**A Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors**

**Feedback is invited on a proposed Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors who want to be on the on-line Heritage Advisor List.**

Heritage Advisors play an important role in the management and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria.

**Heritage Advisors:**

* must assist sponsors to prepare all Cultural Heritage Management Plans, involving assessment, engagement with RAPs and developing conditions and contingencies
* must supervise all complex assessments, but only if qualified as an archaeologist
* can assist with preliminary Aboriginal heritage test applications
* can assist with audits, surveys and research
* can assist with new place and object registrations

First Peoples - State Relations maintains a Heritage Advisor List on its website - go to [Heritage Advisors List | First Peoples - State Relations](https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/choose-heritage-advisor) .

The Heritage Advisor List aims to help developers and land managers who need to engage a Heritage Advisor to find one. Being on the List doesn’t mean that the Heritage Advisor is ‘endorsed’ by First Peoples - State Relations, but they must meet the Minister’s Guidelines on Heritage Advisor Qualifications and Experience. Heritage Advisors can choose whether to be on the List or not.

The Minister has proposed that Heritage Advisors who opt to be on the Heritage Advisor List must sign up to a new Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors.

A draft Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors has been prepared and shared with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council for feedback. Heritage Advisors and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are now also invited to provide feedback.

The draft Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors seeks to guide Heritage Advisors in how they go about their work and maintain their professionalism. This includes Heritage Advisors who are Traditional Owners. The Code also makes clear to those who engage and work with Heritage Advisors what behaviours they can expect.

In summary, the draft Code sets out expected conduct against 4 principles:

* compliance
* cultural respect
* professional integrity, and
* pursuit of professional development.

It is proposed that if the department receives written complaints that a Heritage Advisor is not abiding by the Code, the Heritage Advisor will be asked to explain. Serious or repeated breaches of the Code could result in First Peoples - State Relations removing the Heritage Advisor from the List. The Code will *not* be a substitute for the legal requirements and offence provisions in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, nor under any other legislation.

For further information, and to view the draft Code of Conduct for Heritage Advisors, go to <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/guidance-for-heritage-advisors-changing>

**Please email your feedback by 10 June 2022 to** **aboriginal.heritage@dpc.vic.gov.au****, or send by post to Heritage Services FP-SR, GPO Box 4912, Melbourne, VIC 3001.**