

Communities management approach



We aim to work responsibly and respectfully with our communities, looking for ways to maximise the benefits of our presence, and providing support when needed.

We play an important role in communities – providing reliable and affordable energy, employing around 5,000 people across Australia and the Pacific, and supporting educational opportunities through the Origin Energy Foundation.

Working with communities

Our assets – such as power stations, gas processing facilities and pipelines – can have a lifespan of several decades, which means we have a long-term presence in the communities in which we operate. Our projects can deliver a range of benefits for local communities, including employment for people living in the region, opportunities for local suppliers, financial payments for landholders and Native Title holders, and taxes, levies and royalties for governments.

We are committed to respecting the rights and interests of the communities in which we operate. We consult with our local communities through the lifecycle of an asset to understand and manage the environmental, economic and social impacts of our activities and maximise the benefits.

While we engage with communities across Origin sites, our three most significant interactions occur at our Australia Pacific LNG operations in Queensland, as part of our Beetaloo Basin exploration project in the Northern Territory, and at our power stations, the largest of which is Eraring Power Station in New South Wales.

We have dedicated specialists across Origin who manage relationships with local communities and our stakeholders.

Traditional Owners

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia.

We acknowledge many of our resources and facilities are located on the land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner groups and we respectfully engage with those groups and their communities, with unwavering respect for their enduring connection to land and sea.

We strive to achieve mutually beneficial relationships and outcomes, and seek to conduct our business activities in a way that fosters full respect for the dignity, human rights, aspirations, cultures and natural resources-based livelihoods of Indigenous peoples.

Origin works to implement our obligations in our formal agreements with Traditional Owners, guided by the principles of both Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), as articulated by the International Finance Corporation Performance Standard 7, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We have a set of five guiding principles for our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all of our activities:

1. Respect

Origin operates assets and enterprises on traditional Aboriginal Lands across Australia. The Intent of this principle is to encourage Origin employees and contractors to be comfortable acknowledging, recognising and respecting the rights of Australia's first peoples.

Employees and contractors participate in various aspects of Aboriginal cultural life, including Acknowledgment of Country at meetings and events, Welcome to Country ceremonies, and ways to ensure that Traditional Owners continue to have access to places of cultural importance in areas where we operate, respecting cultural protocols.

2. Involvement

The intent of this principle is to ensure that Origin employees and contractors understand how their job, and Origin's activities, impact on Aboriginal groups. Understanding this then informs the nature and type of relationship that should be maintained with the relevant Aboriginal group. Key elements include:

- ensure Aboriginal groups have a say on decisions that may affect them, such as any potential cultural heritage impacts, environmental impacts, limitations on access to country and sharing of benefits;

- ensure there is a two-way conversation about Aboriginal groups' interests, such as Indigenous employment and procurement targets and how we execute our RAP; and
- ensure there is a regular flow of information in a format that can be readily understood by the relevant Aboriginal people.

3. Cultural heritage protection and management

The intent of this principle is to ensure that we proactively consult and work with relevant Aboriginal groups to protect and manage cultural heritage in the areas of our activities. Key elements include cultural heritage in all risk assessments and avoidance measures.

4. Sharing benefits

The intent of this principle is to ensure that Origin contributes towards community health and well-being as well as playing an appropriate role in increasing Aboriginal communities' participation in economic development. Key elements include:

- using the comparative advantage of the Origin business to maximise education and vocational training, local employability and business development;
- promoting good health, cultural maintenance, environmental protection and good governance;
- involving the skills and partnership of others;
- deploying resources according to needs, seeking to benefit the Aboriginal community as a whole rather than individuals, political groups and / or their supporters; and
- not directly substituting for government provision of the same services.

5. Local level commitments and delivery

Doing what we promised to do is a simple way to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal communities. The Intent of this principle is to ensure that all Origin employees and contractors:

- are clear about what mutual commitments are being made when involving Aboriginal communities and discussing shared benefits; and
- acknowledge that any company commitments that are made, must be delivered.

