

Aboriginal Peoples Engagement Program

1. What is the Aboriginal Peoples Engagement Program?

- Funded by the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) the Aboriginal Peoples Engagement Program is an NSW SES initiative that works alongside Aboriginal communities across New South Wales to strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery in emergencies.
- The program focuses on codesign, cultural safety, and building long-term, meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2. Why is this program important?

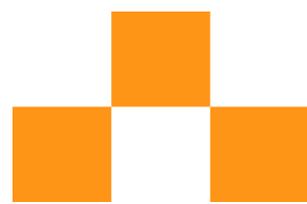
- The SES values the strength, knowledge, and enduring wisdom of Aboriginal communities, who hold unique cultural, environmental, and geographical relationships with Country. We are committed to building better understanding and working in genuine partnership and co-design, in ways that amplify Aboriginal voices and embed the changes and improvements identified through this continuum.

3. How will the program work?

The NSW SES have hired three dedicated Aboriginal Community Engagement Officers (ACEOs). Our three ACEOs will work with communities to:

- Build trusted relationships with Aboriginal communities
- Support co-design activities
- Ensure cultural safety in NSW SES processes
- Listen deeply and reflect community priorities through governance
- Provide feedback loops to strengthen how NSW SES engages with community over time.

The ACEOs are the contact point for communities and will continue to guide development of FAQs and resources.



4. What do you mean when you say “community” and “people”?

- Community refers to a place-based Aboriginal Community or a locality where a higher percentage of Aboriginal people reside. These communities are connected to specific locations and have shared relationships with Country.
- Peoples refers to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people made up of many distinct Nations, language groups, and cultural identities. Peoples also refers to the individuals, families, and groups who live in, belong to, or have cultural ties to Country.

5. How can I be involved?

Here’s how you can stay involved and connected:

- Through the Aboriginal Community Engagement Officers (ACEOs) working across NSW.
- By participating in community engagement activities such as codesign sessions, yarning circles, or feedback processes.
- Share your experiences and insights through surveys, sessions, or discussions - your voice helps shape how the program grows.

6. What is DRF funding?

- The Disaster Ready Fund (DRF), often called the DRF, is a national program that helps communities get ready for natural disasters like floods, storms, bushfires, and cyclones. The Australian Government provides up to \$1 billion over five years (from 1 July 2023) so communities can be better prepared and safer when disasters happen. [nema.gov.au].

If you would like to connect and learn more about the program, please contact the team at apecp@ses.nsw.gov.au

