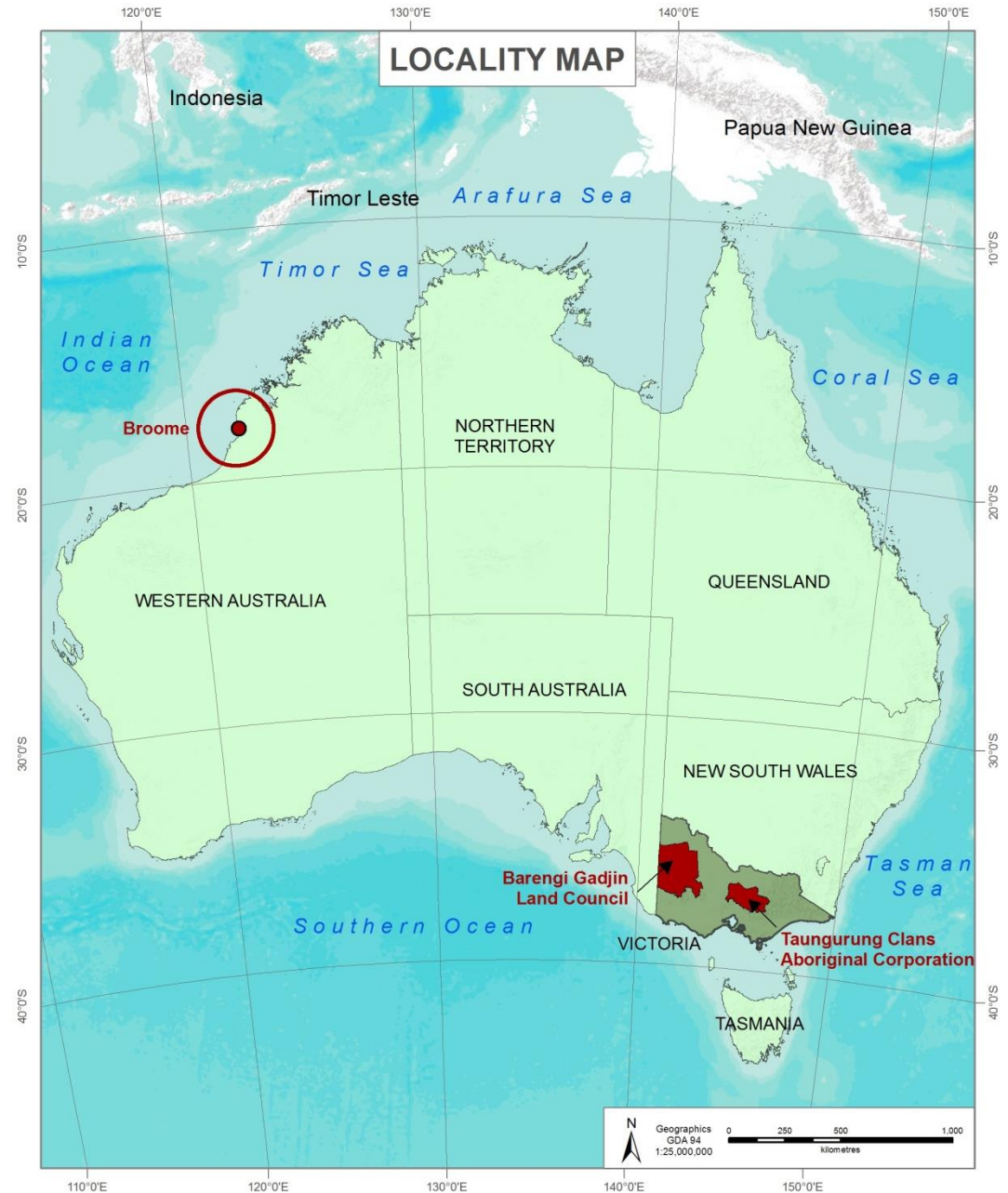


# Strengthening Family Engagement and Decision Making in Traditional Owner corporations





**Barendgi Gadjin Land Council**  
**<https://www.bglc.com.au/>**

# Why family re-engagement?

- BGLC wanted to be confident that it is representing all Traditional Owners in looking after and negotiating for Country
- BGLC wanted to hear from families:
  - What's keeping families away (barriers)
  - What families need to be more involved (solutions)
  - Hopes and aspirations for the future
- BGLC also wanted to provide information about new opportunities under the TOS Act

# BGLC Family Re-engagement Process

## OVERVIEW



### Process Design

BGLC with support from RPFc and NTSV worked together to design the Family Re-Engagement process.



