

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION

ABORIGINAL TOURISM

ACTION PLAN 2025



[TOURISM.SA.GOV.AU](https://tourism.sa.gov.au)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This document acknowledges and respects that all tourism activity and development take place on lands traditionally owned by South Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and encourages Aboriginal communities to be a part of the current and future South Australian tourism successes.

For the purpose of this Plan Aboriginal tourism is defined as the act of participating in a tour, experience or activity that involves interaction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, community, site or artefact (including retail purchases), in a manner that is appropriate, respectful, and true to the Aboriginal culture, heritage and traditions being presented.

It is recommended that where Aboriginal culture is the product, Aboriginal people determine its content and interpretation. As owners of their culture, and through participation, the integrity and authenticity of the product or experience and its regional context can be maintained.

Note: "Aboriginal" refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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INTRODUCTION

The South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030 and the Regional Visitor Strategy 2025 identify Aboriginal and cultural tourism as an important sector that contributes to the South Australian economy. The South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) is committed to ensuring that the Aboriginal tourism sector is supported, through a cooperative approach to product and experience development, marketing and capability building.

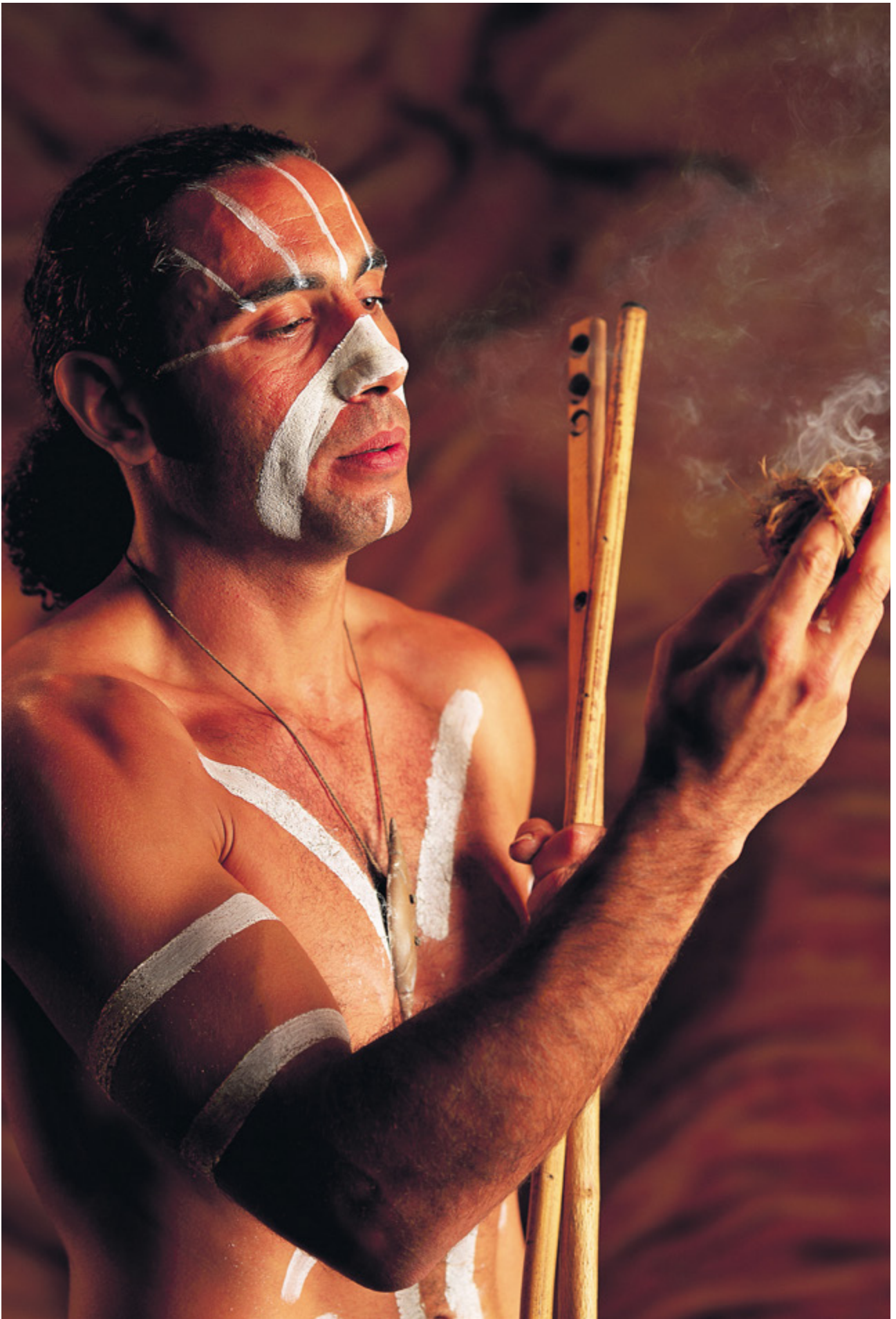
The SATC's Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2025 has been developed to ensure our state is considered by consumers as a destination rich in Aboriginal culture and history and that we have quality tourism products that deliver the experience to visitors.

