

# *Two Ways Together*

New South Wales Aboriginal Affairs Plan (2003–2012)





## What is *Two Ways Together*?

*Two Ways Together* is the NSW Government's ten-year plan to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities.

Through *Two Ways Together*, Aboriginal communities and NSW Government agencies have been focusing on improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in:

- health
- housing
- education
- culture and heritage
- justice
- economic development
- families and young people.

These are known as the seven priority areas and were identified by Aboriginal people as the areas most important to their lives and future wellbeing.

*Two Ways Together* recognises that Aboriginal people have inherent rights as the first peoples of Australia.

These inherent rights include the rights of Aboriginal people to determine their social, economic and political futures, and the right to maintain their culture, language and identity.

As a ten-year plan, *Two Ways Together* offers a dedicated and long-term commitment to Aboriginal people.

*Two Ways Together* requires government agencies to work together with Aboriginal people to ensure that services required by Aboriginal people are accessible, culturally appropriate and deliver results.

## *Two Ways Together* Vision

Aboriginal people, the NSW Government and the Australian government work in partnership and are jointly responsible for planning and delivering solutions that meet community needs.

## Objectives

The overall objectives of *Two Ways Together* are to:

- develop sustainable partnerships between Aboriginal people and government; and
- improve the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal people in NSW.

To achieve this we are:

- enhancing the skills and ability of government agencies to work with Aboriginal people;
- developing the skills and ability of Aboriginal people to work with governments; and
- supporting and affirming the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people.

## Why do we need an Aboriginal affairs plan in NSW?

Key social and economic indicators show Aboriginal people are still at a major disadvantage compared to non-Aboriginal people:

- Life expectancy is about 20 years less
- The rate of infant mortality is 1.8 times higher
- Aboriginal unemployment is more than three times higher than the general unemployment rate
- Aboriginal women are six times more likely to be victims of domestic violence
- Aboriginal people still lack access to traditional lands, waters and natural resources to maintain their culture
- Aboriginal youth are over-represented in the juvenile detention and child protection systems.



## Principles

Our work under *Two Ways Together* is guided by the following principles:

- collaboration
- accountability
- cultural appropriateness.

### Collaboration

Through *Two Ways Together*, NSW and Australian Government agencies, Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations are being brought together in a structured and systematic way – a first for NSW in regard to Aboriginal affairs.

### Accountability

One of the main features of *Two Ways Together* is greater accountability.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has decided the performance of all Australian governments should be measured against indicators of Indigenous disadvantage.

*Two Ways Together* incorporates these COAG indicators and includes more NSW-specific measures.

Every two years a progress report will be produced and presented to the NSW Premier. The next report is due to be published in 2008.

### Cultural appropriateness

*Two Ways Together* aims to improve the way governments respond to the needs of Aboriginal people.

To ensure better service delivery and informed policy, *Two Ways Together* promotes:

- greater employment of Aboriginal people in the public and private sectors;
- greater representation of Aboriginal people on boards and committees that advise government;
- better knowledge of Aboriginal culture for government employees; and
- making Aboriginal service delivery central to government business in all NSW agencies.

## How will this work in practice?

Government agencies are able to focus resources on the issues that have been identified by Aboriginal communities as priorities.

Aboriginal communities have a forum for raising issues of concern to them through Community Working Parties, Regional Engagement Groups and the *Two Ways Together* Coordinating Committee.

Aboriginal people are active stakeholders in developing solutions.

Solutions are developed holistically – and not in isolation. For example, an issue affecting Aboriginal education is looked at in the wider context of health, housing and youth service provision.

Solutions are developed for local communities – no two communities have identical characteristics or needs, so these are taken into account when targeting actions and delivering services.



## Links to national initiatives

The NSW and Australian Governments entered into a bilateral agreement in March 2006. This agreement establishes how both Governments will work together in Aboriginal affairs.

The agreement promotes joint planning, streamlining of services, and making services more accessible for Aboriginal people.

