for improving access to mainstream services (Area Health Service, Dept of Health and Ageing, AMS and AH&MRC to collaborate)

Budget: None initially

Measures: REG Actions on health agreed and added to this Plan, including outcome measures

4. Improve identification and referral processes

There is scope to improve the early identification of Aboriginal people who would benefit from support and assistance from a range of health programs (mental health, maternal health, drug & alcohol support, diet and exercise programs). The 'first to know' agencies may not be health services (e.g. schools may be an important contact point for maternal health programs). The REG will identify priority programs and referral points and work on processes for each program to develop relationships with the key referral points.

- Provision of prevention, early intervention, assessment, treatment, health maintenance and continuing care services to maintain the health of Aboriginal people
- Finalisation of Cultural Respect training program for implementation
- Implementation of the Collecting Patient Registration Information training program

Budget: None initially

Measures: # of programs where early intervention referral points are identified

Pattern of referrals to key programs

and pattern of agencies involved

5. Monitor progress of otitis media screening

- The REG has a role to oversight the progress on achieving the goal for screening and treatment of otitis media for young children. Hunter New-England AHS and DET have a working group managing the otitis media screening and will provide regular reports to the REG.
- Encouragement of screening by the general health services, not just Aboriginal Health
- Establishment of Area Otitis Media Steering Committee with external stakeholders i.e. schools, DET
- Raising importance of the screening process with DET and School Principals

Budget: None

Measures: # and % of Aboriginal children who are screened each year

6. *Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health strategy*

- First antenatal visit - before 20 weeks gestation (%)
- Working with local transport providers to work in a coordinated approach to transport to assist women
- Developing partnerships with AMS, Dept Education, and TAFE to provide community programs targeting adolescent girls. (Teenage pregnancy)
- Completion of interactive Aboriginal resources, including DVD (focus antenatal care, A&D issues, nutrition & gestational diabetes)
- Develop and distribute culturally specific parenting resource booklet – “Growing up strong jarjums” developed through the ACYFS (funded by Communities Division Central Office) targeting Aboriginal parents with children 0-5

Data development

- Significant lag in population level data (current to 2001 only) – needs updating
- Data is for the area of the former ATSIC Many Rivers region, which covered the Central Coast, Hunter and North Coast. Data needs to be broken down to this region.

Links

Regional Aboriginal Health Strategy; AMS service agreement; Families First; Healthy for Life; Stronger Families & Communities

Goal 3: Aboriginal people are employed in sustainable jobs

Population: Working age Aboriginal People

Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment rates for Aboriginal people compared to non-Indigenous people • Number of new jobs for Aboriginal people • Number and percentage of people staying in jobs • Number of Aboriginal people completing post school education and training at Certificate 111 and above
Baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unemployment rate: Aboriginal people – 14.3% compared to 7.6% for non-Aboriginal people (2001) (Note: unemployment rate for Aboriginal people in the Hunter was much lower than the statewide rate of 23.1%) • Follow up with DEWR for time series data
Background to the baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of performance at school is a barrier to further education or training • Self esteem – individuals have a limited view of their own capacity or low expectations of their ability to learn how to do a range of jobs • Several generations in some families have not worked, leading to low expectations and limited understanding of how to work
Lead	<p>NSW Dept of Education & Training TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute (on pathways from school)</p> <p>DAA (on employment)</p>
Potential partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEWR (Job Network system) – links to employers; case management for individuals • Centrelink • Department of State and Regional Development • Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC). • DET through the implementation of the Hunter/Central Coast Regional School and TAFE Aboriginal Education and Training Action Plan • TAFE – bridges from school to vocational education and training, career counselling and job brokerage services • AECG – link to community on education issues • Premier’s Department – assist in negotiation of job compacts <p>REG Chair to also approach these organisations to explore their potential involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Commerce • Department of Planning • Department of Water & Energy • Department of Local Government • Shire Councils • Job Network members – support and case management for individuals • Chambers of Commerce • Relevant community organisations
Possible Actions	<p>1. <i>Identify employment opportunities in key industries</i></p> <p>REG to explore options in two key industries – (Natural Resource Management, Retail, Construction and Mining).</p> <p>Options include Aboriginal employment as part of government construction contracts and employment in new mines (DAA to lead; Premiers, DEWR, including Job Network Providers)</p> <p>Budget: None in addition to resources already committed to the program</p> <p>Measures: # of people placed in jobs # of workplaces signed up to take on new employees</p>

2. Develop an Aboriginal Employment Strategy

RCMG is developing an Aboriginal Employment Strategy, drawing on experience of the model from the North Coast. (DAA to lead with Premiers, TAFE, ICC, DEWR)

Budget: None initially – scoping may identify options for funding

Measures: Strategy approved by REG – September 2007, including forward actions

3. Scope options

REG to review issues around employment and scope further options

Budget: None initially

Measures: Actions scoped and added to this Plan by June 2007

4. Links with private sector and job network agencies

- ANZ Bank model – Agencies to develop strategies/actions to support this initiative
- Participation in industry forums/business networks
- Target industries – manufacturing, hospitality, banking

