



# Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

## ***Why are they important?***

A Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners recognises the continuing connection of Aboriginal Traditional Owners to their Country. Victoria has a strong and proud Aboriginal history, comprising of complex ownership and land stewardship systems stretching back many thousands of years.

## ***What is the different between a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgment of Country/Traditional Owners?***

A Welcome to Country ceremony is performed by Aboriginal Traditional Owners for people visiting their Country. These ceremonies vary from speeches of welcome to traditional dance and smoking ceremonies.

[More information on a Welcome to Country can be found here.](#)

An Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners can be done by anyone and is a way of showing awareness of, and respect for, the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of the land on which a meeting or event is being held.

[More information on an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners can be found here.](#)

## ***How can I find out who the Formally Recognised Traditional Owners are for the Country I am meeting on?***

The easiest way to find out who the Formally Recognised Traditional Owners are for an area is to consult the interactive map.

[Map of Formally Recognised Traditional Owners](#)

If the Traditional Owners have not been formally recognised for the land on which your event is taking place, you should acknowledge Traditional Owners generally, without making a reference to the name of any specific Traditional Owners. An example of such an acknowledgement is provided below:

'I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today.'

## ***Further Information***

The answers to the above questions have been obtained from the following sources:

<https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/welcome-country-and-acknowledgement-traditional-owners>

<https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/welcome-country>

<https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/acknowledgement-traditional-owners>

<https://achris.vic.gov.au/weave/wca.html>

## ***When to do an Acknowledgment of Country***

For Society meetings, an Acknowledgement of Country should occur and be listed as an Agenda item at the start of the meeting. There is also a Society "Prayer of Reconciliation" that Members, Volunteers and Staff are welcome to use at the start of meetings in addition to the Acknowledgement of Country.