


Support Indigenous Australians

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KEY POINTS

The Morrison Government is working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to provide the same opportunities as for every other Australian.

We know and believe that, to deliver real outcomes, we need to work in partnership.

We've drawn a line in the sand in regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies and programs.

We need to refresh what we're doing because, while the 2019 Closing the Gap report highlighted successes across the country, only two of the seven targets are on track to be met.

The original targets were well-intentioned but developed without the collaboration and accountability of the states and territories or input from Indigenous Australians.

Under the Morrison Government, Australia's Closing the Gap targets will be redeveloped in partnership with Indigenous Australians for the first time.

When it comes to delivering the services needed, we believe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are best placed and we are increasing their number under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Our Empowered Communities initiative, co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, is a prime example of our reforms.

We are working with the Empowered Communities leaders and across each region to improve our engagement and delivery in partnership with local community leaders.

The Morrison Government has provided over \$30 million to support local engagement and capacity building to eight Empowered Communities regional bodies throughout the country. Empowered Communities leaders are now directly involved in determining how funding is allocated in their regions.

We are also increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses winning contracts with the Commonwealth. From July 2019, the Indigenous Procurement Policy 2.0 will introduce a target of 3 per cent of the value of Commonwealth contracts to be

awarded to Indigenous businesses within a decade. This builds on the highly successful IPP target that was introduced in 2015: where 3 per cent of the number of Commonwealth contracts are to go to Indigenous businesses.

We remain committed to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution.

The recognition of First Australians in our nation's founding document would acknowledge our shared history and the value we place on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

We also acknowledge the importance of telling and sharing our nation's story: especially the history and culture of the oldest living culture on Earth. Supporting a process of truth telling and healing is an important part of our nation's journey to reconciliation.

OUR RECORD

The Liberal Nationals Government's Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) delivers \$5.2 billion in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities: ensuring children are attending school, adults are in jobs and communities are safe.

As partners with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, we have done a power of work.

Across the IAS, funding is increasingly delivered by Indigenous organisations operating in their communities, ensuring high quality and culturally appropriate services.

We have doubled the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations delivering services under the IAS – up from 30 per cent before its introduction to 60 per cent now.

Under our Government's Indigenous Procurement Policy, over 1473 Indigenous businesses have won contracts delivering goods and services worth more than \$1.83 billion, up from just 30 businesses receiving \$6.2 million in 2012-13.

We have remained steadfast in our commitment to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution.

We established a Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition (the Committee) to examine how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are consulted and engaged with and to consider options for constitutional change. We did this because the Referendum Council did not do its job – it did not provide a clear path to a successful referendum.

We are now working to implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee so this pathway can be achieved.

We have supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians sharing their stories, languages and cultures through national institutions such as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the National Museum of Australia. And we've committed an additional \$10 million to support the revival and maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians languages.

We are also helping our nation to heal with funding to deliver the support that is needed for surviving members of the Stolen Generations.

We are providing \$20 million to the Healing Foundation to support their work, including a comprehensive needs-analysis to better understand the demography of the surviving Stolen Generations.

We are providing almost \$50 million a year to fund more than 110 organisations nationwide: supporting social and emotional wellbeing activities, including for Stolen Generations members and their families.

The Morrison Government will continue our efforts to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution – and increase the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the design of policies and delivery of programs that benefit them.

Closing the Gap – a refresh

The Closing the Gap process that began in 2008 was born of good heart.

Despite this, it did not truly seek to partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The driving belief was that a top-down approach could achieve the change that was rightly desired, through lofty goals and bureaucratic targets.

The Morrison Government has turned a new page.

We are committed to working together and deciding together how future policies are developed – especially at a regional and local level.

We have listened to what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have told us is important.

At COAG in December last year, all governments committed to share ownership of, and responsibility for, frameworks, targets and ongoing monitoring of a refreshed Closing the Gap Agenda with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at its heart.

And under the leadership of Prime Minister Morrison, the Commonwealth, state and territory and local governments in partnership with the National Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations signed an Agreement to change the way government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians work together on Closing the Gap.

We are providing \$4.6 million to the National Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations to ensure an equal partnership with governments in designing and monitoring Closing the Gap.

Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

Since 2013, the Liberal and Nationals Government has maintained the multi-partisan commitment to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution.

We are listening to the recommendations of the bi-partisan Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition Relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (chaired by Julian Leeser MP and Senator Patrick Dodson).

The Joint Select Committee recommended that further work was needed to clarify a model for constitutional recognition and how it could best suit the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

We are committed to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Constitution at the same time as delivering practical outcomes to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. But there needs to be more work done on what model we take to a referendum and what a voice to parliament would be - which is why we are funding a consultation process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. This process will develop up a question for a referendum and what a referendum will deliver - because no one can answer what a voice to parliament actually is at the moment.