Budget: To be scoped

Measures: Report to REG

Data
development

Develop five year trends in employment for the region (DEWR) – significant lag in available data

Track the number of new jobs that result from actions in the strategy

Investigate how to monitor retention beyond 26wk employment outcome (DAA, ICC, DEWR)

Links

Regional Development Strategies (Local Councils)

Goal 4: Better housing
Population: All Aboriginal people

Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # & % of Aboriginal people in housing stress • Average duration of tenancies for Aboriginal people • Accessibility to Housing; • Rates of indigenous home ownership
Baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38% of Aboriginal households owned or were purchasing their homes, compared to 72% of non-Aboriginal households (2001) • REG to seek more detailed Housing data from AHO
Background to the baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported overcrowding • Limited accessibility to the private rental market • Housing located in areas that may not be suitable – too far from services or programs • Housing is a critical support for other outcomes (e.g. inadequate housing may lead to impacts on health) • Lack of crisis accommodation
Lead	Department of Housing, including Office of Community Housing
Potential partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICC – link to Australian Government agencies • AHO Regional Advisory Committee • FaCSIA – funded programs • DAA – funded programs • Indigenous Business Australia <p>REG Chair to also approach Aboriginal Housing Office, the Department of Fair Trading and community housing providers to explore their capacity and willingness to contribute to this goal.</p>
Possible Actions	<p><i>1. Scope options</i> REG to explore the detail of housing need in the region, causes and possible solutions. AHO to provide a baseline report to initiate discussion. Budget: None initially Measures: Actions developed by REG and added to this Plan</p> <p><i>2. Establish a coordinated approach for services</i> AHO, DOH and OCH participate in cross agency discussion about new initiatives that will affect Aboriginal people's access to appropriate, affordable and secure housing in locations that they want to live. Budget: Maximise to use the limited dollars in the social housing sector Measures: Report to REG</p> <p><i>3. Develop options to support/sustain tenancies and maintain ownership.</i> Budget: None initially Measures: Report to REG</p> <p><i>4. Scope options addressing access to private rental market</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understand barriers to access and develop strategies to improve access; • Work to ensure DoH access products (Rentstart by Phone, Tenancy Guarantees, Tenancy Facilitation and Private Rental Brokerage) meet the needs of Aboriginal people; <p>Budget: None initially; Measures: Report to REG</p>

5. Accessing social housing

- Examine barriers and explore opportunities to improve access to social housing

Budget: None initially

Measures: Report to REG

Data development — Consult with AHO/Dept of Housing on data

Links Commonwealth State Housing Agreement

Goal 5: The recognition of Aboriginal diversity, identity and culture is valued and promoted.

Population: All people.

Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebration of Aboriginal Culture• Feedback from community based working groups or other community bodies• To be developed by REG
Baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not currently collated.• Hunter Aboriginal representatives state that the lack of acknowledgement underpins all social indicators of their communities which are related to culture as the centre.
Background to the baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSW Government Agencies are committed to providing culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal people – however there is a community perception that Government services are not yet culturally appropriate• Government agencies can be perceived as being unfriendly or unwelcoming of Aboriginal people• Positive experiences with mainstream services will increase access to these services by Aboriginal people• Access to services for Aboriginal people is complicated by geographic isolation, transport disadvantage and an historical mistrust of government services.• Racism within Schools• Racism amongst small local business• Aboriginal Access [Marine Park]; Cultural right as for Aboriginal fishing• Criminal support systems upon entry into prison and post;• Input of Elders & LALC for youth mentoring• Cultural awareness training for Police and Educators
Lead	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
Potential partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Aboriginal Peak Bodies including; Aboriginal Education Consultative Group NSW, Regional Aboriginal Housing Committee of the Aboriginal Housing Office, NSW Aboriginal Land Council, NSW Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee.• ICC - Link to the Australian Government agencies• Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC). <p>REG Chair to also approach the Local Government Network in the region, relevant Catchment Management Authorities and any other RCMG agencies not already involved in this plan to explore their willingness and capacity to contribute to this goal.</p>
Possible Actions	<p><i>1. Development and Implementation of the Cultural Respect Framework</i></p> <p>The aim of the framework is to provide guidance to agencies to ensure that over time all workers in RCMG agencies have the skills and knowledge to work effectively with Aboriginal people. The ICC may be able to complement this work in NSW Govt agencies by sharing the Framework with Federal Government Agencies involved in service delivery in the Hunter Region. REG may play a role in monitoring the implementation of the framework, identifying any roadblocks, and suggesting appropriate solutions.</p> <p>Budget: This initiative is intended to be cost neutral to agencies</p> <p>Hunter New England Health (on behalf of the Families First Agency partners) holds \$30,000 of the FF funding that has been set aside for the development and delivery of Cultural Awareness Training to the funded services (NGO) sector. A working group will be formed to agree on the training package and process. This Project could contribute</p>

to the overall cultural awareness training for the Government agencies and the services they fund

Measures: Number of State and Federal Government agencies that use the framework.