### Family Meetings

RPFc facilitators facilitated 16 family meetings with 67 participants between October 2014 – April 2015. NTSV was available to provide information on the renegotiation and native title issues. From these meetings families were sent summaries of their meetings which were then used as the foundation for the BGLC Family Re-Engagement Report.



### Family Re-Engagement Process Draft Report

The BGLC Family Re-Engagement Draft Report summarises the advice and feedback from all the family group meetings. This Report was workshopped with the BGLC board to identify key themes and issues from the family meetings. It is a tool to support the board as it develops strategies to engage the broader native title group in shaping the next steps for BGLC.



### Traditional Owner Forums

Three Traditional Owner forums were held in Melbourne, Horsham and Ballarat in April / May 2015. The BGLC Family Re-Engagement Draft Report was presented at these forums and people got to prioritise what was most important for them.



### Re-Engagement Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan has been developed by the BGLC board in response to input from the broader group drawing on information from the individual family meetings, Family Re-Engagement Report and Traditional Owner forums. This Plan is a working document.

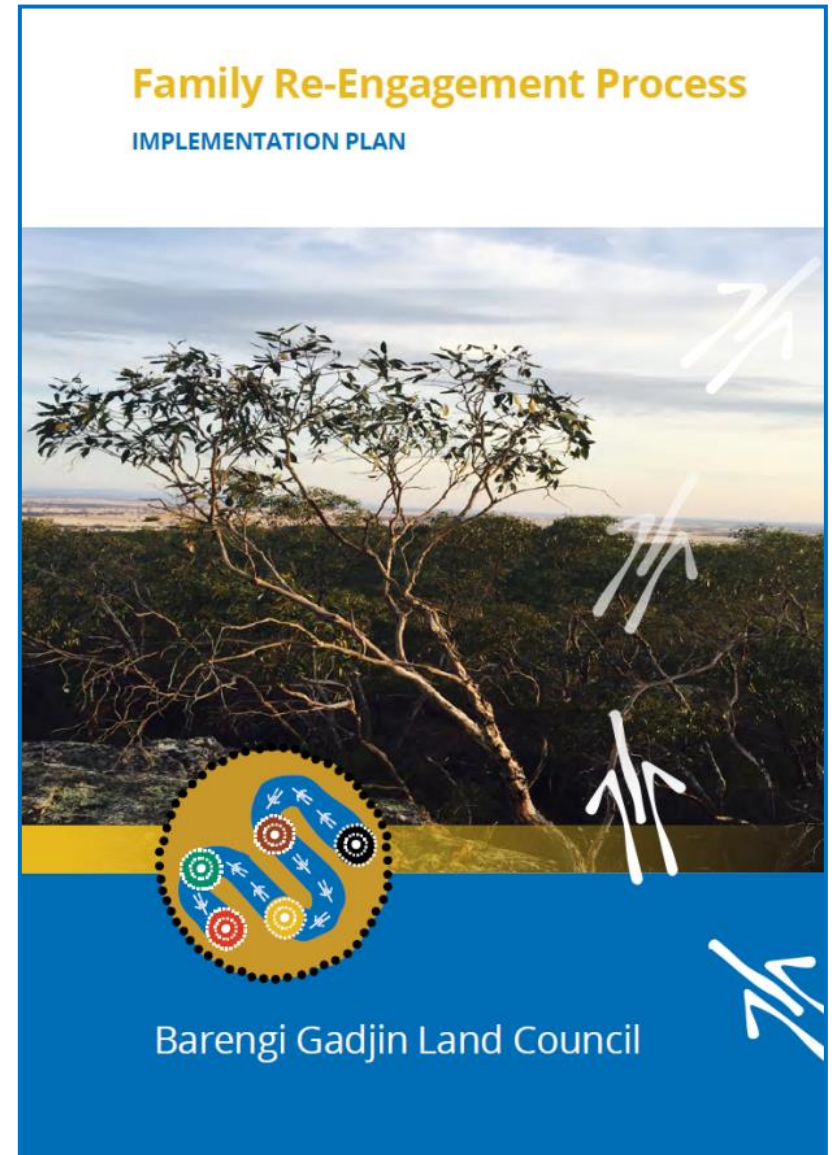


### Implementing the Plan

The BGLC board will take responsibility for implementing this Plan. They will monitor and evaluate the Plan as it is being implemented to make any required adjustments.

