

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 – striving to provide reliable and affordable energy, employing over 5,500 people across Australia, 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 Traditional Owners, and taxes, levies and royalties for governments.

We aim to work responsibly and respectfully with the communities in which we operate. We consult with our local communities throughout the life cycle of an asset to understand and manage the environmental, economic and social impacts of our activities and to maximise the benefits.

While we engage with communities across Origin's sites, our most significant interactions occur at our Australia Pacific LNG operations in Queensland 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 lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner groups. We engage with the groups and their communities, with unwavering respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' enduring connection to land and water.

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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our work to implement Origin's obligations in our formal agreements with Traditional Owners, is guided by the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), as articulated by the International Finance Corporation Performance Standard 7 (IFC PS7), as reflected in the Equator Principles, and the United Nations 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 to seek to:

- 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 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (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

We aim to proactively consult and work with relevant Aboriginal groups to protect and manage cultural heritage in the areas of our activities.

4. Sharing benefits

We aim to ensure that Origin contributes towards community health and well-being as well as play 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. We aim 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

Australia Pacific LNG has a significant footprint across the Surat Basin in Queensland. As upstream operator of Australia Pacific LNG, 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 local communities. They work with communities 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 in Australia, 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 affected by our activities. Our Stakeholder Liaisons live in the communities in which they work and act as dedicated points of contact for all matters relating to land access, helping us to build and maintain positive, long-term working relationships.

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 location 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 between Origin and landholders set out the details of how we will enter the land to carry out our activities and how landholders will be compensated.

We also periodically review 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 upstream operator of Australia Pacific LNG, we are required to comply with the mandatory conditions of the Queensland Government's Land Access Code. This code sets out best practice guidelines and requirements in relation to the behaviour and conduct of resource companies and their employees. These include ensuring employees are trained, vehicles travel at an appropriate speed, all gates are left as they are found (either closed or open) and that 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 identifying opportunities for employment, capability building and contractor engagement.

Australia Pacific LNG holds Indigenous Land Use Agreements and other agreements with Traditional Owners. These recognise native title rights and interests, and can help identify sustainable social and economic development opportunities.

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

Eraring Power Station

We have created a Community Engagement Strategy to provide a framework for Origin's engagement with community members and stakeholders during Eraring Power Station's pre-closure and immediate post-closure periods. The Community Engagement Strategy outlines our principles for engagement, a monitoring framework and consideration of social risks.

We have also reconfigured the Eraring Community Forum in FY2023, which comprises representatives of state and local government, community groups, and business and environmental organisations, following a hiatus during COVID-19. The role of the forum is to enhance communication between Origin and the local community and improve our understanding of community issues. It also acts as a channel for community members and other stakeholders to provide meaningful input into proposed development activities at Eraring.

To support the Earing community through the transition of exiting coal-fired generation, we have committed to maintaining existing community partnerships and sponsorships. We have established a Community Fund of \$5 million to fund these and other local community initiatives via sponsorships, grants and partnerships over 2023–2032. Applications to access the fund are governed by robust evaluation processes involving a Community Investment Advisory Panel comprising community representatives and Origin employees.

We also engage with the Earing community and our community partners via our newsletter, which provides information on site operations, projects and activities such as our proposed battery energy storage project. The newsletter also includes environmental updates and information about community investment and engagement activities.

Responding to complaints

Origin has formal grievance mechanisms in place to allow community members to share their feedback and concerns, and for these to be 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 is 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 strive 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 way to share economic benefits with the communities

in which we operate and to promote 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, and local and regional community investment programs, and by providing emergency and crisis support.

We are working with the following sporting organisations:

- Netball Australia, supporting players at all levels across the country – from local clubs to the world-leading Australian Diamonds;
- Sydney Swans, as Official Energy Partner, helping the club take action to reduce its carbon footprint and transition to a cleaner energy future; and
- Melbourne City Football Club, helping to reduce the carbon footprint of its City Football Academy in south-east Melbourne by using clean energy solutions such as solar, battery storage and electric vehicle charging stations.

Our local community investment targets four priority areas: creating safe, vibrant and inclusive communities; building great places to live and work; caring for our environment; and delivering economic benefits. We also provide financial and in-kind support, and encourage employee volunteering and charitable donations, which are 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.

Supporting vulnerable customers and communities

We offer assistance to customers experiencing hardship and take action to support vulnerable groups in our community, including those affected by family violence, homelessness and natural disasters.

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. We also fund the Foundation's running costs, ensuring that all its 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's focus areas are:

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

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

In FY2022, we introduced the Origin Energy Foundation Board Observer Program – a professional development program through which senior Origin leaders become observers for 12 months. Each year, one or more observers with a diverse skill set and a genuine interest in the community sector are selected to bring their experience and energy to the Foundation while gaining insight into boardroom activities.

Supporting employees' giving

Our employees can give their time and professional skills to help Foundation partners and support good causes in education through our Give Time volunteer program. The program allows employees unlimited days for volunteering.

Volunteering opportunities include helping teachers bring humanitarian science and engineering to life in classrooms around Australia with partners such as SolarBuddy and CSIRO, and mentoring students through the Raise Foundation and The Smith Family. Our volunteers have also cooked and prepared meals for the most vulnerable members of our community, and renovated homes for those seeking shelter.

Origin employees have used their skills to support projects such as the Australian Red Cross Employment Justice Project and the First Nations Digitisation Fund.

Through our workplace giving program, Give2, Origin employees can give to Australian charities of their choice and the Foundation matches their donations 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
