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A VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country

The Push strongly encourage all Freeza providers begin events with an Acknowledgement of Traditional owners. It is important to recognise that every day, we (those of us who are settlers/non-Indigenous to this country) are working on stolen country and benefiting from a system that continually displaces, disadvantages and discriminates against First Nations peoples. An Acknowledgement shows respect for the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples connection to their country.

Please familiarise yourself with the info below and pass on to the MC/s of your events so that they can begin the event with an acknowledgement. You can also arrange for a Welcome to Country to be performed by a Traditional owner group of your area. Please note that if you decide to arrange a Welcome to Country (optional) it will generally involve a payment for the Traditional owner group carrying out the ceremony.

[This document](#) has some really useful and important info on the difference between an Acknowledgement of Traditional owners and a Welcome to Country, how to perform an Acknowledgement of Traditional owners, and how to arrange a Welcome to Country.

The document also has some examples of what to say when performing an Acknowledgement of Traditional owners. I have also included an example at the bottom of this page.

Towards the bottom of the document there is a list of Victorian regions where you can find traditional owner name/s for your specific committee location. They have also included suggested contacts if you have any questions regarding the traditional owners of your region. Let me know if you can't find your area or are unsure about any of this.

This page has further info on all of this: <https://www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage/welcome-to-country-and-acknowledgement-of-traditional-owners.html>

Examples of Acknowledgement of Traditional owners/country:

- a) "We would like to acknowledge (name of Traditional owners) as the Traditional owners of the land on which this event is held. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the first people of Australia. They have never ceded sovereignty, and remain strong in their enduring connection to land and culture."
- b) "We would like to acknowledge that this event takes place on (Traditional name of area) country. We pay our respects to (Traditional owner name) Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to any First Nations people who are present today. We acknowledge that Aboriginal sovereignty has not been ceded."

Resources:

1. Victorian Government - <https://www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage/welcome-to-country-and-acknowledgement-of-traditional-owners.html>
2. Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning - https://www2.delwp.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0009/4221/Acknowledgement-of-Traditional-Owners-and-Welcome-to-Country-Guidelines.docx