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Standardization of Geographical Names**

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Item 9 (b) of the provisional agenda*

National standardization: office treatment of names

**Guidelines for the use and recording of Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander place names**

Submitted by Australia**

Summary

This paper is complimentary to Australia's Guidelines for the Consistent Use of Place Names. It was prepared by the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA) in 1992 and revised at the annual CGNA meeting in April 2001.

The National Policy Guidelines for the Use and Recording of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names have been developed in recognition of the continuing close relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the land, and of how these relationships form the basis of an oral indigenous place names system.

The Policy is also cognizant of the concept of "self-determination" and, as such, it recognizes the fundamental right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be involved in the decision-making processes of government, particularly those related to official naming processes.

Apart from the advice of anthropologists, linguists or those associated with nomenclature authorities, it must be recognized that the right to decide the use of names rests always with the indigenous people whose language or place names are being used for official naming purposes.

The guidelines further provide a unique opportunity to adopt a set of national standards for the collection and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. They will also ensure uniformity in the way that information is collected and used

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by State and Territory nomenclature authorities, and at the same time, will enhance the maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage in areas throughout Australia.

It is recognized that each State and Territory has a differing set of environmental and administrative circumstances in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names. Differences in legislation, community structures and physical circumstances require guidelines to be broad enough to cater for the differences in circumstances in each State and Territory.