Our aim is to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to develop and promote a number of new tourism products or experiences throughout the domestic and international tourism distribution network, along with supporting direct to consumer Aboriginal cultural experiences, within the next five years.

To be successful, the SATC will focus on the following four key objectives:

1. Encourage investment in new, and enhance existing, Aboriginal tourism products, experiences and activation of natural assets.
2. Provide industry capability building opportunities for new and existing Aboriginal tourism operators and ensure quality service, products and experiences are delivered to visitors.
3. Foster strong partnerships and build meaningful relationships between community groups, private investors and local, state and federal governments.
4. Promote and market Aboriginal Tourism to South Australia's key domestic and international markets.

This Plan provides the SATC, key industry stakeholders and regional partners with clear direction that will assist us in reaching our targets and growing the Aboriginal tourism sector in our state.



Above Karl Telfer Paitya Dancers, Adelaide

BACKGROUND

Aboriginal tourism is defined as the act of participating in a tour, experience or activity that involves interaction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, community, site or artefact (including retail purchases), in a manner that is appropriate, respectful, and true to the Aboriginal culture, heritage and traditions being presented.

Aboriginal Tourism in Australia:

- Australia's Aboriginal tourism sector has an estimated value of \$5.8 billion annually, catering to 910,000 international visitors and 688,000 overnight domestic trips in 2016 (Australian Government Office of the Arts 2020, Consultation Paper on Growing Indigenous Visual Arts).
- In 2017, more than 820,000 international tourists engaged with Aboriginal art while in Australia, an increase of 41% since 2013 (Australian Council

for the Arts, First Nations Arts Engagement International Tourists, November 18, 2018).

Aboriginal tourism businesses can be defined as being:

- Wholly owned and operated by Aboriginal people;
- Operated in partnership with non-Aboriginal people and have the ongoing consent of the appropriate Aboriginal people; and
- Those businesses that are owned and/or managed by Aboriginal people, as well as those non-Aboriginal businesses that deliver true Aboriginal cultural experiences (developed by way of joint ventures or collaborative marketing).



BACKGROUND

Aboriginal Tourism Research in South Australia

Traditionally, Aboriginal tourism experiences in South Australia have been targeted at international visitors, appealing mostly to Western Hemisphere markets. Given the impact of COVID-19 on global travel, our focus will be on supporting diversification of Aboriginal tourism experiences to ensure their offerings have a domestic focus and appeal.

ABORIGINAL TOURISM ACTIVITY YE SEPTEMBER 2020

\$195M

Total trip spend for visitors to South Australia who undertook an Aboriginal Experience. Expenditure peaked at \$275M pre-COVID.

