



CITY OF ALBANY ABORIGINAL ACCORD

27th March 2003

CITY OF ALBANY ABORIGINAL ACCORD

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Statement of Understanding & Commitment

**Between: The City of Albany
The People of Albany
The Aboriginal Community of Albany**

Understanding

The City of Albany and its people recognise the cultural and spiritual links that Noongar people have to the land and sea, and acknowledge they are the traditional owners of country know today as Albany.

The local Noongar people witnessed the European settlement of the King George Sound area in 1826, and endured the massive changes this brought to their land and lifestyle.

The City of Albany and its people acknowledge the loss by Noongar people of country and the extensive damage to and loss of their culture and customs as a result of European settlement and the injustices of the past.

Despite the impact of European settlement and the passage of time the Noongar people have retained their sense of identity and unique culture.

The City of Albany and its people acknowledge the right of the local Aboriginal people to live according to their traditional values and customs, subject to law, and will respect Noongar places of cultural significance.

Commitment

The City of Albany and its people are committed to working with the Aboriginal people of Albany to establish an accord, which will promote a greater understanding throughout the community of Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal people's history and culture.

The City of Albany – Aboriginal Peoples Accord will be a living document that promotes reconciliation, provides a process of negotiation and co-operation and results in a mutual sharing of the economic and social prosperity of the City of Albany.

The City of Albany, the people of Albany and the Aboriginal community accept their responsibilities to work together to develop an awareness of our shared history and culture, and to build a partnership based upon mutual respect, understanding, co-operation and trust.

Signatories:

Representatives of the City of Albany, Aboriginal community and wider Albany community signed the Statement of Understanding and Commitment on 30th November 1999.

The signing ceremony and document were witnessed by the then Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs, and Local Government.

Original signed copies of the Statement of Understanding and Commitment hang in the City of Albany's York Street Administration Building and Department of Indigenous Affairs Aberdeen Street office.

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1. BACKGROUND ALBANY

1.1 Location

The City of Albany is located on the South Coast of Western Australia, some 403km South-East of the State Capital, Perth. The City of Albany covers an area of 4315 square kilometres and stretches along the southern coastline from Hay River in the West to Pallinup River in the East. The Shires of Denmark, Plantagenet, Gnowangerup and Jerramungup border the City. Albany is the regional centre and administrative hub for the Great Southern, which comprises 12 municipalities and covers an area of 38,917 square kilometres.

1.2 Population

Total population of Albany is estimated at 31,000 as at Jan 2001. (Based on 2001 ABS figures adjusted). This is expected to grow to around 37,000 by the year 2012.

Total population of indigenous people is estimated at 810 (adj.) as at 31st December, 2002. Of these 448 (55%) are over the age of 18 years, 362 (45%) are under 18. 409 are male, 401 are female. Predominantly this population is Noongar.

Selected Characteristics by Indigenous Status and by Sex – ABS 2001 Census			
	Males	Females	Persons
Total Persons	401	397	798
0 – 4 years	56	45	101
5 – 14 years	106	100	206
15 – 24 years	78	76	154
25 – 44 years	122	116	238
45 – 64 years	28	48	76
65 Years and over	11	11	22
Attending an educational institution:			
5 – 14 years	100	96	196
14 – 19 years	13	17	30
Highest level of schooling completed			
Year 10 or below	148	154	302
Year 11 to 12	57	64	121
Still at school	6	11	17
Never attended school	3	4	7
Enumerated in private dwellings:			
Separate house	293	339	632
Other private dwelling	55	46	101
Total	348	385	733
Enumerated in non-private dwellings			
	53	12	65

Source: ABS Time Series Profile (2001 Census) & Estimates of Residential Population 2002 – City of Albany

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1. BACKGROUND ALBANY (Continued)

1.3 Local Economy

The Albany economy is as diverse as the City is large. Covering an area in excess of 4300 square kilometres, Albany boasts a vibrant agricultural and rural sector that produces both cereal and non-cereal crops, livestock, wool, meat, dairy, poultry, fruit, vegetables, flowers, timber and wine. Fishing is a major industry and aquaculture is an emerging producer of seafood. Manufacturing is an important part of the City's economy, serving predominantly the industrial requirements of the rural sector, as well as processing agricultural commodities.