# Outcomes

- Implementation Plan developed and implemented:
  - communication strategy
  - meetings held in multiple locations
  - family meetings continue to be used as model to engage
- Increased family representation on BGLC board
- Representative negotiating team
- Hopes and aspirations and Implementation plan informed BGLC's strategic plan



# Taungurung Clans AC

<https://www.taungurung.com.au/>



# Taungurung Family Engagement project

## Invitation

### TAUNGURUNG FAMILY MEETINGS

Taungurung Family Engagement + Decision Making Guides Projects

Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (TCAC) invites all Taungurung people to participate in a family meeting, during October and November 2017.

These family meetings are being organised by the Right People for Country Program (RPFc) as part of the Taungurung Family Engagement Project and Decision Making Guides Project.

#### Purpose of the family meetings

##### Strengthening TCAC engagement with Taungurung families

TCAC wants to hear from Taungurung families:

- How are you already engaged in Taungurung Business – if at all?
- What, if any, have been the barriers to your participation?
- What will help you to be more involved?
- What are your hopes and aspirations for Taungurung people?

##### Decision Making Guides

TCAC wants to get your help in developing new Decision Making Guides to grow community understanding about who makes what decisions and how, and how Taungurung cultural protocols can be respected in decision making.

#### For more information or to be involved in a family meeting please contact:

Kirsty Lewis, RPFc Project Officer  
t. 03 9651 0601 m. 0428 875 268  
e. [kirsty.lewis@dpc.vic.gov.au](mailto:kirsty.lewis@dpc.vic.gov.au)

#### Sharing information about the Taungurung settlement

An NTSV Lawyer will be available at the meetings to share information and answer your questions about what's happening with the Taungurung settlement agreement under the Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement Act.

#### Organising a family meeting

In the coming weeks you or a key member of your family will be contacted by independent facilitator Graham Atkinson or project officer Kirsty Lewis to set up a family meeting. This member of your family will co-ordinate with Graham / Kirsty and your family group to arrange a time and place to hold a family meeting.

The family meetings will be a safe place for all Taungurung people to talk freely about TCAC and about their hopes for the future. The family meetings will be independently facilitated by Graham Atkinson and Toni Bauman.

Taungurung people who don't fit easily into any of the family meetings will be given an opportunity to have their views heard. If you are concerned that you aren't being included you can call Graham or Kirsty.

Graham Atkinson, Independent Facilitator  
m. 0411 472 243  
e. [graham@atkinsonconsultinggroup.com.au](mailto:graham@atkinsonconsultinggroup.com.au)