To deliver on this recommendation, the Morrison Government is providing \$7.3 million for the comprehensive co-design of models to improve local and regional decision making and options for constitutional recognition. This work will commence immediately to provide a model and pathway to a successful referendum.

The key issue that we keep hearing is what is this Voice, the ALP cannot tell us what the Voice might look like and how it might operate. We believe if Australians don't understand what they're voting for in a referendum, they will vote no, and endanger this important issue for another generation.

The Government will engage and consult with Indigenous communities, organisations and leaders across Australia to deliver this important work.

A referendum will be held once a model has been settled, consistent with the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee.

And we have allocated \$160 million in the Budget to run a referendum, with funding remaining in the Contingency Reserve until a referendum model has been determined.

National Resting Place

The Morrison Government supports the establishment of a National Resting Place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remains as a place of commemoration, healing and reflection. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee.

The Government has committed \$5 million to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to undertake a scoping study and consultation as a first step. This important memorial will recognise the unique contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history to our nation.

Truth Telling

The Morrison Government supports a process of truth telling as part of our nation's journey to reconciliation.

A truth telling process would acknowledge the history and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians – and the impacts and consequences.

We will work with local Indigenous communities on this recognition and acknowledgment, supporting a process of local reconciliation for all Australians.

We are also investing almost \$2 million in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to support the work of its Family History Unit. The unit works with local communities to identify and commemorate past trauma, dispossession and the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The family history research and services support the process of truth telling and healing.

Our Government's commitment to a National Resting Place also supports the process of truth telling.

A National Resting Place would provide an important memorial for the whole nation to reflect on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians since European settlement.

Working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

The Morrison Government remains committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

We will continue to work and expand our co-designed Empowered Communities initiative to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are involved in local and regional decision making.

In addition, we will continue to increase the number of Indigenous-owned and operated organisations delivering services to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, we have doubled the number of contracts held by Indigenous organisations from 30 to 60 per cent. We know Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are best placed to deliver services to their communities.

We are committing to increase that by 10 per cent each year with an aspirational target of 100 per cent by 2023.

THE CHOICE

When last in office, Labor failed First Australians for six years.

Labor had no cohesive focus to address decades of entrenched disadvantage.

It delivered the symbolic apology to Indigenous Australians, but then dropped the ball on improving outcomes.

The hopes of many Indigenous people that Labor would deliver real, practical change on the ground on the back of the apology were dashed.

As Labor destroyed the economy and the Budget, leaving \$240 billion in cumulative deficits, it turned its back on Indigenous Affairs.

Trapped in the mindset of academics and peak advocacy bodies, Labor lost sight of the urgent need to address poverty and dysfunction.

The process of co-design and listening to Indigenous Australians was what Labor supported last year in Senator Pat Dodson and Julian Leeser's report and this issue is too important to get wrong.

Now, their only solution is to rush, without adequate consultation to establish The Voice to Parliament – a new national representative body that amounts to a Third Chamber of Parliament just for Indigenous Australians.

Currently there's no model, and we've got the ALP proposing to go to a referendum, and we don't support the position to go with an unknown referendum question.

The key issue that we keep hearing is what is this Voice, the ALP cannot tell us what the Voice might look like and how it might operate?

We believe if Australians don't understand what they're voting for in a referendum, they will vote no, and endanger this important issue for another generation.

This is something that is neither desirable nor likely to be supported by the Australian people.

By contrast, the Morrison Government will focus on real action to deliver better outcomes for Indigenous people – getting kids to school, adults to work and making communities safer.

We are focusing on genuine engagement directly with communities.

And we will work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to deliver constitutional recognition and continue to improve our engagement through local and regional decision making.

We're working with Traditional Owners, elders and communities to identify the fundamental priorities and policy approaches that will lead to greater engagement in schooling, training and work and lead to safer communities.

We support the representative bodies like Land Councils that Labor wants to ignore.

For the first time in years, we have a clear line of sight to where each and every Indigenous-specific dollar is being spent.

We are ensuring that funding is directed to areas of greatest need and that organisations delivering services are held to account for outcomes.





We have ended the passive racism of lower expectations in the delivery of services to Indigenous people.

We recognise that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are thriving and making a positive contribution to our nation.

Only the Morrison Government can be trusted to deliver the practical change to address Indigenous disadvantage.

Only the Liberal Nationals Government, by keeping the economy strong, will be able to keep up the investment that is needed going forward.

Only the Morrison Government can be trusted to deliver the practical change to address Indigenous disadvantage.

 COALITION 	 LABOR 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Under our Indigenous Procurement Policy, almost 1,500 Indigenous businesses have won government contracts worth more than \$1.8 billion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Only 30 Indigenous businesses won just \$6 million in government contracts in the last year of the Labor Government (2012-13).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 60 per cent of organisations funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Only 30 per cent of organisations funded in Indigenous Affairs are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

COST

The Morrison Government's policies to partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are funded from the \$5.2 billion Indigenous Advancement Strategy.