

# Chapter 1

## Achieving constitutional recognition

1.1 This is a progress report by the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to the 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament.

1.2 The committee tabled an interim report on 15 July 2014. In that report, the committee expressed a view that a successful referendum proposal on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will need to meet three primary objectives. The committee remains of the view that in order to be successful, a referendum proposal must:

- recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia;
- preserve the Commonwealth's power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- in making laws under such a power, prevent the Commonwealth from discriminating against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

1.3 Based on the content of written submissions and public hearings so far, the committee is convinced of the benefits of recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution.

1.4 The committee notes that the Final Report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act of Recognition Review Panel (the Review Panel) found that levels of community support for constitutional recognition had increased between August 2013 and August 2014.<sup>1</sup> However, the committee shares the Review Panel's concern that while support for recognition grew, awareness of the proposed referendum fell from 42 per cent to 34 per cent during the same period.<sup>2</sup>

1.5 The committee is of the view that action is needed to focus the nation's attention on, and build momentum towards, what would be a significant change to our founding document. The committee agrees with the Review Panel's recommendation that:

A 'circuit breaker' needs to be rapidly identified to settle the final form of words and draw debate on the model to a conclusion. This will build a

---

1 The Hon John Anderson AO, Ms Tanya Hosch and Mr Richard Eccles, *Final Report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act of Recognition Review Panel*, 19 September 2014, p. 25.

2 Ibid, p. 26.

sense of national urgency and provide renewed certainty that the country will proceed to a referendum.<sup>3</sup>

1.6 Ultimately, a referendum proposal must take the form of a bill submitted to Parliament and that bill must be passed by an absolute majority in both houses.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore imperative that the wording of that bill be capable of achieving near-unanimous parliamentary support. The committee considers that in order to achieve that unanimity, the House of Representatives and the Senate should each set aside a full day of Parliamentary sittings to debate concurrently the three options for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples put forward in this report.

### **Recommendation 1**

**1.7 The committee recommends that each House of Parliament set aside a full day of sittings to debate concurrently recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as set out in this report with a view to achieving near-unanimous parliamentary support for and building momentum towards a referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution.**

### **Disqualification from voting (section 25)**

1.8 Section 25 of the Constitution contains a formula for allocating parliamentary seats for each state according to population. The section contemplates reducing a state's representation in Federal Parliament should that state remove the right to vote at state elections from certain residents based on their race,<sup>5</sup> as follows:

#### **25 Provision as to races disqualified from voting**

For the purposes of the last section, if by the law of any State all persons of any race are disqualified from voting at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State, then, in reckoning the number of the people of the State or of the Commonwealth, persons of that race resident in that State shall not be counted.

---

3 The Hon John Anderson AO, Ms Tanya Hosch and Mr Richard Eccles, *Final Report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act of Recognition Review Panel*, 19 September 2014, p. 7.

4 *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1901*, s 128.

5 George Williams, 'Recognising Indigenous Peoples in the Australian Constitution: What the Constitution Should Say and How the Referendum Can be Won', *Land, Rights, Laws: Issues of Native Title*, vol. 5, no. 1, September 2011, p. 4.

1.9 The committee is persuaded by written submissions and submissions given at public hearings that section 25 is no longer necessary.<sup>6</sup> The committee agrees that its repeal 'involves the removal of a vestige of racial concepts and practices that have no place in contemporary Australia.'<sup>7</sup>

## **Recommendation 2**

### **1.10 The committee recommends repealing section 25 of the Constitution.**

#### **Recognition of languages**

1.11 In its interim report, the committee considered the recommendation of the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians (Expert Panel) to include a declaratory provision in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages,<sup>8</sup> a new section along the following lines:

##### **127A Recognition of languages**

- (1) The national language of the Commonwealth of Australia is English.
- (2) The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are the original Australian languages, a part of our national heritage.<sup>9</sup>

1.12 Based on the content of written submissions and public hearings so far, the committee is of the view that the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages would be better achieved by other means.