Our [Code of Conduct](#) also states our expectations of individuals when engaging with Traditional Owners.

Australia Pacific LNG

Currently, the largest asset with the most significant and widespread potential impact on its neighbouring communities is Australia Pacific LNG, where Origin is a shareholder and the upstream operator.

We regularly engage with local councils, chambers of commerce, economic development groups and community organisations. Although all employees act as Origin ambassadors in the community, our social performance specialists – who live in the regional areas in which they work – manage effective engagement with the local community and work with them to identify ways we can positively contribute, including through community investment programs.

Landholders

Federal, state and territory governments hold the rights to minerals and resources found beneath the surface of the land, including natural gas. Companies apply for and pay for the ability to explore and develop these resources across defined geographical tenures.

We proactively engage with our landholders, as well as neighbouring landholders who could be impacted by our activities. Our Stakeholder Liaisons live in the communities in which they work and provide dedicated points of contact for all matters relating to land access, helping us to build and maintain positive, long-term working relationships with landholders.

Before we begin operations in areas where Australian Pacific LNG construction or development activities are proposed, we meet with landholders and explain how our potential future activities might impact them.

We work with landholders to agree access to and development of natural resources. We also agree the accommodation of our infrastructure associated with our operations (such as pipelines, wells, gas processing facilities and water treatment facilities) on their land. Trust and respect for the rights of landholders form the basis of our approach to any negotiations.

Conduct and Compensation Agreements (CCAs) between Origin and landholders set out the details of how we will enter the land to carry out our activities as upstream operator of Australia Pacific LNG and how landholders will be compensated.

We also instigate an independent review of the negotiation process with landholders, as an assurance activity. This review assesses our conduct throughout the negotiation process to ensure it meets the standards set out in our Code of Conduct and identifies potential improvements.

As the upstream operator, we are required to comply with the mandatory conditions of the Queensland Government's Land Access Code. The Land Access Code sets out best practice guidelines and requirements in relation to the behaviour and conduct of resource companies and their employees, including ensuring employees are trained, vehicles travel at an appropriate speed, all gates are left as they are found (either closed or open) and waste is removed from private property. We outline our expectations in relation to employee interactions with landholders in our Code of Conduct.

Traditional Owners

Across our activities in the Surat Basin in Queensland, we work closely with several Traditional Owner groups, collaborating to protect cultural heritage and identify opportunities for employment, capability building and contractor engagement.

Australia Pacific LNG holds Native Title Agreements and Indigenous Land Use Agreements with Traditional Owners, which recognise native title rights and interests, and help to identify sustainable social and economic development opportunities including learning, mentoring and employment.

Australia Pacific LNG also has Cultural Heritage Management Plans in place with Traditional Owners, which set out processes and plans for protecting Indigenous cultural heritage in areas where we operate. Our Cultural Heritage Officers assess proposed developments for areas of cultural significance, to ensure they are protected for future generations.

Beetaloo Exploration Project

We have been engaging with community members across the Northern Territory since we became the operator of the Beetaloo Basin permits in 2014.

The Beetaloo Exploration Project aims to generate sustainable, long-term benefits for Native Title holders, pastoralists and communities in the Barkly region, and more broadly for the Northern Territory. To enable successful long-term development, Origin has incorporated sustainable development principles in its management approach to the project, aligned with the Northern Territory Government's aim of ecologically sustainable development for natural resources.

For Origin, sustainable development means operating in a way that seeks to ensure any development generates an equitable distribution of benefit across various legitimate stakeholders. Beyond royalty payments to the Northern Territory Government and payments to Native Title holders, Origin seeks to

maximise broad-based local participation in education, training, employment and commercial business enterprise opportunities associated with the project.

Origin's focus for sustainable development is on the people, environment, communities and the health and safety of those who participate in, or are affected by, the activities of our assets. This approach facilitates the management and mitigation of potential adverse impacts; and requires Origin to work in partnership with others who have the necessary knowledge and skills to maximise the creation of value for stakeholders, including Native Title holders and the people of the Northern Territory.

