

Discriminatory or Derogatory Place Names Policy

Definition

Discriminatory or derogatory place names are those determined by the Place Names Committee to be offensive, demeaning, or harmful to the reputation of individuals, or to social, ethnic, religious, or other groups.

Principles

1. Discriminatory or derogatory place names are not acceptable.
2. It is recognised that the perception of discriminatory or derogatory may vary through time, and from place to place.
3. In response to requests the Place Names Committee will investigate the use of any names suggested to be discriminatory or derogatory.
4. The Place Names Committee has regard to the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)* and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 (NT)* in considering whether a name is discriminatory or derogatory, particularly in respect of race, ethnicity, sex, sexuality, or religion.
5. The Place Names Committee has regard to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly Article 13(1) - *Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*

Requests to change place names suggested to be discriminatory or derogatory

1. Any person or group may submit a request to change a currently used name on the grounds that they believe the name is discriminatory or derogatory.
2. Requests must pertain to an individual place name; large-scale general change requests will not be accepted, e.g. a request to change all place names in the Northern Territory that contain a particular word that no longer meets general community standards of appropriateness.



3. Requests should be in the form of an official naming request and lodged through the Place Names Online portal and include:
 - a. reasons why the present name should not remain in use
 - b. a proposed new name, and details of its origin and meaning (including detailed biographical information if the proposed name is in commemoration of a deceased person's contribution)
 - c. a map showing the location of the place
 - d. demonstrated support from the relevant local government council (if in a local government area)
 - e. demonstrated support from the relevant Aboriginal land council (if outside of a local government area)
 - f. demonstrated support from the local Aboriginal community and Aboriginal organisations and / or the relevant Aboriginal land council (if a word of Aboriginal origin is proposed)
 - g. demonstrated support from family or next of kin (if the proposed name is in commemoration of a deceased person's contribution).

Incomplete requests will be returned to the requestor for further information before being considered by the Place Names Committee.

4. The Place Names Committee will give careful consideration to all relevant factors, including the requirements of the *Place Names Act 1967*, principles outlined in this policy, the extent and distribution of usage, historical context, user perceptions and intent, and lexical meanings.
5. If the Place Names Committee's considerations result in it determining the name to be discriminatory or derogatory, it will prepare a report for the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics recommending the name be changed.
6. In the circumstance that the Minister approves the name change, the name will be immediately updated in the Place Names Register. The new name will be included in the next batch update for inclusion in the Gazetteer of Australia.
7. As the Place Names Register records historical information, a discriminatory or derogatory name will not be removed entirely, however, a note indicating that a name has been determined to be discriminatory or derogatory by the Committee will be included in the entry for the place.
8. If the Place Names Committee's considerations result in it determining the name to not fall within the scope of this Policy, it will provide written advice to the requestor which will include reasons for its decision.

Approved: 7 March 2019