5%

Average annual growth rate over five years to December 2019 (pre-COVID)

\$146M

International visitors total trip spend for international visitors to South Australia who undertook an Aboriginal Experience

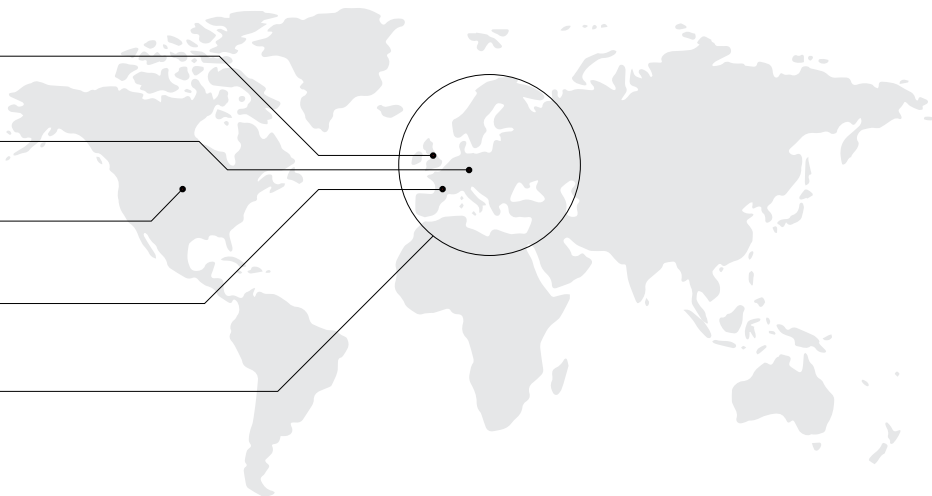
29%

International overnight visitors to SA undertook an experience that involved Aboriginal culture

* SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL VISITOR SURVEY & NATIONAL VISITOR SURVEY

THE TOP FIVE MARKETS TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA WITH AN INTEREST IN ABORIGINAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES:

- 1. UNITED KINGDOM
- 2. GERMANY
- 3. UNITED STATES
- 4. FRANCE
- 5. OTHER EUROPE



BACKGROUND

DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT TRIPS THAT INCLUDED AN ABORIGINAL TOURISM EXPERIENCE
2015 - 2019 TOTAL (000)



INCIDENCE OF TYPE OF ABORIGINAL EXPERIENCES ENGAGED WITH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA			
	INTERNATIONAL	INTERSTATE	INTRASTATE
EXPERIENCE ABORIGINAL ART/CRAFT & CULTURAL DISPLAYS	80%	70%	64%
VISIT AN ABORIGINAL SITE/COMMUNITY	51%	65%	43%
ATTEND ABORIGINAL PERFORMANCE	18%	N/A	N/A

Existing Aboriginal Tourism Operators in South Australia

There is a wide variety of Aboriginal tourism products and experiences across South Australia, including, but not limited to:

- Ngaut Ngaut Conservation Park on the Murray River
- Wilpena Pound in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park
- The Ceduna Arts and Cultural Centre
- The Head of Bight Whale Watching experience on the Far West Coast
- Dhillba Guuranda-Innes National Park on the Yorke Peninsula.

There is also an array of artworks, exhibitions and artefacts on display at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute and the South Australian Museum has the largest collection of Australian Aboriginal cultural material in the world.

There are many new opportunities in South Australia that need further exploration, and through implementation of the actions outlined in this Plan, we will seek to include but not limit to, activation of cultural stories and assets in:

- Metropolitan Adelaide, including the Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre at Lot Fourteen on North Terrace
- Kanku-Breakaways Conservation Park in the Flinders Ranges and Outback
- APY Lands in Central Australia
- Raukkan community in the Murray River, Lakes and Coorong region
- International Dark Skies Reserve in the Mid Murray
- Goolwa Wharf, Murray Mouth and Granite Island, Fleurieu Peninsula

Discussions have also commenced with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Communities regarding new projects that have been identified in the Barossa and Clare Valley, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide Hills, Riverland, Limestone Coast, and the Yorke, Eyre and Fleurieu Peninsula's.