*Two Ways Together* is identified in the agreement as the framework within which the two Governments will work together.

Through the agreement, both Governments have reiterated their commitments to achieving improvements in the priority action areas which have been identified by COAG.

## Links to the NSW State Plan

The NSW Government released the State Plan in November 2006. The State Plan contains priority areas for government action. These priorities were identified in consultation with the people of NSW. State Plan Priority F1 is to improve the health, education and social outcomes for Aboriginal people. The objectives under F1 are focused on family safety, education, environmental health and economic development.

In addition, the State Plan gives priority to an underlying strategy for Aboriginal people – building community resilience. Ensuring stronger communities and affirming Aboriginal culture and heritage are critical to the success of other initiatives that focus on addressing disadvantage. A strong community and a strong culture provide the basis for better outcomes in health, education and economic development.

The State Plan contains a number of priorities of relevance to Aboriginal people, including S4 Increasing levels of attainment for all students, F4 Embedding the principle of prevention and early intervention into government service delivery in NSW and R4 Increased participation and integration in community activities. *Two Ways Together* will track all State Plan priorities of relevance to Aboriginal people.

## How will this work in practice?

Aboriginal policies, programs and services will be designed by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people.

Non-Aboriginal people who provide services to Aboriginal communities will support the community in a way that is appropriate and responsive to community needs.

## How does it all work?

A network of *Two Ways Together* groups and committees has been established to ensure that key government agencies and Aboriginal peak bodies are working together to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

### *Two Ways Together* at a State level

At the State level, *Two Ways Together* is driven by the Chief Executives Committee, the *Two Ways Together* Coordinating Committee and *Two Ways Together* Project Groups.

### The Chief Executives Committee (CEC)

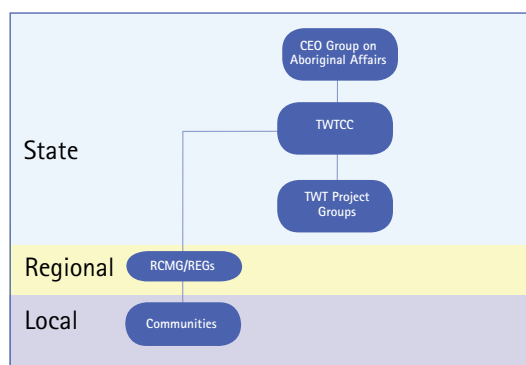
The CEC comprises the CEOs of major NSW public sector agencies and is chaired by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. It is the NSW Government leadership group which drives the implementation of policy and service delivery priorities. The CEC advises the NSW Government on key issues relating to Aboriginal affairs. It monitors State Plan Priority F1 and its implementation through *Two Ways Together*.

### The *Two Ways Together* Coordinating Committee (TWCC)

TWCC consists of senior officers from NSW and Federal Government agencies and representatives from peak Aboriginal bodies. The TWCC oversees the management of *Two Ways Together* and coordinates the work of the *Two Ways Together* Project Groups.

### *Two Ways Together* Project Groups

*Two Ways Together* Project Groups implement strategies and actions to address the priority *Two Ways Together* objectives set by the NSW Government. Project Groups are chaired by lead agencies and, like the TWCC, include membership from NSW and Federal Government agencies and peak Aboriginal bodies. Project Groups replaced the *Two Ways Together* Cluster Groups in the second half of 2007.



*Two Ways Together* governance structure

## *Two Ways Together* in the regions

To ensure that government agencies are meeting community needs at the regional and local level, a network of Regional Engagement Groups have been established under *Two Ways Together*.

### Regional Engagement Groups (REGs)

REGs include representatives from the NSW Government, the Australian Government and regional representatives of peak Aboriginal organisations. REGs are coordinated through the regional offices of DAA.