1.4 Tourism

Tourism is one of Albany's most significant and sustainable economic activities, with the City and local businesses winning a number of major tourism awards. Two of the most significant developments in tourism for many years have been the sinking of the former HMAS Perth in King George Sound, as an artificial dive wreck, and the new Western Power Wind Farm. This major producer of clean renewable energy is the State's largest, producing enough electricity to power around 75% of the City's total needs. Located on the majestic South Coast it is proving to be one of Albany's most popular visitor attractions.

1.5 Education

The City is very well catered for in terms of education, from kindergarten and pre-primary through to the new University of Western Australia's Albany campus. While UWA offers only a limited range of courses at this time, the opportunity for Tertiary education in Albany means fewer young people having to move to the Metropolitan area. The Great Southern Regional College of TAFE also provides a comprehensive range of vocational and lifestyle courses.

1.6 Lifestyle

Albany enjoys an outstanding lifestyle based around the unspoilt natural beauty of the southern coastline and a moderate Mediterranean climate. From rugged and spectacular coastal cliffs that are pounded by giant winter swells, to secluded white sandy beaches almost deserted even during summer, Albany offers an idyllic outdoor lifestyle in one of Western Australia's most beautiful settings. During spring Southern Right and Humpback whales frequent the sheltered waters of King George Sound, while Autumn provides pleasant conditions for outdoor activities, sports and recreation.

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1. BACKGROUND ALBANY (Continued)

1.7 State & Federal Government Services and Facilities

As a major regional centre Albany offers the full range of services and facilities expected of a rural City. Most Government departments are represented in the City, providing ready access to information, services and facilities, whether that is for business, community or welfare.

1.8 Local Government, Services & Facilities

The Albany City Council provides local governance for the City, which is comprised of seven electoral wards. Each ward is represented by two elected Councillors, with the Mayor being elected by the broader City of Albany electorate. Council's administrative and works functions are provided from two offices located at York Street and Mercer Road.

The City of Albany administers a range of services and facilities including:

- Land, buildings and property development;
- Environmental and health services;
- Ranger services, parking, dog and fire control;
- Roads, drainage, parks and reserves – construction & maintenance;
- Waste collection, disposal and recycling;
- Corporate services, community and recreation development;
- Library and information services;
- Vancouver Arts Centre;
- Town Hall Theatre;
- Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre;
- Childrens' day care; and
- Albany Regional Airport.

1.9 The City's Vision, Mission & Values

The City of Albany's Strategic Plan, Albany 2020 - Charting Our Course, outlines the City's strategic vision and mission. These are:-

Vision:

“The superbly located rural City of Albany will be a safe, caring community in harmony with its natural environment, historic past, prosperous hinterland and unique sense of place.

Future generations will enjoy a quality lifestyle and benefit from a range of educational, recreational and cultural experiences, sustainably managed environments and diverse robust economy”.

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1. BACKGROUND ALBANY (Continued)

Mission:

“As trustees for Albany’s future on behalf of our diverse communities, your Council will be a customer driven organisation committed to service and on-going communication in order to evaluate and respond to changing community needs and expectations. We will:

- *Provide decisive leadership;*
- *Advocate strongly to maximise opportunities offered by external influences and to minimise any adverse impacts;*
- *Establish and encourage a culture of innovation and enterprise;*
- *Responsibly manage Council’s services and assets;*
- *Promote the development of dynamic, diverse and sustainable rural and urban communities;*
- *Promote a positive attitude towards the sustainable management and use of all resources;*
- *Encourage a diverse range of industry, business and investment throughout our region; and*
- *Advocate and provide for strong, sound and accessible infrastructure.”*

Strategic Ports of Call.

Specific objectives – Ports of Call, identified in Albany 2020, which impact on the provision of services and facilities for the community and to which this Accord is aligned include:

- *“Attraction and development of a broad range of social cultural and economic entities – Community Development.”* Under Albany 2020 the City of Albany is committed to developing a vibrant community where all are encouraged to participate and contribute.
- *“The continual development of Council services and facilities to meet the needs of all stakeholders.”* - The Council, through Albany 2020 is committed to meeting the needs and aspirations of the whole community, as well as meeting the needs and aspirations of specific stakeholder groups.

In accordance with these strategic objectives and guided by the vision of the Statement of Understanding and Commitment, the City of Albany, in close consultation with the Aboriginal community, has developed this strategic City of Albany Aboriginal Accord.