South Australian Government Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan 2021-2022

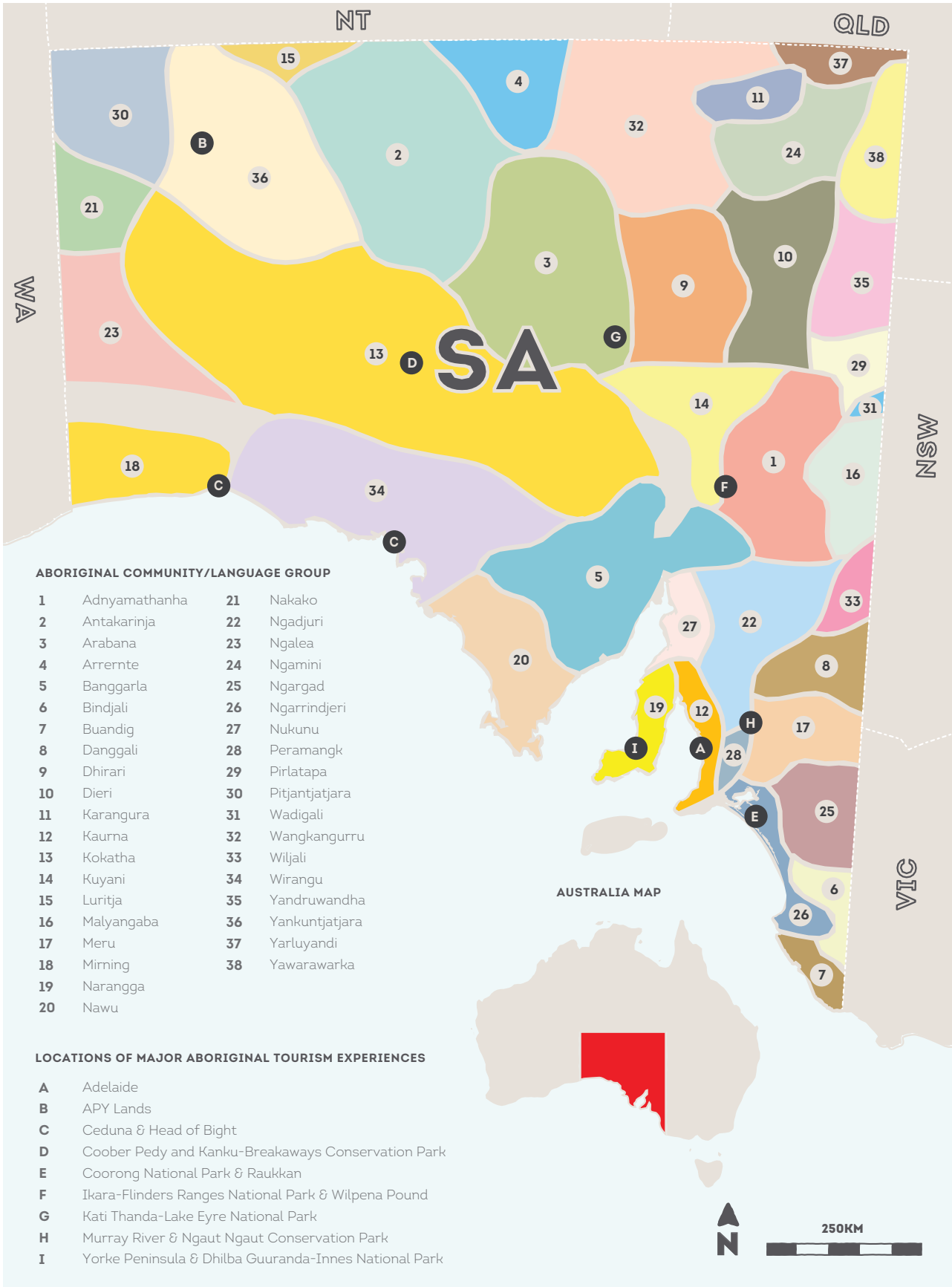
Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, is the South Australian Government's lead agency on Aboriginal affairs, providing engagement, support and advice for Aboriginal people and government.

The South Australian Government is committed to improving the opportunities and services available to Aboriginal South Australians. To achieve this ambition, the Government has developed the Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan that outlines a series of initiatives and actions. The key areas outlined are:

- Creating opportunities for Aboriginal jobs and businesses
- Improving the quality and delivery of services to Aboriginal South Australians
- Building strong and capable Aboriginal communities.

The SATC's Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2025 aligns with the South Australian Government's Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan and directly supports all key business areas outlined.

