

Murujuga general protocols: Questions for discussion

Background

1. What are cultural protocols?

Protocols come from our Law. They are our rules for being on Murujuga. They guide us in our work and in our everyday life. We inherit these rules from our Ancestors, just as we inherit the responsibility to care for our *ngurra*.

Because many people come to Murujuga now, for different reasons, we need to communicate our rules with everyone. Through your respect and cooperation we maintain our pride and dignity.

Your cultural safety is our responsibility, and these protocols are designed to keep you safe.

Wanyarri in our language means to listen. We listen to country and the teachings of our Ancestors. Now we are sharing our *wangka* (voice/discussion) with the many people who come to Murujuga. We ask that you *wanyarri* (listen) and help us care for *ngurra*.

Protocols are for learning and education. They are to promote respect and understanding through clear communication. They provide structure, and help us all to understand what is expected.

As well as our Law, there are state and federal laws and international conventions associated with actions that affect our *ngurra*. We can help you to understand and uphold these.

2. Who are these protocols for?

These protocols are for everyone who comes to Murujuga for any reason, whether it is to work, to visit, or to live, for a short time or a long time. These protocols are also for anyone who wants to learn about Murujuga. If you are just visiting for a short time, some of these protocols will not apply to you. However, we ask that you read this document for your own information, and we encourage you to do a cultural safety induction with us to enhance your visitor experience.

3. How to Use this Document as your resource for coming into Murujuga.

This document is structured as a list of frequently asked questions. The text is short so that you can read all of it quickly. This is just the first step. We encourage you to find out more information by contacting us via MLSU. There are instructions about how to do this below.

4. Are there costs associated with these protocols?

In some instances, there will be costs associated with activities that draw on our time and resources. Be aware that the Elders are very busy with a range of different responsibilities relating to cultural governance, land management, family, and matters of Law and Culture. Their time is valuable, and it does not come free. MAC and MLSU can assist you to understand how to budget for Elders' time.

MLSU Rangers working at north Murujuga – Source: Vanessa Margetts



What to do

5. What do you do if you want to carry out research on Murujuga, or are already researching on Murujuga?

If you want to carry out research on Murujuga please see our research protocols, which are in a separate document that will assist you with your research. We ask that you come and inform us about your research, and go through our cultural safety induction.

6. What do you do if you want to work on Murujuga, or are already working on Murujuga?

If you want to work on Murujuga we ask that you read all our protocols and make sure that you come and do our cultural safety induction. As the carers and managers of Murujuga we like to know what people are doing here, so please inform us about your work.

7. What is a cultural safety induction?

Our standard cultural safety induction is a half-day session that includes a welcome to country, a short introduction to our culture, history, languages and *Galharra*, and a cultural awareness discussion. It will guide you on how to be safe and enjoy yourself on Murujuga. This is an opportunity for us to meet, and for you to ask questions.

8. How can I organize a cultural induction?

We can organize cultural safety inductions for small or large groups to suit your needs.

To book a cultural safety induction with us and find out times, costs and availability, please contact MLSU at dadmin@murujuga.org.au or call us on 08 9183 1248. Full contact details at front of book.

9. Can I collect samples or souvenirs?

In the first instance, we advise that you do not take anything away from Murujuga. It is illegal to take things from a national park or a heritage site without going through a proper process. If you feel you need to take samples of any kind we ask that you follow our process as follows:

- a. Contact the Rangers through the MLSU. Please provide detailed information and documentation about what samples you wish to take, why you wish to take them, what the samples will be used for, where they will be taken to, and whether they will be brought back.
- b. The Rangers will then communicate your request to the CoE. If you are required to come and discuss your request directly with the Elders, the Rangers will facilitate this process for you.
- c. We will communicate with you and provide reasons for our decisions. Please remember there may be costs associated with this (see point 4).

10. What do I do if I want to access Traditional Knowledge?

It depends what kind of knowledge you want to discuss with us, and what you want to do with it. We have our own set of protocols to follow about what information can be shared in what context, so we need to know what you intend to do with it. We need to make decisions as a group about your request, because we have a shared responsibility for knowledge, including intellectual property. Follow these steps:

- a. Contact the Rangers through the MLSU. Please provide detailed information and documentation about what you wish to discuss with us, and what you intend to do with the information.
- b. The Rangers will then communicate your request to the CoE and organize for you to come and discuss it with us at our *Yatha*. It all starts at the *Yatha*; a lot of information comes out of there.
- c. We will communicate back to you and provide reasons for our decisions. Please remember there may be costs associated with this (see point 4).