## TAUNGURUNG FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

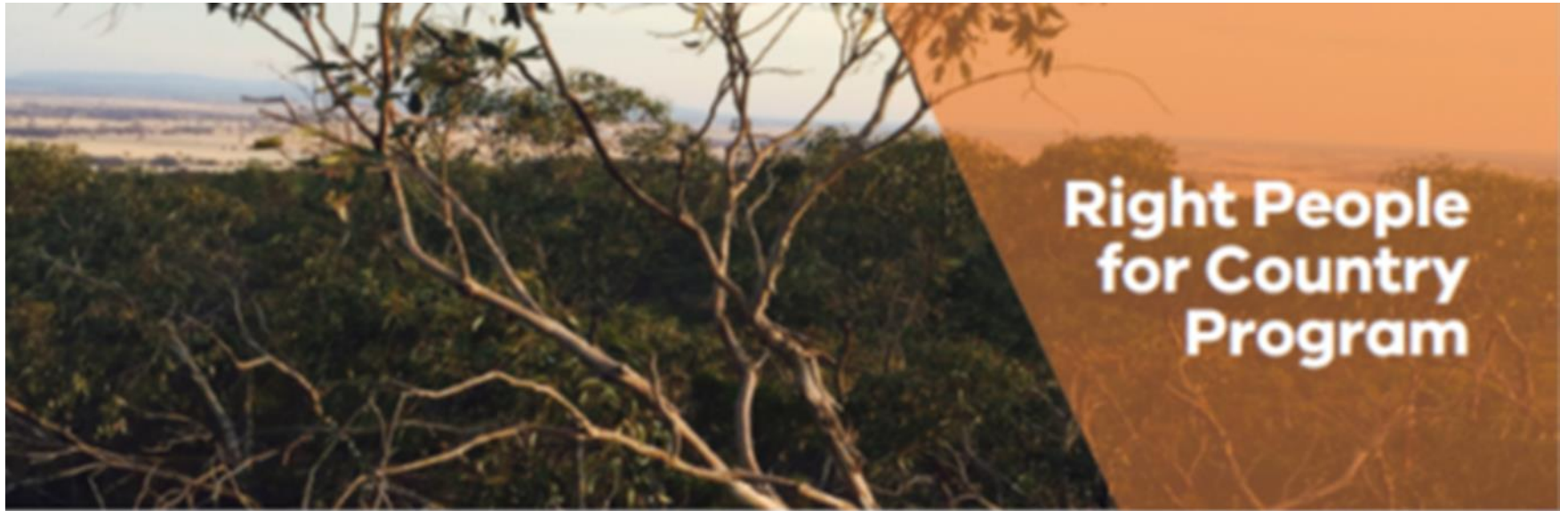
REPORT TO TAUNGURUNG CLANS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and  
Right People for Country program (RPFc)

# Right People for Country program

[www.dpc.vic.gov.au/rightpeopleforcountry](http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/rightpeopleforcountry)





# Traditional Owner agreement making

RPfC supports Traditional Owner groups to make durable agreements:

- Between groups – about boundaries / extent of Country
- Within groups – about representation and membership and engagement

These agreements can assist Traditional Owner groups to gain formal recognition under the Aboriginal Heritage Act and Traditional Owner Settlement Act / Native Title Act.


# How does RPfC works?

## Principles:

- Traditional Owner-led
- Tailored and flexible support
- Confidentiality
- Coordination
- Relationships

# Family Engagement - Key Success Factors

- Traditional Owner leadership
- Inclusive of all families
- Transparent process
- Independent facilitators
- Therapeutic approach



**Right People for Country Program**

## Family Re-Engagement Process Story

**Designing the process**

In 2014, the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) board requested support from the Right People for Country program and Native Title Services Victoria to strengthen engagement with all their native title holders through a process of family meetings.

BGLC wanted to be confident that it is doing everything it can to look after the rights and interests of all native title holders.

BGLC also wanted to demonstrate its commitment to engaging with the broader native title group in preparation for the renegotiation of their 2005 Settlement Agreements.

In particular BGLC wanted to:

- Hear from families about what's important to them – hopes, aspirations, priorities
- Hear how families want to participate and whether there are barriers to participation
- Share information about new opportunities in native title through the proposed renegotiation under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act

BGLC requested independent facilitators to facilitate meetings with each family. The facilitators worked with BGLC to design the family meeting process.

**Family meetings**

Over a period of seven months, Right People for Country facilitators held 16 family meetings with 67 participants. These meetings were organised through key family contacts and were held at a time and place chosen by each family. Families were able to tell their stories in a comfortable space and in their own voice. After each meeting a summary was sent back to each family to review. These summaries were then de-identified and collated into one Family Re-Engagement Report.

“Doing all those family meetings, giving people the chance to review the meeting summaries and identify priorities, collating all the feedback for the board to hear – it worked really well. People really appreciated the opportunity to engage. It helped to change people's perceptions of BGLC,” reflects Jennifer Bear, current BGLC chairperson.

“What worked was being really open and transparent. BGLC was able to hear the reasons why people aren't involved, and receive ideas to address those issues. At the same time, BGLC was able to let people know that we don't have anything to hide” says Janine Coombes, BGLC board member and chairperson at the time of the family meetings. A personal highlight was that Traditional Owners living off Country, in Melbourne, felt included.”

**ABORIGINAL VICTORIA**

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# Information Management