Considerations for contracting an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO)

- The State Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan includes a framework to contract ACCOs to deliver culturally safe services. Contracting with ACCOs will result in increased engagement and improved outcomes for the community.
- ACCOs are not-for-profit organisations controlled by a majority of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and must have a demonstrated connection to the community in which they deliver services.

Considerations for contracting an ACCO

- Under the Delivering Community Services in Partnership (DCSP) Policy, ACCOs may be directly engaged by government agencies if the service is primarily being delivered to or affects Aboriginal people.
- When there are multiple ACCOs that may suitably deliver the required service, transparency and clear communications will be important, and a competitive restricted process may be undertaken to engage a service provider.
- There are some important considerations when transitioning from a non-ACCO to an ACCO service provider; these include but are not limited to:
    - Client prioritisation;
    - Ensuring both parties are aligned;
    - Transition planning and agreement;
    - ACCO readiness; and
    - Employee considerations and contract flexibility.
- Partnerships between service providers may be considered to optimise service delivery. For example, subcontracting arrangements can be considered for an ACCO to deliver part of a service alongside a non-ACCO and vice versa.
- Agencies should raise awareness of possible procurement opportunities with a Registration of Interest (ROI) to gauge the level of interest among ACCOs in providing a certain service.

- Targeted consultation with ACCOs is required to assess their capacity to respond to a procurement processes, and documentation additionally, readiness for service delivery should be explored and support provided where needed.
- Agencies should consider including small grants to assist ACCO providers with improving their service offering and readiness for service agreements.

How can the community services procurement process be tailored to ACCOs?

- Agencies should approach procurement with flexibility and work with ACCOs to ensure they are prepared and understand the process. Draft Requests can be released on Tenders WA to provide an opportunity for feedback and additional time to prepare.
- Additional training and workshops can be delivered to talk to the procurement process and explain the documentation.
- Agencies should consider using case studies, videos and interviews as part of procurement processes that engage ACCO providers. Conducting interviews on country, if possible, allows ACCO providers to showcase their service delivery credentials in a familiar setting.

How should service agreement management be adapted by ACCOs?

- Agencies should develop targeted and simplified reporting requirements that take into account the administrative burden and service delivery focus of ACCO providers, especially those with limited experience in delivering services to government.
- Relationship based service agreement management should be implemented when with working with ACCOs. Flexibility whilst maintaining accountability for both agencies and ACCOs is important.