Native Title holders

The Federal Court of Australia has made Native Title determinations over the entire Beetaloo Exploration Project area. The Federal Court determinations set out the Native Title holders, decision makers and the decision-making process for those areas in accordance with the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Native Title holders are those people referred to in the Federal Court determinations who have both the legal and traditional rights to make decisions for those areas. This is distinct from Traditional Owners, who may have decision making authority under traditional law to their respective country, but not with regards to the project area.

The exploration agreements with Native Title holders and Native Title claimants for the project area include consent to the grant of tenure and exploration activity. Native Title holders have the right and opportunity through multiple avenues to be kept informed about Origin's exploration activities, including annual on country meetings, sharing of work programs, sacred site clearance and avoidance surveys, and site visits.

We work closely with the Northern Land Council (NLC) in its capacity as the representative body of the Native Title holders under the *Native Title Act* and as the agent for the Registered Native Title Body Corporate for the Native Title holders. The NLC's role includes the responsibility to ensure Native Title holders are identified and consulted in negotiating and concluding agreements, providing independent legal advice and other expertise.

Between 1983 and today, the NLC has conducted considerable ethnographic work in the Beetaloo Basin that informs the identification of Native Title holders, the traditional decision-making processes, and information relating to sacred sites.

How we engage

Origin is committed to early and continuing engagement with stakeholders. This engagement is fundamental to secure support for Origin's exploration activities in the Beetaloo Basin.

Origin's social performance team is responsible and accountable for the day-to-day management of matters relating to local Native Title holders and local communities, including the management of native title obligations, sacred sites protection and negotiation and implementation of agreements.

The social performance team strives to build and maintain trusted relationships with Native Title holders and local communities, arranging on country meetings and site inspections, as well as preparing key materials about project activity to inform and support engagement. The team also provides mentoring support to Aboriginal people working on the project.

Origin adheres to all relevant domestic legislation and works to the principles of FPIC. We apply the definition of FPIC set out in the International Finance Corporation Performance Standard 7 (IFC PS7), which is now also reflected in the Equator Principles. We seek to apply the principles of FPIC across all current and future engagement with Native Title holders.

The principles of FPIC include continual and transparent sharing of information and consultation. All work programs are shared with Native Title holders in advance of the proposed commencement of work activity, providing an opportunity for Native Title holders to review the work program and initiate a sacred site avoidance and clearance survey. Origin's exploration work can only proceed once it has been cleared by Native Title holders and must comply with any conditions set by them.

Origin meets formally with Native Title holders on an annual work program basis to detail current and planned exploration activity and answer any questions or concerns that may arise. Native Title holders are also invited to site to view and inspect activity.

We also participate in a number of community engagement sessions and events across the Northern Territory, including regional shows, local business conferences and presentations to local community groups and businesses on the opportunities the Beetaloo project may offer.

More information on how we engage with Native Title holders, including the history of our current exploration agreements, can be found in our [Beetaloo Native Title Holder Engagement](#) report.

Eraring Power Station

The Eraring Power Station Community Forum was established in December 2002 – before Origin acquired the power station from the New South Wales Government in 2013 – in response to concern from local environmental and community groups regarding Eraring's environmental impacts. With representatives from the community and Origin, the forum aims to enhance understanding of both the power station and community issues by providing an opportunity to share updates, raise concerns, and discuss proposed community investment and activities to mitigate and manage impacts.

As part of the Eraring ash dam expansion project, a Community Consultative Committee has been established, comprised of seven community members and representatives of Origin and Lake Macquarie City Council. The committee meets regularly, providing a forum for open dialogue between Origin and representatives of the local community, local councils and other stakeholder groups on issues directly related to the project.

Responding to complaints

Origin has formal grievance mechanisms in place to allow community members to share feedback and concerns and have these addressed. Complaints can be reported to Origin through a variety of channels, including email, the Origin website, community hotlines and in person at regional offices. Each complaint is investigated and the outcome shared with the complainant.

We monitor complaints, our response time and the resolution of these matters and aim to identify opportunities to proactively manage issues before they escalate into formal complaints. We use feedback from our stakeholders to continuously improve our processes.

