



# ON-AIR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Best Practice Guidelines v4 | Q3 2024  
Paramount ANZ Reconciliation Action Plan



*Connection, by Jade Dolman*



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# INTRODUCTION

We live, work, and tell stories on the lands of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations.

At Paramount, we believe that we have a global responsibility to use our platform to amplify, celebrate and show respect for diverse voices and perspectives. Having launched our Reconciliation Action Plan in 2020, we are particularly committed to achieving reconciliation through the power of media, as well as to advocate for a more inclusive and empowered future for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The purpose of these guidelines is to foster effective communication of Paramount ANZ's Acknowledgement of Country through the best practice scenarios that we aim to execute in our on-air content.

We acknowledge the complexity and sensitivities of this subject matter, as well as the differing views that exist. With this in mind, we are putting our best foot forward on the journey of exploring the ways in which we can acknowledge country, but proceeding with awareness, humility and rigorous consultation on this matter. This will be an evolving document.

Our ultimate hope is to acknowledge country consistently and impactfully in an exuberant way that is “authentically Paramount”, organically incorporated and beautifully crafted, so to best express our collective respect with heart and humanity.



# 1. APPLICATION

- We expect our commissioned content filmed in Australia to acknowledge country regardless of platform, genre, duration, or subject matter
- The preferred placement of the Acknowledgement is at the beginning of the first episode of each new season; This demonstrates a prioritization of the practice and sets the intent early; All exceptions should be communicated by the Network Executive Producer as per the escalation process (see **5. ASSISTANCE, APPROVAL & ESCALATION**)
- All programs are encouraged to acknowledge country, and may do so with different frequencies, but the timing of the Acknowledgement as relative to the series should be discussed with the program's network point of contact
- For programs not produced in Australia at any stage of production or post, please speak to your network contact if there is a desire to acknowledge country so that a deeper discussion may be scheduled (see **5. ASSISTANCE, APPROVAL & ESCALATION**)

## 2. PRESENTATION

There are three tiers of options for practical application

### 1. Seamless Integration

The first preference is for the Acknowledgement of Country to be seamlessly integrated into the episode.

One manifestation of this may be for the host to verbally Acknowledge Country in natural, heartfelt language at the top of a series, considering specific attributes of the show, and personal feelings, as in *MasterChef Australia*. Other examples including incorporation of a written acknowledgement prominently displayed in the reception area in *The Dog House Australia*.

This method of inclusion ensures the highest level of audience attention and engagement.

### 2. Supertease Inclusion

The second preference is for the Acknowledgement of Country to be integrated into the supertease (where applicable), if it is not possible for the host to integrate into their script.

The Acknowledgement may be incorporated into the VO script that runs through the supertease (in English) or may be incorporated in a visual manner (in text). This allows for the Acknowledgement to remain an organic and visually engaging part of the episode itself.

### 3. Show-specific Pre-roll

Where seamless integration into the main episode is not possible, the preference is to progress beyond the current standard title card Acknowledgement by adding:

- **Music & Audio** – Whereas music by a First Nations composer is always recommended and may warrant further investigation or discussion, it is also possible to use existing music tracks from the show
- **Visually rich elements** – Imagery of Country and land may be used to avoid cultural appropriation; where necessary, please ensure that the appropriate Land Councils, Communities or Elders have been contacted to ensure that the land depicted is not a sacred site, culturally significant or sensitive location
- **Customised script** - tying the Acknowledgement to elements specific to the show's subject matter and filming location (see section 3)
- **A note on Language:** Non-English text or VO for the entire Acknowledgement is not generally recommended, however, where words or phrases in language are used, please include subtitles to identify language spoken

# 3. SCRIPT

In the scripting of the Acknowledgement, please specify land and peoples where possible, incorporate the specific subject matter and circumstances of the program, weave in genuine feeling and be thoughtful about the overall tone. All customized scripts should be submitted to the Network Executive Producer for internal sign-off.

## Sample Generic script

**From all of us bringing you this program, we acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their Elders.**

**Our programs are made across the lands of many First Nations, and we recognise their continuing connection with country, waters and story.**

## Sample On-air script

**From all of us bringing you this program, we acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their Elders.**

**This program was made on the land of the (specific nation), and we recognise their continuing connection with (specific elements to country/subject matter of the show).**

# 4. OTHER CONTENT

## Welcome To Country & Smoking Ceremonies

We encourage and support the broadcast of Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies where the event is filmed specifically for the editorial content of the show (e.g., *The Bachelorette* 2021)

## Thank you for permission to film on country

Where permission has been specifically granted for a production to film on country by the Local Aboriginal Land Council, we encourage and support the broadcast of a thank you title card at the conclusion of the series (e.g., *Australian Survivor* 2022)

## Warnings regarding imagery of deceased

Content creators should be aware that images and voices of long-deceased persons may cause distress to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Where applicable, the below warning is advised to be added to the top of the program, presented as a lower-third super:

**WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are warned that the following program may contain images and voices of deceased persons.**

## Warning about racist themes or subject matter

A title card displaying a warning may be necessary when the content is historical in nature and involves subject matter or language that is no longer acceptable.

Suggested wording:

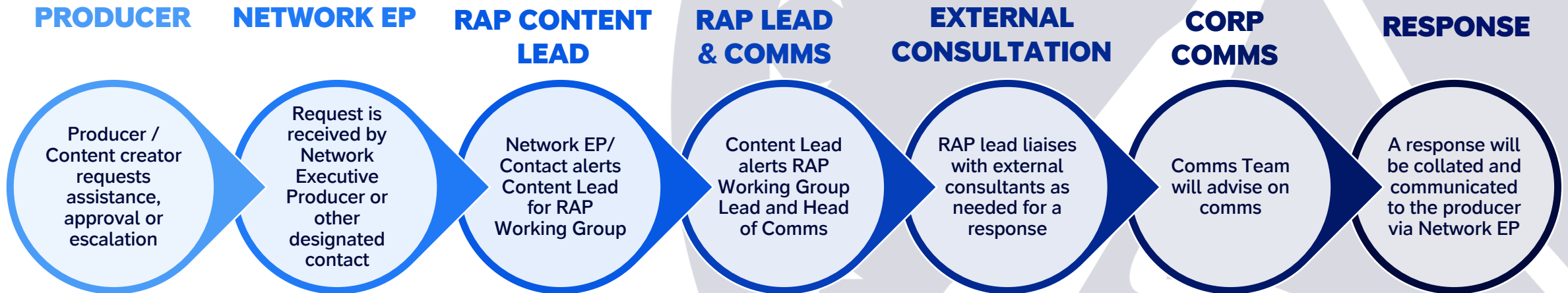
**WARNING: Please be aware that the following program may contain language and themes that are now considered inappropriate.**

**This may include terms and annotations that reflect the attitude of the writers, producers or the period in which the program was created, that would not be acceptable today.**

# 5. ASSISTANCE, APPROVAL & ESCALATION

We will establish one simple protocol for seeking assistance, approval, or escalation in all matters regarding on-air Acknowledgement of Country and other content as detailed in section 4. Examples of circumstances that may lead to the activation of this protocol may include (but are not limited to):

- Lack of clarity around land name, ownership or in need of Local Aboriginal Land Council point of contact
- Unprecedented scripts or presentation mediums proposed for the Acknowledgement preceding the show
- Guidance around tone and language for the script
- Advice on whether other warnings are necessary
- Programs wholly produced in a foreign country
- Controversial or negative response received regarding the Acknowledgment of Country







*Paramount*