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY/LANGUAGE GROUPS & LOCATIONS OF MAJOR ABORIGINAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES



ACKNOWLEDGMENT: Names and regions as used in *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia* (D Horton).

DISCLAIMER: This map indicates only the general location of large groupings of people which may include smaller groups such as clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. Boundaries may not be exact.



OTHER KEY GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC)
The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
Indigenous Business Australia (IBA)
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)
Tourism Australia (TA)

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC)

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC) is an Australian Government public service central department of state with broad ranging responsibilities, primary of which is for intergovernmental and whole of government policy coordination and assisting the Prime Minister of Australia in managing the Cabinet of Australia. The PMC provides funding to the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) to implement a range of initiatives to improve the lives of indigenous Australians.

pmc.gov.au

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

The NIAA is committed to improving the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by working to influence policy across the entire Australian Government. The NIAA liaises closely with state and territory governments and indigenous peak bodies, stakeholders and service providers are delivering for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as intended.

The NIAA also provides funding to projects aimed at helping Indigenous Australians. A \$40m Indigenous Tourism Fund was recently launched by the NIAA to deliver a package of support over the next four years, for Indigenous owned tourism businesses and communities.

niaa.gov.au

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA)

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) is one of the key Government agencies that provide business support and access to capital for indigenous businesses. IBA's *Business Solutions Program* provides finance products and business support with a focus on early stage entrepreneurs and businesses unable to access commercial finance. IBA's *Investment and Asset Management Program* supports the creation of sustainable ventures that provide meaningful opportunities for Indigenous Australians to accumulate wealth, develop their capacity to participate in Australia's economy, create jobs, increase training and skills development, and supply goods and services.

iba.gov.au

Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) is a corporate Commonwealth entity. The ILSC assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people to realise economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits that the ownership and management of land, water and water related rights can bring. The ILSC provides this assistance through the acquisition and management of rights and interests in land, salt water and fresh water country.

centraloffice@ilsc.gov.au

Tourism Australia (TA)

Tourism Australia (TA) is the Australian Government agency responsible for attracting international visitors to Australia, both for leisure and business events. The organisation is active in 15 key global markets and has traditionally applied expertise and knowledge in promoting Australia to international markets. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and international borders closing, TA pivoted its strategies and campaigns to launch new inward marketing and messaging supporting domestic travel within Australia. Once international travel restrictions start easing, TA will again ramp up its attention on our key global markets when the time is right.

tourism.australia.com

Discover Aboriginal Experiences

In 2018, Tourism Australia launched a new Signature Experiences Collective, Discover Aboriginal Experiences (DAE). DAE is a collective of quality, authentic Aboriginal guided tourism experiences that have met guidelines to ensure they are able to meet the needs and expectations of trade and the international market. Members are required to be endorsed by their respective State Territory Tourism Organisations, consistently meet the membership criteria, and wish to partner with Tourism Australia in a collective manner.

There are currently 45 members involved in the collective. South Australian operator Wilpena Pound Resort is a member.

tourism.australia.com/aboriginal

OTHER KEY GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC)

Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)

Department for Environment and Water (DEW)

Regional Development Australia (RDA)

Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC)

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is the South Australian Government's lead agency on Aboriginal affairs, providing engagement, support and advice for Aboriginal people and government.

Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation works with Aboriginal people, communities and organisations with a focus on:

- empowering Aboriginal people to have a stronger voice in government decision-making
- supporting the state's three Aboriginal landholding authorities: the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT), Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) and Maralinga Tjarutja (MT)
- encouraging engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders by the government, business and community sectors
- recognising and celebrating the contributions of Aboriginal culture and peoples to South Australian society
- partnering with Aboriginal people to protect and preserve Aboriginal heritage
- working with Aboriginal South Australians to ensure that the needs of Aboriginal people and communities are met, including in areas of identified disadvantage, as well as those of strength.

dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/aboriginal-affairs-and-reconciliation

Lot Fourteen

DPC is responsible for leading the redevelopment of Lot Fourteen, the former Royal Adelaide Hospital site, into a world-class innovation neighbourhood for work, study and exploration.

lotfourteen.com.au/

Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre (AACC)

The new Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre (AACC) will be located at Lot Fourteen on North Terrace in Adelaide. The AACC will provide an extraordinary, immersive experience combining traditional storytelling with modern technology. The new centre will showcase the South Australian Museums collection of more than 30,000 items from around Australia, making it the most comprehensive collection of Australian Aboriginal cultural artefacts in the world. The AACC is due to open in early 2025.

