



Aboriginal Representative Organisations

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Department of Communities (Communities) is reforming child protection processes to strengthen safety, and connection to family, culture and Country for Aboriginal children and families through partnering with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Questions collated during Yarns On Country

The consultation questions raised during the Yarns On Country sessions held from May to June 2026 revealed several recurring themes and areas of interest across different regions, with many ACCOs expressing similar feedback and inquiries irrespective of their location. Rather than developing a FAQ that responds to each individual question separately, we have consolidated the following most commonly asked questions throughout the state.

What is an Aboriginal Representative Organisation (ARO)?

Aboriginal Representative Organisations (AROs) are recognised by local communities for their deep cultural knowledge and expertise that is crucial for making culturally informed decisions. AROs provide cultural information and advice to Communities on placement decisions, and Cultural Support Plans ensuring Aboriginal children in care have opportunities to remain connected to family, community and culture in accordance with the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle](#).

How will cultural authority be determined?

The Department recognises that cultural authority is region-specific and must be informed by local Aboriginal people and communities. Offers for ARO services will be assessed using a range of evidence, including local cultural knowledge, governance arrangements and demonstrated community support and relationships. Aboriginal representation will be incorporated in the evaluation of ARO Offers.

Will a single ACCO be responsible for overseeing the entire region?

Service delivery arrangements will be determined through commissioning and regional planning considerations. Budgets are allocated by region and ACCOs seeking to provide ARO services, should indicate how they would ensure cultural authority and service

capability for the specific region, including whether, depending on local circumstances, services may be delivered by a single ACCO, multiple ACCOs, or through partnership arrangements.

What funding is being allocated for the ARO program in each region?

Regional budget allocations for service delivery will be published with the request to allow you to consider how your organisation could provide the ARO service within the regional budget.

What will be the duration of the service agreements?

Each Service Agreement will have an initial Term of Service Agreement of three years with two one-year options to extend.

What will the ARO service model look like for our region?

The Request will outline specific service requirements for AROs, such as expected hours of operation within business hours, expected timeframes for provision of consultation advice, and the expectations for ARO consultation. How your organisation meet these expectations can be addressed within your Offer, including who you may wish to partner with for ARO service provision in your chosen region or regions.

Is there any flexibility within the current ARO model?

While there are core service requirements that must be met, the model is intended to support regional adaptation and local solutions that reflect community need and priorities.

Where can ACCOs locate the most recent data on child protection concerning Aboriginal children?

The data regarding child protection for Aboriginal children is available in Communities Annual Report. This annual report offers a comprehensive overview of operational activities, achievements, data and adherence to relevant policies and legislation. See link [Department of Communities Annual Reports](#).

Will ACCOs be notified when the Request for Tender appears on Tenders WA site?

The Request for Offers to deliver the ARO program will be advertised through Tenders WA and on Communities website. Stakeholders engaged in the consultation process will also be kept informed of upcoming commissioning opportunities via email. All communications will be circulated to the widest audience through the Aboriginal Outcomes ACCO mailbox.

To register your interest in receiving project updates, please contact ARO.ROI@communities.wa.gov.au.

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