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2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Role of the City of Albany

In accordance with the direction outlined in the Albany 2020 Strategic Plan, the City of Albany has recognised the role that it must play in the provision of services and facilities for the Aboriginal community, as well as identifying areas where it has a role to play in supporting and advocating for Aboriginal people in relation to the services and facilities provided by other government agencies and organisations. Accordingly the City of Albany has coordinated the development of this Accord and facilitated the process undertaken by Aboriginal Accord Advisory Committee in the formulation of the Aboriginal Accord Strategic Plan. Council also recognises the part it must play in the implementation of the Accord and associated Strategies.

2.2 Statement of Understanding & Commitment:

On the 13th November 1999 witnessed by the then Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs and Local Government, representatives of the City of Albany, the Albany Aboriginal community and the wider Albany community signed a Statement of Understanding and Commitment, which in part contained an agreement “*to establish an accord which will promote a greater understanding throughout the community of Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples’ history and culture.*”

The Statement of Understanding and Commitment directed that “*the City of Albany – Aboriginal Peoples Accord will be a living document that promotes reconciliation, provides a process of negotiation and cooperation and results in a mutual sharing of the economic and social prosperity of the City of Albany.*”

2.3 Accord Aims

The aims of this Accord and associated Action Plan have been guided by the vision outlined within the Statement of Understanding and Commitment. They are:

- Recognise the cultural and spiritual links that Noongar people have to the land and sea;
- Recognise Noongar people as the traditional owners of the country (Albany);
- Acknowledge the loss of culture and customs that Aboriginal people suffered as a result of European settlement;
- Acknowledge the right of Aboriginal people to live according to their traditional values and customs, subject to law.
- Recognise and respect places that have cultural significance to Noongar people;
- Raise awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples history and culture;
- Promote reconciliation and provide a process of negotiation and cooperation;
- Ensure that Aboriginal people share the economic and social prosperity of the City of Albany; and
- Build a partnership between the City of Albany, the people of Albany and the Aboriginal community based on mutual respect, understanding, cooperation and trust;

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3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Format

In developing the proposed City of Albany – Aboriginal Peoples Accord, the following broad subject areas were identified to give direction and format to the Accord process and to guide the development of objectives and strategies designed to achieve the vision outlined in the Statement of Understanding and Commitment.

- Cross cultural awareness;
- Consultative mechanisms and liaison;
- Social and economic planning;
- Environment;
- Local history and site conservation;
- Arts and culture;
- Employment, Education and Training;
- Young people.

3.2 Process

The methodology used in the development of this Accord has included the following key processes.

Demographic Analysis

ABS population statistics for the City of Albany were examined, with those statistics relating to local Aboriginal people being studied in detail.

Interviews and Consultation

Direct consultation was undertaken with Aboriginal people and local Aboriginal community groups, as well as agencies and individuals who provide services and facilities for Aboriginal people.

Community and Focus Group Meetings

A Consultant, with links to the local Aboriginal community, conducted a number of community group meetings involving members of the Aboriginal community. This process was used to garner comment from local Aboriginal people on a comprehensive range of issues, as well as providing those Aboriginal people with an opportunity to comment on any issues of interest or concern to them.

Information that resulted from the community group meetings was relayed via the Consultant to a number of meetings of a focus group involving local Aboriginal community representatives and the Department of Indigenous Affairs, for consideration, analysis and comment.

The Consultant presented a report on the results of both processes to the Aboriginal Accord Advisory Committee for consideration and inclusion in the development the Accord and Strategic Plan.

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3. METHODOLOGY (Continued)

City of Albany Aboriginal Accord Advisory Committee

The City of Albany, recognising the necessity to put in place an appropriate body that would be responsible for drafting the Accord and associated strategic Action Plan, appointed an Aboriginal Accord Advisory Committee that would operate under the provisions of the Local Government Act and in accordance with a Terms of Reference established by the Council. The Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee is an appendix to the Accord document.

The City of Albany Aboriginal Accord Advisory Committee comprised representatives from the City of Albany, Aboriginal community groups and the wider Aboriginal community. The Advisory Committee held a number of meetings and workshops at which the Accord document and Action Plan were developed. Representatives of the Department of Indigenous Affairs also attended these meetings in an advisory capacity.

Review of Relevant Information and Data

Information and data relating to Aboriginal and other relevant issues was reviewed for its relevance to the Accord and its potential impact on the Aboriginal community.

