

Barton Deakin Brief: Indigenous Voice to Parliament

17 December 2021

Today, the Morrison Government has released the Final Report into the co-design of an indigenous voice to Parliament. This Report will enable broader community discussion and consultation with state jurisdictions.

The Government took the commitment to develop models and options for an Indigenous voice and to enhance local and regional decision-making to the 2019 election. The co-design process has been developed in consultation with 52 co-design members over the past 18 months.

Background

In October 2020, the Indigenous Voice Co-design Process Interim Report was presented to the Australian Government. Since its public release, over 9,400 people and organisations participated in a consultation process led by co-design members. In preparing the report, there were 115 community consultation sessions in 67 diverse communities and more than 120 stakeholder meetings around the country.

Key Recommendations and Proposals

The Report recommends the creation of 35 local regions across Australia. It also recommends the creation of a small national body of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members to provide a 'National Voice' and advise the Federal Government on policy. The National Voice would advise on matters of national significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples relating to their social, spiritual and economic wellbeing. The Australian Parliament and Government would be 'obliged' to ask the National Voice for advice on a defined and limited number of proposed laws and policies that overwhelmingly affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The regional and national bodies would be integrated by a two-way formal advice link between Local & Regional Voices and the National Voice.

The creation of new advisory bodies will not usurp existing arrangements that give a voice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Next steps for the Government

The Morrison Government will now begin discussions with States, Territories and local governments to encourage participation in Local & Regional Voice arrangements. The Government will appoint a Local & Regional Voice Establishment Group to work with government to form the 35 Local & Regional Voice bodies. Meanwhile, it will engage with stakeholders to progress the Local & Regional Voice.

For more information

To read the Final Report, [click here](#).

To read the Minister Wyatt's Media Release, [click here](#).

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