



MPRA Engagement Protocol			
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<b>Endorsed by:</b>	Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly	<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	July 2025

**Background:**

The MPRA is the regional Aboriginal governance body for the Murdi Paaki Region representing the interest of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Western NSW, covering an area that extends from Lightning Ridge in the north east of the region to Dareton Wentworth in the south.

Membership of the MPRA is comprised of Chairpersons from sixteen Community Working Parties (CWPs) representing the communities of Gulargambone, Coonamble, Walgett, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, Goodooga, Weilmoringle, Brewarrina, Enngonia, Bourke, Cobar, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Menindee, Ivanhoe, Dareton/Wentworth (Including; Buronga, Pomona, Curlwaa, Coomealla, Gul Gol, Euston) , representatives of the Murdi Paaki Young & Emerging Leaders (MPY&EL), and NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) Councillors, who cover the three NSWALC regions inside the Murdi Paaki Region.

1. The MPRA role is to:
  - a. Support further development of governance capacity in Murdi Paaki Aboriginal communities.
  - b. Promote intergenerational skills transfer, responsibility in leadership and increasing youth leadership.
  - c. Advise government on ways to direct the service system to operate effectively and respond to the priorities of Aboriginal communities in the region and establish mutually agreed service outcomes with NSW government.
  - d. Provide a strong and representative governance structure for Aboriginal communities to raise issues with NSW government.
  - e. Act as a catalyst and driver in regional initiatives important to MPRA member communities
2. The MPRA operates in accordance with the accepted principles of good governance and in accordance with cultural practices and traditions of the people and nations of the region.
3. The MPRA acknowledges the rights of member communities to pursue initiatives for the betterment of their community and recognises that these initiatives may be negotiated at a local community level outside the MPRA.

The MPRA is not a funding / service delivery organisation. The MPRA recognises and respects the cultural authority of Traditional Owner groups within the region and does not make decisions that would impinge on the cultural authority and autonomy of these groups. The MPRA does not represent personal or individual issues and/or matters. Rather the MPRA represents the interests and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the Murdi Paaki Region.

Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly is the peak representative structure that represents the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 16 communities across the Murdi Paaki region.

Bourke  
Collarenebri  
Goodooga  
Menindee

Brewarrina/Ngamba  
Coonamble/Wan-Gali  
Gulargambone  
Walgett/Gamiloroi

Broken Hill  
Dareton/Wentworth  
Ivanhoe  
Weilmoringle

Cobar  
Enngonia  
Lightning Ridge  
Wilcannia

Community Working Parties have been established to encourage community participation and to represent the interests of Aboriginal people at the community level. Community Working Parties are the foundation stones of the MPRA, they are owned by the communities and are of their making.

- *The functions of Community Working Parties are to;*
  - *Represent and advance the interests of the community*
  - *Elect a representative to the Regional Assembly*
  - *Engage with Commonwealth, State, local government, NGOs and Aboriginal organisations around the provision of services at the community level*
  - *Determine community priorities*
  - *Sustain the practice of good governance, at the community level*
  - *Prepare a Community Action Plan*
  - *Negotiate service delivery agreements with government agencies*
  - *Engage with service providers to articulate community goals, aspirations and priorities*

The MPRA has developed the attached engagement protocols to guide government agency staff, service providers, and individuals wishing to engage with or seek advice from the MPRA.

Some CWP's within the Murdi Paaki Region have developed their own community specific engagement protocols which can be accessed through the respective CWP.

Copies of Community Action Plans are available through the CWP or through the MPRA at [www.mpra.com.au](http://www.mpra.com.au)

## **MPRA and CWP Engagement Protocols**

### **Engagement:**

The MPRA and CWP's are the principal engagement points for agencies and service providers working with Aboriginal communities and peoples within the Murdi Paaki region, in regard to delivery of Government and non-Government programs and services that contribute to improving outcomes for Aboriginal People.

This is especially important for organisations applying for funding or implementing programs, projects and service delivery for the first time. Support, approval and acknowledgement either from the CWP, and/or MPRA demonstrates that engagement with the Aboriginal community has been undertaken.

Individuals and organisations engaging with the MPRA / CWP's should respect the input and opinions of Aboriginal people, acknowledging that they know best the needs of their community and should also respect Aboriginal cultural decision making processes of each community.

Government agencies, service providers and individuals should engage the MPRA at a regional level and/ or with the CWP at a community level, when;

- visiting the region or community for the first time.
- seeking advice in regard to service delivery issues
- seeking endorsement for proposals
- reporting / providing advice on service delivery issues

Government agencies, service providers and individuals wishing to engage with the MPRA or CWP's should;

- contact the MPRA Chairperson or secretariat to request time on the relevant MPRA meeting agenda. Requests should provide details of issues to be discussed, estimated time required and relevance to the MPRA. Wherever possible requests should be provided at least 1 month prior to the scheduled MPRA meeting.

- Where endorsement from the MPRA is being sought relevant background documentation should also be provided in advance to allow MPRA members time to fully consider proposals.

Government agencies, service providers and individuals wishing to engage with CWP's should;

- Notify the MPRA Secretariat or copy them into all correspondence to the CWPs
- Contact the CWP Chairperson or secretariat to request time on the relevant meeting agenda. Requests should provide details of issues to be discussed, estimated time required and relevance to the CWP. Note that time frames to be placed on CWP agendas will be at the discretion of individual CWP. Wherever possible CWP's should be given ample time to develop agendas.
- Where endorsement from a CWP is being sought relevant background documentation should also be provided in advance to allow CWP members time to fully consider proposals.
- Be aware of and conversant with local engagement / cultural protocols where they exist.