Stakeholder Feedback

The draft Action Plan document was forwarded to all organisations and agencies identified within the document for their comments, feedback and suggestions. Issues raised by stakeholders were considered by the Advisory Committee for inclusion within the Action Plan.

Public Consultation

The wider Albany community will be given an opportunity to view and make comment on both the Accord and Action Plan documents, prior to their adoption by Council.

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4. ACCORD OBJECTIVES

The City of Albany Aboriginal Accord has as its primary focus, the following objectives:-

4.1 Cross Cultural Awareness & Understanding

- To improve awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture and customs amongst Elected Members and the City of Albany staff.
- To improve the status and recognition of Aboriginal people within the community.
- To raise awareness of Aboriginal cultural issues, traditional laws and customs within the broader community.

4.2 Consultative Mechanisms & Liaison

- To ensure that the initiatives and strategies identified within the Accord and agreed to by the parties, are implemented in accordance with the agreement.
- To provide an ongoing avenue of liaison and consultation between Council and the Aboriginal Community.
- To ensure that Aboriginal people are consulted on all relevant issues.
- To recognise that Aboriginal people were the first inhabitants of the land and that as the traditional owners, they have a right to be involved in the management of that land.

4.3 Social & Economic Planning

- To provide Aboriginal people with an opportunity to be actively involved in social and economic planning processes of the City of Albany.
- To increase the involvement of Aboriginal people in civic and community affairs.
- To ensure that Aboriginal people share in the social and economic prosperity of the City of Albany.

4.4 Environment

- To recognise the traditional and cultural links that Aboriginal people have with the environment and to ensure those links continue.
- To recognise the role that Aboriginal people played in the management of the land for thousands of years prior to European settlement.
- To ensure that Aboriginal people are given an ongoing involvement in the management of the environment.
- To raise awareness of the significance of indigenous flora and fauna to traditional Aboriginal culture.

4.5 Local History & Site Conservation

- To increase awareness and understanding of local Aboriginal history.
- To recognise Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land (Albany).
- To ensure that sites that are culturally significant to Aboriginal people are treated with dignity and respect.

4. ACCORD OBJECTIVES (Continued)

4.6 Arts & Culture

- To raise awareness of all forms of Aboriginal art and culture.
- To encourage the involvement of young Aboriginal people in artistic and cultural pursuits.
- To encourage and assist the development of an interpretive centre for Aboriginal culture.

4.7 Employment Education & Training

- To recognise and address the social and economic issues that have resulted in high unemployment rates within the Aboriginal community.
- To improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within the City's administration and outdoor work forces.
- To improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal people throughout the local business community.
- To improve the retention of young Aboriginal people in primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- To recognise that many Aboriginal people come from a position of social disadvantage in relation to education, training and employment opportunities.

4.8 Young People

- To increase self-esteem and pride within the young Aboriginal Community.
- To improve young Aboriginal peoples understanding of traditional Aboriginal laws and customs.
- To increase the involvement of young Aboriginal people in recreational activity.
- To enhance the employment prospects of young Aboriginal people who do drop out of mainstream education.
- To reduce the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour involving young Aboriginal people.

5. ACCORD STRATEGIES

The objectives identified in the Accord can only be achieved through the development of a well-considered and comprehensive Action Plan. The City of Albany Aboriginal Accord Action Plan identifies specific strategies that have been developed to achieve the objectives of the Accord, as well as providing a detailed blueprint of actions, activities, programs and initiatives.

Implementation of the Action Plan will see the vision outlined in the Statement of Understanding and Commitment and the broad objectives of the Accord achieved within a stated time frame. The City of Albany Aboriginal Accord - Action Plan is an appendix to the Accord document.

The Strategies identified in the Action Plan and which are supported by a detailed program of activities, are:

5.1 Cross Cultural Awareness & Understanding

- City of Albany Elected Members and staff will participate in a program of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training.
- The inclusion of Aboriginal people on the guest list for Council functions and City of Albany events.
- The inclusion of Aboriginal people in the ceremonial aspect of Council functions and City of Albany events. (eg. A “Welcome to Country”)
- Support for and involvement with cultural awareness raising activities including NAIDOC week celebrations, Harmony Day, Reconciliation Week.