The Circle, First Nations Entrepreneurs Hub

An initiative of the Adelaide City Deal and located at Lot Fourteen, connects eligible South Australian based Aboriginal businesses to culturally respectful, professional and opportunity driven services. The Hub fosters the innovation and growth of a sustainable and thriving Aboriginal business sector, including priority growth sectors such as Tourism, Creative Industries, Food, Wine and Agribusiness. Industry partners, service providers and government representatives will connect to Aboriginal business members via workshops, presentations, networking events, service provision and mentoring opportunities.

Arts SA

DPC leads initiatives and programs that showcase and cherish the state's treasures, culture and artistic talents.

The role of Arts SA is to ensure that the state recognises and capitalises on economic opportunities arising from the diverse arts and cultural organisations, practitioners, events and physical assets in the state by developing programs that build on cultural heritage and creativity and providing financial support to the creative industries.

In 2019, the Arts and Culture Plan South Australia 2019-2024 launched with the intent to guide the growth of investment in the state's leadership in the arts and cultural sector.

dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/arts-and-culture

**Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) -
*The Office of Industry Advocate***

The South Australian Government is committed to increasing procurement opportunities and building the capacity and capability of Aboriginal businesses to ensure all South Australians have access to the benefits of economic participation.

In 2015, the South Australian Division of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation led the development of a new strategy to support improved Aboriginal economic participation outcomes. In 2016, the Office of the Industry Advocate took carriage of the Aboriginal Economic Participation through Procurement Strategy and in 2017 the Aboriginal Economic Participation Policy was embedded in the South Australian Industry Participation Policy.

industryadvocate.sa.gov.au/support-for-aboriginalbusinesses

Department for Environment and Water (DEW)

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) supports First People's connection to Country, including through co-management opportunities.

Co-management opportunities in South Australia is a partnership between the State Government and Aboriginal groups to help manage our national parks, combining traditional knowledge with contemporary park management. Co-management also gives Aboriginal people a voice, a framework to contribute to a range of State priorities, such as nature-based tourism initiatives and promoting community health and wellbeing.

