



www.ccspp.catholic.edu.au

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This Acknowledgement of Country resource has been compiled by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Parent Committee of the Council of Catholic School Parents NSW/ACT for use by Catholic school communities.

Note: an Acknowledgement of Country is not the same as a Welcome to Country. This resource describes each and distinguishes between the two.

## WHAT IS A WELCOME TO COUNTRY?

A Welcome to Country is when a traditional custodian of the land, typically a respected Elder or delegate of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, welcomes visitors to his or her Country. The welcome ceremony can take many different forms and may include prayer, smoking and water blessings, dance and art according to local customs/traditions. Elders should always be meaningfully involved in the planning of any Welcome to Country. It is both a right and a privilege of the Elder to provide a Welcome. As far as is possible, a Welcome to Country should commence proceedings for all significant community events.

## WHAT IS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY?

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing an awareness of, and respect for, the traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodians of Australia's land, seas and waterways. It also acknowledges the deep physical, spiritual and family connections that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to their Country.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

### WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Only a traditional custodian or delegate can conduct a Welcome to Country ceremony.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Anyone in the community can provide an Acknowledgement of Country.

## HOW CAN OUR COMMUNITY INCORPORATE AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY?

An Acknowledgement is given at all school and community gatherings and meetings. It can be used at assemblies, parent association meetings, school board meetings and special events, whether in person or online. It is typically given once at the commencement of the gathering in accordance with local diocesan protocols and customs. Students as well as adults, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, can give the Acknowledgement of Country.



[www.ccspp.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ccspp.catholic.edu.au)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY EXAMPLE:

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the .....  
People, who long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future.

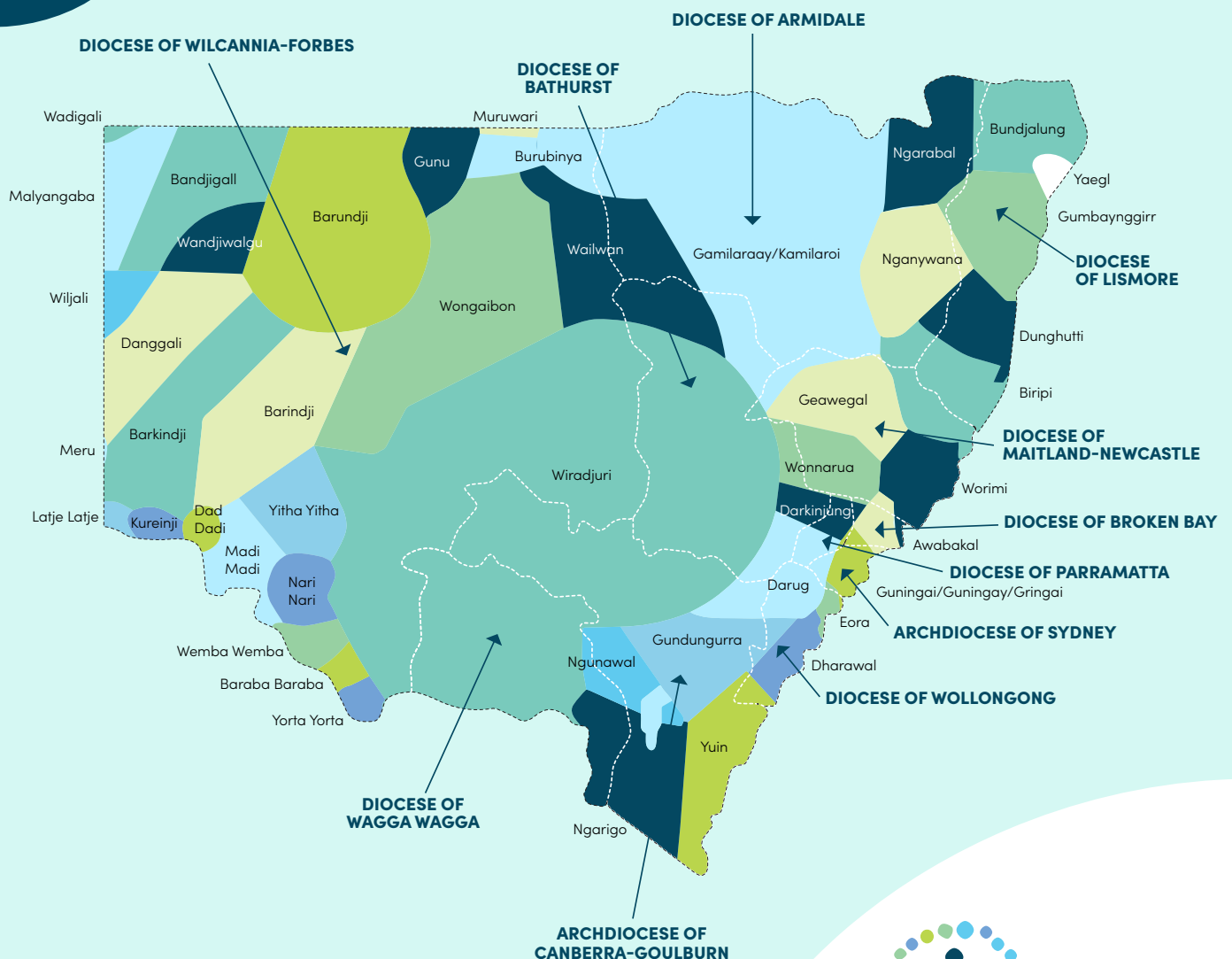
We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities.

We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

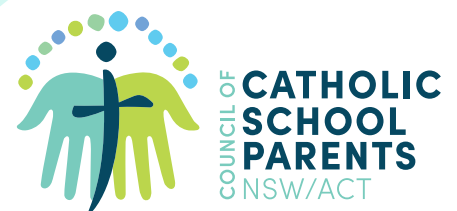


## DO YOU KNOW WHAT COUNTRY YOU ARE ON?

The Acknowledgement should identify the relevant Aboriginal nation (or nations).  
The name of the Aboriginal nation and/or language group that your school community falls within can be found on the map below.



CCSP acknowledges with respect and sensitivity the ongoing multi-layered impacts of dispossession on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We share this as one interpretation of an Aboriginal Language Map which attempts to acknowledge the richness, diversity and meta-temporal nature of the oldest culture in the world. Before relying on this map in any important matter, users should carefully evaluate the accuracy, completeness and relevance of the information for their purpose and should engage in appropriate consultation with Elders and community for advice relevant to their particular circumstances.



LEADERSHIP | ADVOCACY | SUPPORT