

Joel Williams

Response to the Aboriginal Lands Act Review

I Joel Williams submit the following response to the proposed changes in the Aboriginal Lands Act Review 2022.

1. Revisions to Aboriginal Land Council Tasmania (ALCT) Elections

- The community does not want any revisions to the ALCT elections.
- The current process gives Aboriginal people the opportunity to challenge anyone applying to get on the roll who are not Aboriginal. Anyone challenged must prove their eligibility through an Aboriginal Panel appointed by the Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner. This is the most appropriate, transparent, and fair process.
- If anyone applies for anything else, such as employment benefits or getting a driver's licence, they must prove who they are. This process should not be any different.

2. A land management role for local or regional Aboriginal community organisations.

- Aboriginal land managers who look after Aboriginal land, are experienced, and have the deep knowledge and expertise to care for our country and its resources.
- We should be caring for country in a united way to maintain cultural resources and access for all Aboriginal people.
- Land management responsibility must not be taken away from the current process through ALCT.

3. Identification of land suitable for transfer

- All lands across lutruwita are equally important and significant to all Aboriginal land. The Tasmanian Aboriginal community has said they want to see the return of any (preferably all) Crown Lands to Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

4. Governance issues

- ALCT is collective and inclusive ownership model and community members are part of its governance, unlike other organisations. In other organisations, rights are only given to members on their list, it is exclusive and any transfer of land to these organisations will exclude Aboriginal people across Tasmania.
- ALCT is open and transparent to the community, which is its role. Members attend Aboriginal community meetings and events, as well as host community discussions and forums regarding Aboriginal land management and use.

The Aboriginal community must decide how land is returned and managed.