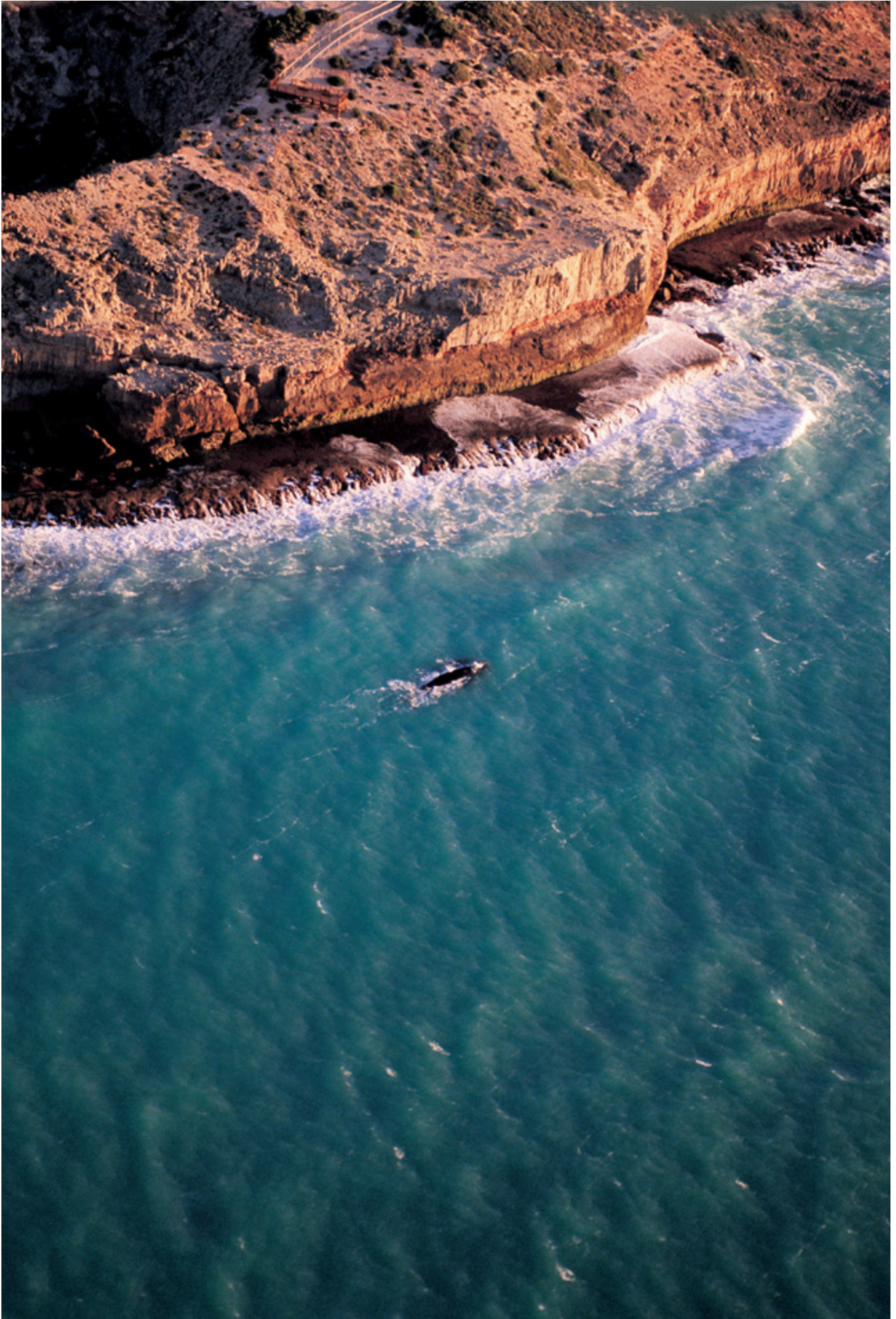
There are now 12 co-management agreements in place over 35 of South Australia's parks and reserves (or 64% of the reserve system), which equates to 13% of South Australia's land area.

environment.sa.gov.au

Regional Development Australia (RDA)

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a national network of committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support and broker economic development opportunities for their regions.

rda.gov.au



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

For the SATC to be successful in developing and promoting new Aboriginal tourism products or experiences throughout the domestic and international tourism distribution network, along with supporting direct to

consumer Aboriginal and cultural experiences, within the next five years, efforts must be made to build on existing strengths, meet new challenges, pursue opportunities and acknowledge threats.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal experiences for international visitors to SA have high appeal, with nearly 30% engaging in a cultural product/experience• South Australia has the largest collection of Aboriginal artefacts in the world based in Adelaide• Federal and State Government commitment to build a \$200 million Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre at Lot Fourteen on North Terrace in Adelaide• Existing natural assets and culturally significant sites, including the Kanku-Breakaways Conservation Park, Wilpena Pound, the Murray River and the Coorong National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited number of Aboriginal tourism operators currently delivering experiences for consumers• Aboriginal tourism experiences are traditionally promoted to International visitors, limiting their consumer market

OPPORTUNITIES

- Development of world class experiences at significant sites, natural assets and within communities
- Existing Aboriginal tourism operators ready to activate natural assets and significant sites
- Cross government department activation (e.g. DEW Nature-based Tourism activation, DPC-AAR, ILSC, IBA)
- Diversifying Aboriginal tourism businesses into tourism offerings targeting domestic market
- Development of Aboriginal tourism product clusters and trails using pre-existing products (e.g. Adelaide, Murray River, Flinders Ranges/Outback and Kangaroo Island)
- Fostering partnerships between existing tourism operators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver content in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and true to Aboriginal culture and traditions
- Flow on benefits to regional communities (e.g. social, cultural and economic)