REGs are linked to the network of Regional Coordination Management Groups (RCMGs), which are supported by the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. Under *Two Ways Together* REGs have been established in each RCMG region: Central Coast, Hunter, Illawarra/South East, Mid-Western NSW, New England/North West, North Coast, Riverina/Murray, Western/South Western Sydney, and Western NSW/Murdi Paaki. In Murdi Paaki, *Two Ways Together* has built upon the work already undertaken through the COAG Murdi Paaki trial.

### Working at the local level

Under *Two Ways Together*, REGs are also working to meet the needs of disadvantaged communities in each region.

*Two Ways Together* supports Aboriginal self-determination and is committed to working with Aboriginal representative groups.

In some local areas, Partnership Communities have been identified and DAA regional officers are also working with government and community representatives to establish representative groups. These groups may be known by a range of names, including Community Working Parties.

In Partnership Communities, DAA and the community will work together to build on the strengths of communities and develop greater capacity for local Aboriginal communities to work with government. This will enable agencies to better target and provide services, through direct input into their development and delivery from community representatives.

## Contacts for *Two Ways Together*

Group	Contact	Address	Phone
<i>Two Ways Together</i> Coordinating Committee	Secretariat	Department of Aboriginal Affairs Level 13, 280 Elizabeth Street SURRY HILLS NSW 2010	02 9219 0700
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Hunter	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs PO Box 1335 COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450	02 6648 5800
<i>TWT</i> Regional Far North Coast	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs PO Box 1335 COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450	02 6648 5800
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Central Coast	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs Level 13, 280 Elizabeth St SYDNEY NSW 2010	02 9219 0700
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Illawarra/South Coast	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs Shop 1, Lot 10, Midtown Arcade Narooma Crescent NAROOMA NSW 2546	02 4476 4955
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Wagga Wagga	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs PO Box 144 WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650	02 6937 3040
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Tamworth	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs PO Box 684 TAMWORTH NSW 2340	02 6701 9000
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Dubbo	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs PO Box 144 WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650	02 6937 3040
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group, Sydney	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs Level 13, 280 Elizabeth St SYDNEY NSW 2010	02 9219 0700
<i>TWT</i> Regional Engagement Group Western NSW/Murdi Paaki	Regional Manager	Department of Aboriginal Affairs 26 Mertin Street Bourke NSW 2480	02 6872 1904

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## How it Works

This diagram shows how *Two Ways Together* is working to provide more coordinated and responsive services by tackling the major issues affecting literacy rates.



### **EXAMPLE: Otitis Media.**

Otitis Media, also known as glue ear, is a middle ear infection common in young children.

In 2003, agencies and Aboriginal communities identified this ear condition as having a significant impact on Aboriginal children's ability to learn.

A strategy was agreed upon to produce an educational awareness kit. The kit has been distributed to community workers to help them identify kids at risk of Otitis Media.

Following a successful roll-out and positive feedback from the community, more funding was allocated to the project and a State-wide screening program introduced. 9,620 Aboriginal children were screened in 2004/05, 12,971 children were screened in 2005/06 and 19,000 in 2006/07.

Early detection means the condition can be treated immediately, preventing serious hearing problems later on. With improvement in Aboriginal children's hearing, we can expect to see better school results.



## Making the plan work

Under *Two Ways Together* a specific funding boost of \$40m over four years was provided by the NSW Government for programs which focus on:

- reducing incarceration and breaking the cycle of family violence
- improving year 3 to 5 literacy and numeracy and school retention rates
- minimising the impact of otitis media on school children up to six years old
- increasing Aboriginal employment
- improving living conditions in Aboriginal communities.

The *Two Ways Together* programs are operating in specific locations across NSW.

### The locations for the local programs are:

**Community Justice Groups** – aims to reduce crime by involving local people in decision making.

Brewarrina, Bourke/Enngonia, Dubbo, Grafton, Kempsey, Lismore, Maclean, Mt Druitt, Nowra, Redfern/ Waterloo, Toronto and Yamba.

**Yindyama La/ Yindyama La Vinaa Family Violence Program** – focuses on rehabilitating perpetrators of violence and provides support for victims.

