



Office of the Chief Executive

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Mr Nicholas Duff
Principal Policy Officer
Aboriginal Policy and Coordination Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

BY EMAIL: AboriginalPolicy@dpc.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Duff

RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT ABORIGINAL EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

Thank you for your email of 16 January 2020 seeking Landgate's feedback on the Western Australian Government's draft Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy (the strategy). In response to the queries you raise, please see my comments below.

1. Please submit your feedback on the main ideas in the discussion paper.

Landgate is broadly supportive of the strategy, noting the extensive engagement with Aboriginal people and organisations and the wealth of existing bodies of research used to develop the draft. Of the six principles underpinning the strategy, those of 'putting culture at the centre', 'enabling Aboriginal-led solutions', 'building cultural respect', and 'boosting economic opportunities' particularly resonate with *Aspire*, Landgate's Aboriginal Economic Participation Strategy (developed in 2017 and currently subject to review).

The strategy expresses a preference for policy solutions and bodies that are targeted at a local or regional level. As discussed with your office, land titling legislation and policy must effectively operate on a State-wide basis to protect individual interests in land ownership. When naming the proposed regional policy bodies, a suggestion from two of our Aboriginal employees at Landgate is to title those bodies using, or referencing, local language groups rather than geographic locations (e.g. 'Martu' rather than 'Pilbara' regional policy body) as this is more culturally relevant.

The strategy also references the status of certain land tenures. The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) has carriage of Crown land administration matters, and Landgate will continue to work closely with the DPLH to bring into effect any land titling changes arising from future tenure amendments.

Your email asks for specific comment on the words used in the strategy to describe Aboriginal peoples, in particular if there is a preference for alternative terms such as First Nations people. Landgate uses the term Aboriginal people, based on engagement with local Aboriginal organisations and our employees. However, we are open to change if that is reflected in the overall feedback.

2. Please provide information on current implementation or potential activities by Landgate that may be useful in developing the strategy.

Current implementation

Through Landgate's *Aspire* program, we support Aboriginal culture, employees and businesses. As part of the Aboriginal Economic Participation Strategy, and echoing the regional approach proposed in the strategy, Landgate is committed to genuine engagement with the Midland community and the City of Swan, to support local economic activity and employment opportunities.

Landgate has successfully undertaken actions such as:

- recruiting three Aboriginal graduate employees in 2019 and two in 2020;
- exceeding the 2018-19 target in the State Aboriginal Procurement Policy¹;
- undertaking cultural awareness and recognition training for Landgate employees;
- commissioning Aboriginal artworks as part of a place-making activity within Landgate's Midland offices;
- supporting community events in Midland, including Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week and other such events; and
- providing support and mentoring at the 2019 Indigenous Mapping Workshop, a connection event for like-minded indigenous organisations adopting digital transformation of maps.

Landgate is currently preparing a support package for local governments and Aboriginal communities to help facilitate the process of identifying suitable Aboriginal place names. This initiative commenced in 2019, when the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Local Government jointly wrote to all local governments and a select

¹ From 1 July 2018, government departments were required to award contracts to registered Aboriginal businesses, consistent with progressive targets increasing to 3%. The targets apply to all government agencies when purchasing goods, services, community services and works. The 2018-19 target was 1%, and Landgate achieved 4.76%.

body of Aboriginal corporations encouraging them to consider opportunities to preserve and reawaken local Aboriginal languages through place naming. Landgate understands the important role of language in connecting Aboriginal people to place and culture and is committed to encouraging the recognition and official use of Aboriginal place names throughout Western Australia.

Potential activities

Your email requested that as part of their response, government agencies identify potential activities where the strategic principles can be aligned to core business.

In future, Landgate could contribute expertise and facilitate opportunities at various touchpoints across the learning and employment spectrum, to enable Aboriginal people to develop an array of geospatial, technological and entrepreneurial skills. This could include:

- undertaking early engagement activities (such as engaging with local high schools to develop geospatial technology skills, or partnering with small business corporations to facilitate start-up workshops) to foster interest and capability;
- providing geospatial resources to schools to link in with curriculum requirements (such as access to interactive maps showing the location of Aboriginal language groups across Western Australia);
- working through the Public Sector Commission's internship program to design a culturally-appropriate university-level project within the land information field; or
- continuing to develop opportunities to support Aboriginal-owned start-up technology businesses. This could be via targeted initiatives within Landgate's existing SPURonWA grant program (such as creating a specific grant category) or continuing to engage with local Aboriginal start-ups requiring geospatial support.

Any future queries can be directed to Grant Goldfinch, Director of Legislation and Corporate Governance, on 9273 7168 or at grant.goldfinch@landgate.wa.gov.au

Yours sincerely


Graeme Gammie
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE
LANDGATE**

17 February 2020