### **Community Participation:**

Government agencies and Service Providers should involve the MPRA and CWPs in decision making around program development and service delivery to ensure alignment with the Murdi Paaki Regional Strategic Plan, at a regional level and Community Action Plans, at a local level. This includes

- Providing regular and consistent attendance (when required) at MPRA and CWP meetings.
- Ensuring organisations are conversant with the MPRA Regional Strategic Plan and relevant Community Action Plans.

### **Respecting Aboriginal Culture**

Government agency staff and service providers should be aware of and respect cultural protocols of each community in the Murdi Paaki region acknowledging that the Murdi Paaki region is made up of many different Aboriginal peoples.

Government agency staff and service providers should ensure the Aboriginal cultural awareness of their staff to improve the quality of services delivered, and to better respond to the needs of Aboriginal communities in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner.



**INPUTS**  
 Understand MPRA and Community engagement protocols. Ensure staff are culturally aware

Government Provider

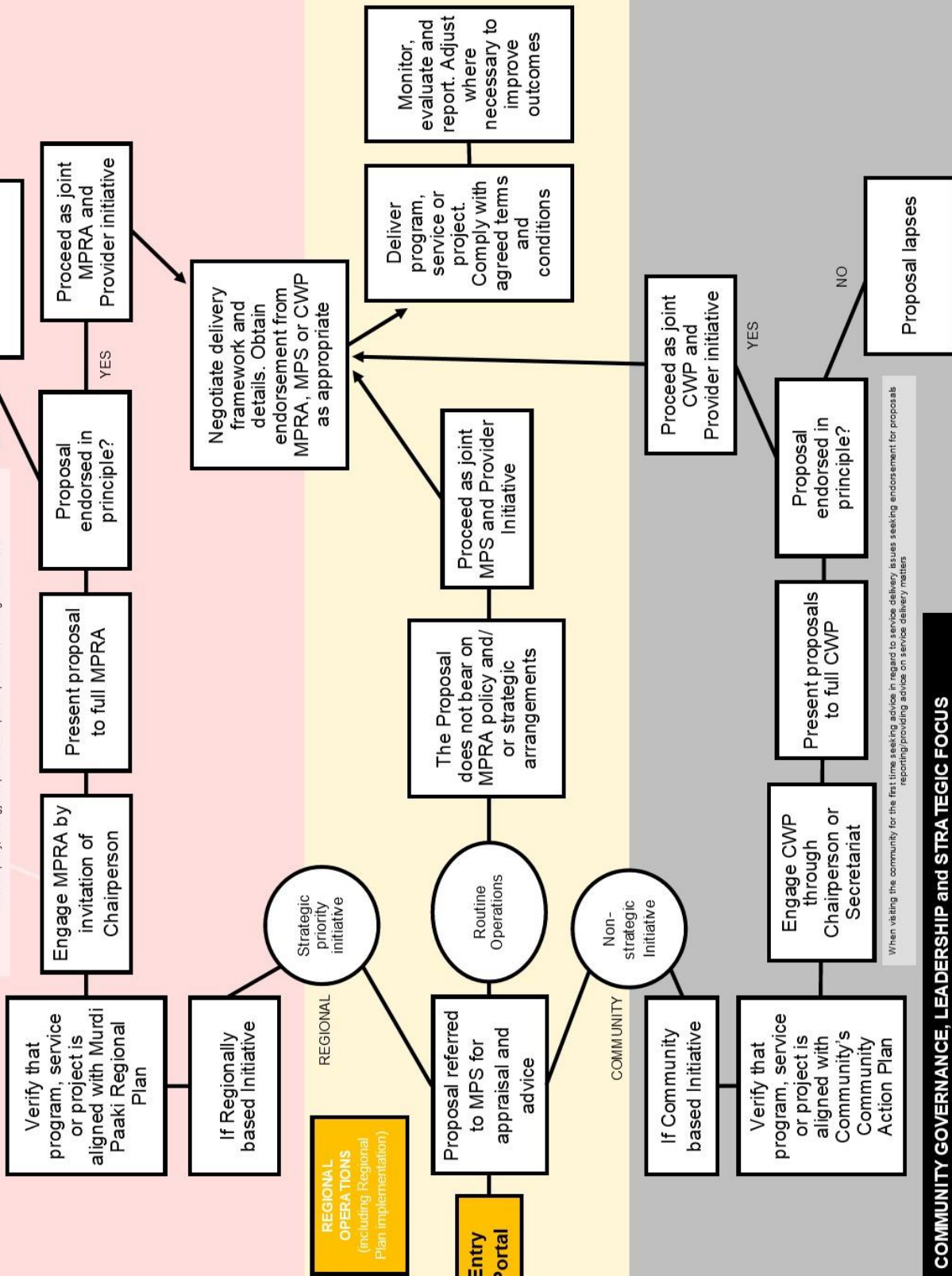
Policies, Programs, Services & Projects

Private Sector Provider

Non-Government provider

**REGIONAL GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, POLICY and STRATEGIC FOCUS**

To seek advice on matters of leadership, policy and strategic importance engage in a dialogue on matters of external policy, strategy and processes Report on performance of Regional Initiatives



When visiting the community for the first time seeking advice in regard to service delivery issues seeking endorsement for proposals reporting/providing advice on service delivery matters

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP and STRATEGIC FOCUS**