

July 2023

Regional Aboriginal Water Committees



Regional Aboriginal Water Committees will enable Aboriginal people to contribute to water management in inland and coastal water catchment areas

About the committees

Water is sacred to Aboriginal people, and we know from years of discussions with Elders and other representatives that they need to have more of a say in guiding water planning, so their rights and cultural values are considered at a local level.

The Aboriginal Water Program is establishing Regional Aboriginal Water Committees to enable Aboriginal people to contribute to water management in inland and coastal water catchment areas.

The committees will:

- empower Aboriginal communities to participate in water programs
- build new relationships across water
- ensure Aboriginal rights and values are considered in water planning, programs and projects
- enable exchange of water knowledge in regional communities
- assist the department staff to identify key stakeholders from a local Aboriginal community to be engaged and consulted where required
- share appropriate knowledge to benefit water management
- work in partnership with the department and other water agencies to contribute to water policy review and development.

Up to 12 committees, with between 10 to 12 members will be selected for each region. Committee members will be required to meet up to six times a year within their region. The committees will operate until 30 June 2025. Women, men, Elders and young people are encouraged to apply.

Applications close on Thursday 24 August, at 12am (midnight) (AEST).

Role of committee members

The role of committee members is to:

- empower Aboriginal communities to participate in water programs
- build new relationships across water
- ensure Aboriginal rights and values are considered in water planning, programs and projects
- enable exchange of water knowledge in regional communities
- assist the department staff to identify key stakeholders from a local Aboriginal community to be engaged and consulted where required
- share appropriate knowledge to benefit water management
- work in partnership with the department and other water agencies to contribute to water policy review and development.

Selecting criteria

To become a member of a Regional Aboriginal Water Committee, applicants must:

- identify as an Aboriginal person, have the ancestral links, and be accepted by their community as a person who can represent their interests
- reside in a local Nation or community they would represent
- have knowledge of local water issues in the region, including Aboriginal cultural water knowledge and basic knowledge of how water is used and allocated, infrastructure, policy, strategy and planning of water on country
- make a commitment to travel to and participate in up to six meetings a year.

Public servants cannot apply to join a committee.

Supporting the committees

The Department of Planning and Environment will work with and support all committees. Committee members will receive a sitting fee of \$220 per day, and travel and meal expenses for participating in meetings.

More information

For more information and to submit an expression of interest to become a committee member,

- visit water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal-water-committees
- Email awp.engagementteam@dpie.nsw.gov.au
- Phone 1300 081 047