Dubbo.

**Community Patrols** – Patrols provide free and safe transport for people – particularly late at night – and aim to reduce crime within communities.

Armidale, Ballina, Bourke, Brewarrina, Dareton, Dubbo, Kempsey, La Perouse, Mungindi, Nambucca, Newcastle, Shoalhaven, Taree and Wilcannia.

**Rekindling the Spirit** – provides a range of support services to help men and their families address issues, such as family violence, relationship development and parenting skills.

Lismore and Tabulam.

**Walking Together** – uses cultural awareness to address social issues such as family violence, low self-esteem, alcohol and other drugs and employment/ training.

Newtown and Redfern.

**Intensive Family Based Services** – intensive at home support for families with children at risk of being placed in out-of-home care – often due to drug, alcohol use or family violence.

Campbelltown and Casino.

**Kids Excel** – links school, community and agencies through localised strategies to improve the educational outcome for students up to 12 years old.

Ballina, Mt Druitt and Walgett.

**Youth Excel** – targets high school students through literacy, numeracy, attendance and retention programs aiming for the successful completion of Year 10 and/or year 12.

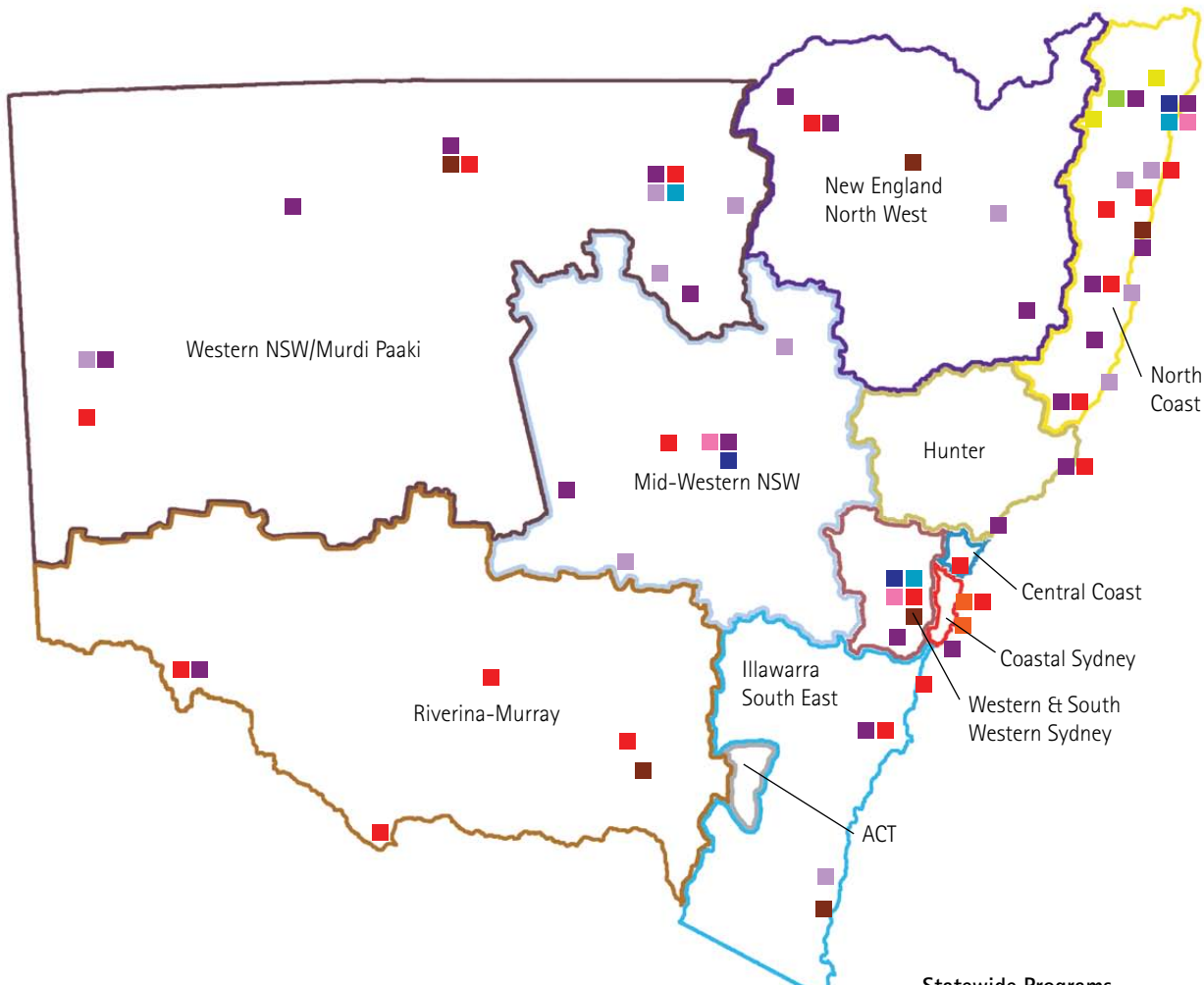
Ballina, Dubbo and Mt Druitt.