2. Implementation of the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) cultural competence course called the Aboriginal Cultural Education Program.

- DECC commenced the role-out of an Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training program in March 2007 for all DECC staff. The program is being delivered in conjunction with the Indigenous Unit of TAFE colleges and local Aboriginal communities. The program is being run in the Hunter and state wide the program extends into the 2007/08 financial year.
- DECC supports, through a Memorandum of Understanding, the work of the Regional Aboriginal Co-management Committee. This committee provides a mechanism for joint management and protection of Culture.
- Cabinet approval for the Lower Hunter Conservation Strategy includes financial support for the Keepa Keepa Aboriginal Cultural Centre when this land, within the Heaton State Forest, is transferred to DECC (National Park) Estate. The transfer is expected to occur in 2008/09.

Explore other options for the region

3. TAFE NSW contributes to the development and dissemination of anti-racism education information and resources

4. All NSW Government employees have received basic Cultural Respect training by 2010.

5. Implementation of networking and support to Aboriginal employees, and all employees working with Aboriginal communities.

6 Development of strategies to improve the reach of services and programs.

7. Development and implementation of Hunter Aboriginal employment strategy.

8. Implementation the Rekindling the Spirit program which provides a range of services for Aboriginal families.

9. Services to quantify responsiveness of reviews such as the Aboriginal Education Policy and future Aboriginal Health Review and the Aboriginal Housing Review

Budget: To be scoped

Measures: Report to REG

Data development – REG to explore options for collecting data & funding
– Agencies to provide implementation reports to the Hunter REG

Links *NSW State Plan 2007*
Department of Education and Training TAFE Aboriginal Education and Training Plan and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Plan 2006 -2008
Overarching agreement on Aboriginal Affairs between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of New South Wales;
All Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies

6 Monitoring and Reporting

- The Regional Engagement Group (REG) Chair will maintain ongoing contact with the project manager in each lead agency to informally monitor progress and provide support
- The lead agency will provide informal progress reports to the quarterly meetings of the REG
- The lead agency will provide formal progress reports to the REG each six months (30 June and 15 December), which will form part of the overall progress report to DAA Secretariat
- The REG Chair will provide an overall formal progress report to the Regional Coordination Management Group and the DAA Secretariat each six months (mid July and mid January).

7 The Regional Engagement Group and its role

The Regional Engagement Group (REG) is co-chaired by the Regional Manager of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and a community representative, and comprises:

- Manager of the Australian Government Indigenous Coordination Centre
- NSW Premier's Department Regional Coordinator
- Chair of the Hunter Regional Coordination Management Group (RCMG)
- Chair of the RCMG Human Services subcommittee
- Chair of the RCMG Environment/Natural Resources/Infrastructure subcommittee
- NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- NSW Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
- NSW Aboriginal Land Council
- Regional Aboriginal Housing Committee of the Aboriginal Housing Office.

Other representatives will participate in the REG according to the priorities in the Regional Plan, e.g. Department of Education and Training (literacy and numeracy) and the Area Health Services (reducing preventable hospital admissions) are currently participating in the REG

The role of the Regional Engagement Group is to:

- improve government service provision across the region through the development of Regional Action Plans
- oversight Partnership Community work in the region, including the provision of advice on the location of Partnership Communities and oversight of the development and implementation of Partnership Community Action Plans
- respond to priorities identified by the CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs
- provide advice on regional service delivery and policy issues to the CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs
- consolidate six monthly reports from NSW and Australian Government agencies and report to the TWTCC and CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs.

The REG may also act as an 'expert adviser' to the Regional Coordination Management Group in scoping culturally appropriate approaches to consulting with Aboriginal communities in the region.

8 Contacts

Agency/address	Contact Person
NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs	Gary Oliver Regional Manager Gary.oliver@daa.nsw.gov.au 02 6648 5805
Indigenous Coordination Centre	Kerry Johnston Regional Manager Kerry.Johnston@icc.gov.au 02 6648 5800
Goal 1: Close the gap in literacy in numeracy	
Goal 3: Aboriginal people are employed in sustainable jobs	
Department of Education and Training	John Mather Regional Director John.mather@det.nsw.edu.au 02 4924 9940 Karen Jones School Education Director Karen.jones@det.nsw.edu.au 02 4931 3500
GOAL 2: Reduced Hospital admissions and incidence of major diseases	
Hunter-New England Area Health Service	Kim Browne Director, Population Health Kim.brown@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au Tony Martin tony.martin@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au 02 6592 9630
Goal 4: Better Housing	
Department of Housing	Geoff Mascord Acting Chair HS ROG T203@housing.nsw.gov.au 02 4985 1777
Goal 5: The recognition of Aboriginal diversity, identity and culture is identified	
Department of Aboriginal Affairs	