Supporting communities

We work to get energy right for our communities in four key areas related to our business: supporting local jobs and suppliers; investing in our communities; protecting vulnerable customers; and providing educational opportunities through the Origin Energy Foundation.

Supporting local jobs and suppliers

As well as delivering energy, we bring other benefits to communities by providing jobs, purchasing from local suppliers and offering financial incentives for our people to 'live local'. We also run regional apprenticeship schemes to build local workforce capacity through training and development.

We recognise that procuring goods and services from local and regional suppliers is an important avenue for sharing economic value with the communities in which we operate and for promoting sustainable community development. We seek to contribute to regional economies by procuring local goods and services wherever possible and working with our major contractors to do the same.

The Australia Pacific LNG Regional Buy Program, which has been in place since 2011, connects small businesses in the communities surrounding our operations in the Surat Basin in central Queensland with opportunities to supply Australia Pacific LNG's operations.

More information on our procurement strategies is available in our [Procurement management approach](#).

Investing in communities

We contribute to communities through national programs and partnerships, local and regional community investment programs, and by providing emergency and crisis support.

Nationally, Origin's Little Big Idea seeks Australia's next generation of inventors in an annual competition to find the big, innovative ideas that will shape the future. We are also working with Netball Australia to support players at all levels across the country – from local clubs to the world-leading Australian Diamonds.

Our local community investment targets four priority areas that our communities have told us are important to them; creating safe, vibrant and inclusive communities; building great places to live and work; caring for our environment; and delivering economic benefits. We provide financial and in-kind support, as well as employee volunteering managed through the Origin Energy Foundation.

We support communities impacted by crises, such as bushfires and drought, through corporate and employee donations and employee volunteering.

Protecting vulnerable customers

We work to protect customers experiencing hardship and are committed to developing better support for vulnerable groups in our community, people affected by domestic violence and people in Indigenous, migrant and regional and remote communities.

See our [Customers management approach](#) for more information.

Providing educational opportunities

The Origin Energy Foundation believes in the power of education to help transform lives and improve communities. Founded by Origin in 2010, the Foundation's grants are funded by the interest income from an initial corpus of \$55 million provided by Origin. Origin also funds the running costs, ensuring that all of the investment income goes to community programs.

The Foundation's focus, chosen by Origin's employees, is to support education programs that help break the cycle of disadvantage and empower young Australians to reach their potential. The Foundation concentrates on:

- creating greater gender diversity in STEM education – science, technology, engineering and maths
- providing equality of educational opportunity for Indigenous students, and young people in regional and rural Australia
- supporting capacity-building for the not-for-profit sector.

The Foundation pursues 'engaged philanthropy', fostering active partnerships based on giving financial support and providing opportunities for Origin employees to volunteer their time and expertise.

Working with partners

Through its grants program, the Foundation provides funding to Australian non-profit organisations that support students from early education to university.

The Foundation is a long-term partner, generally supporting programs for more than four years. Most of the programs benefit students in rural and remote communities and almost half assist Indigenous students to gain skills, opportunities and the confidence to succeed at school and university.

Supporting employees' giving

Our employees can donate their time and professional skills to help Foundation partners and support good causes in education through our Give Time volunteer program, which allows employees unlimited days for volunteering. Members of the Board of the Foundation also volunteer their time.

Volunteering opportunities include helping teachers bring science and engineering to life in classrooms around Australia with partners such as SolarBuddy; mentoring students through the Beacon Foundation, Raise Foundation and The Smith Family; and reading with students at Gawura, a

school in Sydney for First Nations children. Our volunteers have also cooked meals for the most vulnerable in our community, built homes, cleaned up rubbish, and restored natural wildlife habitats.

Through our workplace giving program, Give2, Origin employees can give to Australian charities of their choice and the Foundation matches their donation dollar-for-dollar.

See the [Origin Energy Foundation](#) for more information.

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Further information about Origin's performance can be found on our website originenergy.com.au