11. What do I do if I want to disturb the ground?

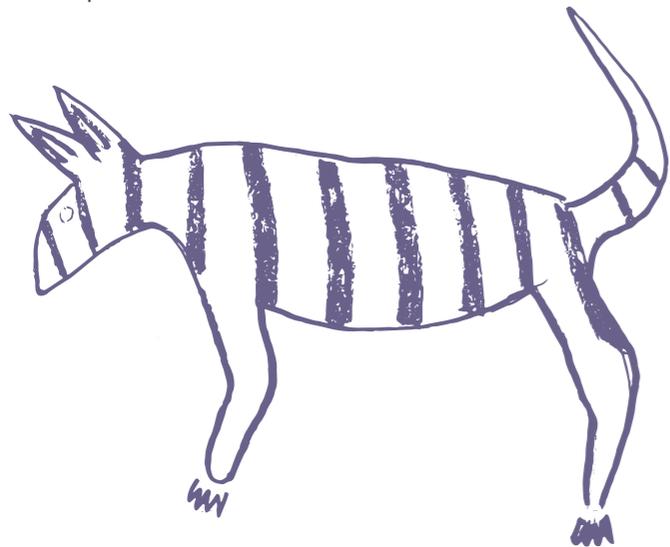
In the first instance, we advise that you do not disturb the ground. Before proceeding, ask yourself the question, "Do I really need to dig?" If the answer is still yes, we ask that you follow our process below:

- a. Contact the Rangers through the MLSU. Please provide detailed information and documentation about what you are planning to do. What will the physical impacts of the ground disturbance be? Will anything be taken away from the site?
- b. The Rangers will then communicate your request to the CoE. If we invite you to come and discuss your request directly with the Elders, the Rangers will facilitate this process for you.
- c. We will communicate with you and provide reasons for our decisions

12. What do I do if I want to work in partnership or collaboration with Murujuga?

The first thing to do is to approach the MLSU with details about the kind of partnership or collaboration you are interested in, so we know where to direct your request. If it is a cultural matter it will go to the Rangers and CoE, otherwise it goes to the MAC board.

We look for partnerships that are mutually beneficial and based on open communication and respect. All partnerships need to fit with our existing governance structures. We may need to have a written agreement specific to the collaboration, to ensure that both parties have clear and realistic expectations, timelines and feedback mechanisms, and understand each other's roles and responsibilities. Such an agreement will also stipulate a time period.



13. What do I do if I want to take photos or already have photos?

We advise that you do not take any photos of our rock art, unless there is a Ranger or an Elder with you to give permission. The reason for this is that some of the art is very sacred and we have strong protocols about who can see it. This a cultural safety matter. If you wish to get permission from Rangers or Elders, please contact MLSU with details of your request and we will facilitate this process for you.

We are undertaking a repatriation process to return all cultural information and materials previously taken from Murujuga. If you have photos taken at Murujuga in the past, especially of rock art or our people, we would love to talk to you about getting copies of the photos. We can also advise you if any photos are restricted images or pose a cultural safety threat.

14. What do I do if I want to publish information about Murujuga through the media, books, research journals, social media, the internet, or any other sources?

We have strict codes of conduct that we need to follow about information going out into the public domain. If you intend to publish something, we ask that you first seek our permission by coming to MLSU, who will facilitate this process for you.

MSLU Ranger Kenny Diamond inspecting rock art – Source: MLSU



Structures

15. How do I make initial contact?

Please contact MLSU at dadmin@murujuga.org.au or call us on 08 9183 1248. Full contact details at front of book.

16. How do I know that my request for contact will be actioned and how long will it take to process?

At MLSU, we have a busy schedule managing a National Park so we need time to accommodate your request. For cultural safety inductions, please contact us a week in advance so we can schedule your induction.

Our CoE meet once a month. If your request needs to go to the Elders, please allow at least a month for us to deal with it.

Working Together

17. How can we help and get involved?

Murujuga is a very significant place to us, and to many other people around Australia and the world, and should always be respected. We are working hard to look after Murujuga and we welcome other people's help with our journey. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact MLSU and tell us what you can offer us.

18. What are the benefits of following these protocols?

Following these protocols will give you a good *wirrard* (Y), *ngayin* (N), *wiru* (M), which means a good feeling and good spirit. This is critical for your safety, wellbeing, success, enjoyment and experience in Murujuga. It will also ensure you have a good relationship with us.

Thank you for your cooperation, and your acknowledgement of our protocols.



MLSU Rangers working with Stakeholders – Source: MLSU