5.2 Consultative Mechanisms & Liaison

- Formation of an Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of the Accord and to advise Council on Aboriginal issues.
- Formalise procedures for consultation with local Aboriginal people and community organisations on relevant issues.
- Formalise protocols for the involvement of local Aboriginal people in the management and care of land that comes under the control of the City of Albany. (I.E. On land that has significance to Aboriginal people and where Native Title has been extinguished)

5.3 Social & Economic Planning

- Encourage local Aboriginal people to nominate and stand for the City’s Council elections.
- Provide assistance, guidance and support to Aboriginal people looking to develop business initiatives.
- Include Aboriginal people within economic planning forums, working groups and initiatives.

5. ACCORD STRATEGIES (Continued)

5.4 Environment

- Joint naming (European & Aboriginal) or renaming (Aboriginal) of significant landmarks and locations.
- Utilisation of traditional Aboriginal names (people and places) when naming roads, streets, parks and places.
- Promotion of Aboriginal Heritage within suitable parks and reserves.
- Promotion of indigenous flora and fauna through botanical style gardens and within suitable parks and reserves.
- The involvement of Aboriginal people in the development and implementation of reserve management plans and in parks and gardens development planning.

5.5 Local History & Site Conservation

- Promotion of Aboriginal history and culture.
- Identification, recognition and protection of sites that have cultural and historical significance to Aboriginal people.
- Recognition of historically significant local Aboriginal people.
- Recognition of the involvement of local Aboriginal people in wars.

5.6 Arts & Culture

- Promotion of Aboriginal art and culture through community art projects.
- Promotion of Aboriginal art through the Albany Art Competition.
- Promotion of traditional Aboriginal music and Dance through community events.
- Provision of support for the development of an interpretive centre for Aboriginal culture.

5.7 Employment Education & Training

- Effective co-ordination and implementation of the strategies of the City of Albany Aboriginal Accord.
- Identification and development of traineeship opportunities within the City's workforce.
- City of Albany employment opportunities to be sustainable and ongoing once traineeships have concluded.
- Support for the delivery of vocational training programs for Aboriginal youth no longer involved in the education system.
- Promotion of sustainable Aboriginal employment opportunities with the City, through implementation of section 50D of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act.
- Encouragement of young Aboriginal people to pursue higher learning and vocational training opportunities.

5.8 Young People

- Provision of recreational opportunities targeted specifically at young Aboriginal people.
- Provision of information and training to raise awareness of Aboriginal history and culture within the Aboriginal youth community.
- Promotion of dance and music as recreational opportunities for young Aboriginal people.
- Provision of personal development training for young Aboriginal women.
- Provision of vocational training for young Aboriginal people who are not involved in the education system

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The Nation's commitment to reconciliation as presented by the Australian Council for Reconciliation

“Reconciliation between Australia’s indigenous peoples and all other Australians is about building bridges. It is about respecting our differences. It is about giving everybody a fair go. It is about building on the strengths of common ground.”

Corroboree 2000

Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation

“We, the peoples of Australia, of many origins as we are, make a commitment to go on together in a spirit of reconciliation.

We value the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters.

We recognise this land and its waters were settled as colonies without treaty or consent.

Reaffirming the human rights of all Australians, we respect and recognise continuing customary laws, beliefs and traditions.

Through understanding the spiritual relationship between the land and its first peoples, we share our future and live in harmony.

Our nation must have the courage to own the truth, to heal the wounds of its past so that we can move on together at peace with ourselves.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians. Many steps have been taken, many steps remain as we learn our shared histories.

As we walk the journey of healing, one part of the nation apologises and expresses its sorrow and sincere regret for the injustices of the past, so the other part accepts the apologies and forgives.

We desire a future where all Australians enjoy their rights, accept their responsibilities, and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

And so, we pledge ourselves to stop injustice, overcome disadvantage, and respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples have the right to self-determination within the life of the nation.

Our hope is for a united Australia that respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.”

6. SIGNATORIES

6.1 Executed by the Parties

**The Common Seal of the City of Albany
was hereunto affixed in accordance with a
resolution of the Council in the presence of:**

**Alison Elizabeth Goode JP
Mayor**

**Andrew Hammond
Chief Executive Officer**

Signed for and on behalf of the Aboriginal People of Albany by:

Noel Coyne

Edith Penny

Darryl Williams

Lynette Knapp

6.2 Witnessed

The signing of this document was witnessed by:

**Hon. Alan Carpenter, MLA
Minister for Indigenous Affairs**

Dated the 27th March 2003