



# ABORIGINAL RANGER PROGRAM

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Aboriginal Ranger Program Reference Group

#### Background/Context

The Western Australian Government's Aboriginal Ranger Program (ARP) was established in 2017 to deliver employment opportunities for Aboriginal people across the State, in hand with broader environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes. In 2021, further funding over the next four years was committed to the program. The ARP is administered by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) under the responsibility of the Parks and Visitor Services Division.

An ARP Reference Group (the reference group) will be established to facilitate elements of co-design and advise on implementation of the ARP. Membership will comprise representatives of Aboriginal groups and organisations who manage and deliver ranger programs across the State, as well as expert advisors and other key stakeholders, as these groups and organisations have a wealth of on-ground expertise and practical knowledge in establishing and running ranger programs.

#### Functions of the Aboriginal Ranger Program Reference Group

The reference group will participate in delivering the ARP by informing co-design and exploring and advising on improvements and options to:

- roll out further funding for the expansion of the ARP effectively by considering
  - scope, objectives and application of the funding streams
  - eligibility and assessment criteria to allocate funds
  - reporting, evaluation and monitoring of funded programs
- progress participation in and maturity of ranger programs by considering
  - avenues to strengthen and expand existing groups and organisations and encourage start-ups
  - ways to incorporate leadership pathways and professional development, encourage networks between groups, encourage active participation by women and girls and provided opportunities for youth.

The reference group will advise and respond to requests for advice from the Executive Director Parks and Visitor Service on aspects relating to application and implementation and any other matters relating to the ARP.

#### Membership of the Aboriginal Ranger Program Reference Group

Membership of the reference group comprises representatives from Western Australia's Aboriginal ranger groups, academia and peak Aboriginal coalition groups. Government departments with relevant portfolio responsibilities will be invited to participate as observers or provide advice as necessary on policy direction.

Representatives will be appointed for the duration of the reference group, anticipated to be 2022 to 2025 to aligned with the implementation of Phase 2 of the ARP. To ensure that the reference group remains responsive membership will be capped at 20 people (excluding DBCA executive and secretariat support and observers).





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Representatives of the reference group will:

- have sufficient understanding and knowledge to be able to provide advice and feedback with confidence
- represent the viewpoint of their organisation or network
- ensure outcomes are conveyed to their organisation or network
- be able to influence key decisionmakers within their organisation or network
- work cooperatively to inform decisions, observations and advice relating to the functions of the reference group
- work cooperatively in the interests of delivering benefits to Aboriginal groups and organisations across Western Australia through the ARP.

## Operation of Aboriginal Ranger Program Reference Group

The reference group will be chaired by DBCA's Coordinator Aboriginal Engagement and Heritage.

During implementation of the ARP, at least one meeting will be held each year between 2022 to 2025. Meetings may be called at other times by the Chair, or on request by representatives of the reference group, in consultation with and agreement of the Chair. Ahead of implementation of the expansion of the ARP, meetings may be called more frequently to help inform the design and scope of future funding rounds.

Meetings may be:

- recorded with permission
- conducted by video conference (Teams, Zoom)
- in person.

Executive and secretariat support will be provided by DBCA to:

- manage administrative tasks associated with meetings
- administer requests from Aboriginal ranger organisations and other groups received via the form on the ARP webpage
- advise members of meeting dates
- call for agenda items and settle the agenda in consultation with the Chair
- prepare and distribute the agenda and supporting papers
- record and distribute meeting outcomes
- follow up actions as determined in the meeting
- maintain ARP and reference group webpages
- maintain records.

Representatives of the reference group may invite non-members as guests to assist or observe areas of particular interest with the agreement from the Chair.





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All organisations and groups active in the Aboriginal ranger sector in Western Australia can address the reference group on matters or issues relevant to the implementation of the ARP. Requests will be noted on the agenda and will be considered in a timely manner with a response provided via the Chair.

At the conclusion of each meeting and in consultation with the reference group, the Chair will report outcomes and feedback to the Executive Director, Parks and Visitor Services. This feedback will include constructive ideas on improvements or changes to the structure and implementation of the ARP. The Executive Director, Parks and Visitor Services will endeavour to incorporate this advice into the ARP or provide feedback should it be required.

## **Conflicts of Interest/ Confidentiality**

It is important for members of the reference group to feel free to contribute honestly and openly, and there is a level of trust between members. Therefore:

1. Representatives should declare conflicts of interest in matters before the reference group, with declarations recorded in the meeting outcomes.
2. Documents provided to representatives are done so with the expectation that these will be distributed responsibly and for obtaining feedback from the organisations or networks they represent.
3. Representatives must maintain confidentiality on sensitive issues, as identified by the Chair.