**Housing for Health, Aboriginal Communities Development Program (ACDP)** – improving housing quality by resolving health and safety issues.

Coonabarabran, Goolgowli, Gungerimba, Murrin Bridge, Nambucca/ Bellwood, Pilliga, Port Macquarie/ Bunya, Quambone, Tingha, Wallaga Lake, Walgett, Wilcannia and Yamba



## NSW Regional Engagement Group Regions and *Two Ways Together* Programs



- New Community Justice Group
- Family Violence Program
- Community Patrols
- Rekindling the Spirit
- Walking Together

- Intensive Family Based Services
- Kids Excel
- Youth Excel
- Aboriginal Communities Development Program (ACDP) - Housing for Health
- DAA Offices

### Statewide Programs

1. Scholarships for Aboriginal Students
2. Otitis Media Screening and Intervention Program
3. Aboriginal Cadetship Program
4. Offence Targeting Project



## Partnership Communities at September 2007

Region	Partnership Community
Coastal Sydney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La Perouse</li> <li>• Redfern (through the Redfern-Waterloo Authority)</li> </ul>
Western/South Western Sydney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambelltown/Macarthur Region</li> <li>• Greater Mt Druitt area</li> </ul>
Central Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Coast</li> </ul>
Hunter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gloucester</li> <li>• Lake Macquarie</li> <li>• Taree</li> </ul>
North Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tabulam</li> <li>• Bowraville</li> <li>• Ballina</li> </ul>
New England/North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toomelah/Boggabilla</li> <li>• Moree</li> <li>• Tamworth</li> </ul>
Riverina Murray NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albury</li> <li>• Balranald</li> <li>• Tumut/Brungle</li> </ul>
Mid-Western NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orange</li> <li>• Bathurst</li> <li>• Wellington</li> <li>• Dubbo (through Dubbo 20/20 Vision Plan)</li> </ul>
Illawarra/South East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Wollongong</li> <li>• Shoalhaven</li> <li>• Wallaga Lake</li> </ul>

Region	Partnership Community
Western NSW/Murdi Paaki (to become partnership communities post COAG trial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bourke</li> <li>• Brewarrina</li> <li>• Broken Hill</li> <li>• Cobar</li> <li>• Collarenebri</li> <li>• Coonamble</li> <li>• Dareton/Wentworth</li> <li>• Enngonia</li> <li>• Goodooga</li> <li>• Gulargambone</li> <li>• Ivanhoe</li> <li>• Lightning Ridge</li> <li>• Menindee</li> <li>• Walgett</li> <li>• Weilmoringle</li> <li>• Wilcannia</li> </ul>

For more information about *Two Ways Together* and the REG in your area, or about *Two Ways Together* Partnership Communities, contact your local DAA regional office.