THREATS

- Competing destinations – Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland are known for Aboriginal tourism products and cultural experiences
- The delivery of Aboriginal tourism experiences not meeting the expectations of consumers
- Budget restraints limiting training and marketing for Aboriginal tourism operators and experiences in South Australia
- Limited funding and investment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to deliver new tourism products and cultural experiences
- The primary consumers of Aboriginal tourism experiences are international visitors; the Australian border closing due to unforeseen circumstances, including the COVID-19 pandemic, may significantly impact visitation from this market

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following four objectives have been identified to assist the SATC in developing and promoting a number of new Aboriginal tourism products or experiences in the domestic and international distribution network, along with supporting direct to consumer Aboriginal experiences, within the next five years.

1. Encourage investment in new, and enhance existing, Aboriginal tourism products, experiences and activation of natural assets
2. Provide industry capability building opportunities for new and existing Aboriginal tourism operators and ensure quality service, products and experiences are delivered to visitors
3. Foster strong partnerships and build meaningful relationships between Aboriginal community groups, private investors and local, state and federal governments
4. Promote and market Aboriginal tourism to South Australia's key domestic and international target markets



OBJECTIVE	ACTION
<p>1. Encourage investment in new, and enhance existing, Aboriginal tourism products, experiences and activation of natural assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tourism advice and support in developing new products and experiences with domestic and international appeal • Seek and communicate funding opportunities for Aboriginal tourism businesses to deliver projects • Encourage and facilitate business and investment partnerships to deliver new experiences for consumers • Identify key South Australian natural and cultural assets and support new Aboriginal tourism ventures to activate and commercialise the opportunity
<p>2. Provide industry capability building opportunities for new and existing Aboriginal tourism operators and ensure quality service, products and experiences are delivered to visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide industry tools and resources toolkit to engage new and existing Aboriginal tourism operators • Undertake Product Assessments and develop individual action plans for Aboriginal tourism operators to support product development • Promote Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TICSA) training programs and encourage Aboriginal tourism participation through support packages • Partner with Tourism Australia to investigate options for for an industry based familiarisation (famil) program across Australia; showcasing best practice in delivering Aboriginal tourism experiences • Investigate the delivery of a Business Mentoring program to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the quality of existing Aboriginal tourism experiences and develop sustainable business practices 2. Improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal entrepreneurs in South Australia e.g. The Circle - First Nations Entrepreneurs Hub at Lot Fourteen 3. Provide opportunities for product/sales distribution through facilitating global tourism partnerships 4. Increase the number of SA products featured in Tourism Australia's 'Discover Aboriginal Experiences' program

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
<p>3. Foster strong partnerships and build meaningful relationships between community groups, private investors and local, state and federal governments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in regular meetings with key Federal, State and Local Government stakeholders to ensure Aboriginal tourism operators and projects are considered and prioritised • Facilitate meetings and support Aboriginal tourism operators and community leadership groups navigate Government support • Investigate the establishment of an independent representative group for Aboriginal tourism in South Australia • Participate in the development of the new Aboriginal Art and Cultures Centre at Lot Fourteen on North Terrace in Adelaide through the Executive Steering Committee
<p>4. Promote and market Aboriginal tourism to South Australia's key target markets, in particular the top western hemisphere international markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new consumer content on southaustralia.com and australia.com promoting Aboriginal tourism experiences and significant cultural assets • Produce a series of short videos promoting Aboriginal tourism operators and an overview of their product/experience. 'Aboriginal Tourism Champions Videos' • Seek investment in cooperative partnership campaigns –working with key trade partners who want to engage with Aboriginal tourism product • Arrange and host famils showcasing the best Aboriginal tourism experiences for industry wholesalers who have an interest in Aboriginal tourism products and who could sell in domestic and international markets • Develop and implement a new marketing plan to promote South Australia's Aboriginal tourism products and experiences through digital and social media platforms • Leverage opportunities through Tourism Australia's 'Discover Aboriginal Experiences' Program, the Aussie Specialist Program and platforms such as australia.com



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