What is cultural heritage?

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) is responsible for administering the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (the Acts).

The main purpose of the Acts is to provide effective recognition, protection and conservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

The Acts define Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage as anything that is:

- a significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander area in Queensland; or
- a significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander object in Queensland; or
- evidence of archaeological or historic significance, of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander occupation of an area of Queensland.

An area or object is significant because of either or both of the following:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tradition
- The history including contemporary history of any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander party for the area

The Acts:

- provide blanket protection of areas and objects of traditional, customary, and archaeological significance
- recognise the key role of Traditional Owners in cultural heritage matters
- establish practical and flexible processes for dealing with cultural heritage in a timely manner

Further information

For further information on the cultural heritage legislation:

- contact the Cultural Heritage Unit on telephone 1300 378 401 or
- email cultural.heritage@datsip.qld.gov.au