---

6 Mr Shane Duffy, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014 pp 2, 6; Mr Ian Brown, President, Queensland Law Society, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014, p. 7; Ms Annette Kogolo, Vice-Chair, Mangkaja Arts Resource Agency, *Committee Hansard*, 23 July 2014, p. 11; Dr Peter Lewis, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Rights Advocacy Lead, Oxfam Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 14 August 2014, p. 16; Ms Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2014, p. 2; Ms Lee Jacobsen, President, Kalgoorlie-Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Committee Hansard*, 9 September 2014, p. 10; Ms Tammy Solonec, Member, Aboriginal Lawyers Committee, Law Society of Western Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 10 September 2014, p. 2; Ms Dierdre Robertson, Co-Convenor, Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2014, p. 8; Mr Peter Quinlan SC, President, Western Australian Bar Association, *Committee Hansard*, 10 September 2014, p. 8.

7 Mr Peter Quinlan SC, President, Western Australian Bar Association, *Committee Hansard*, 10 September 2014, p. 7.

8 Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Interim report*, 15 July 2014, pp 27–29.

9 *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, January 2012, p. xviii.

### **Recommendation 3**

**1.13 The committee recommends not inserting the Expert Panel's proposed new section 127A.**

#### **Power to make laws with respect to people of any race (section 51(xxvi))**

1.14 Section 51(xxvi) of the Constitution provides the head of power for the Commonwealth to legislate for the people of any race for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws, as follows:

##### **51 Legislative Powers of the Parliament**

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:

(xxvi) the people of any race, ~~other than the aboriginal race in any State,~~\* for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws;

*\*removed by referendum 25 in 1967*

1.15 As noted in the interim report, the words 'other than the aboriginal race in any State' were repealed at referendum in 1967, allowing the Commonwealth to make special laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>10</sup>

1.16 The committee is of the view that the Commonwealth no longer requires the power to make laws with respect to people of any race. In addition, the committee has received overwhelming evidence that it is no longer acceptable for the Commonwealth to make laws with respect to race, and recommends the repeal or amendment of section 51(xxvi) in order to remove the constitutional reference to race.<sup>11</sup>

### **Recommendation 4**

**1.17 The committee recommends the repeal or amendment of section 51(xxvi) to remove the reference to race.**

#### **Power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

1.18 While recommending the repeal or amendment of section 51(xxvi) to remove the reference to race, the committee considers that the Commonwealth should retain an ability to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in order to preserve the operation of the following pieces of existing legislation:

---

10 Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Interim report*, 15 July 2014, p. 7.

11 *The Commonwealth of Australia v Tasmania* (1983) 158 CLR 1, para. 77, (Brennan J).

- 
- *World Heritage Properties Conservation Act 1983*;
  - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*;
  - *Native Title Act 1993*; and
  - *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*.<sup>12</sup>

## **Recommendation 5**

**1.19 The committee recommends that the Parliament consider three structural options for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that follow, noting the committee's view that any proposal must preserve both existing Commonwealth laws relying on section 51(xxvi) and the Commonwealth's power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.**

### ***OPTION 1 – New section 51A with a broad prohibition of racial discrimination incorporating the Expert Panel's section 116A amendment***

1.20 The committee noted in its interim report that section 51(xxvi) of the Constitution is still considered to contemplate discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>13</sup> The divided High Court decision in *Kartinyeri v Commonwealth*<sup>14</sup> (Hindmarsh Island Bridge case) is considered by many submissions to the committee as establishing the potential for section 51(xxvi) to be used to enact laws that discriminate against people of a particular race.<sup>15</sup>

1.21 Based on the content of written submissions and submissions at public hearings so far, it is clear that the possibility of racial discrimination is of critical importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in contemplating constitutional change. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have referred consistently to the dispossession of their land, the loss of their languages and the destruction of their cultures since colonial settlement. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander witnesses referred to their long experiences suffering racial discrimination and their desire for a constitutional protection against future discrimination.

1.22 A prohibition of racial discrimination is perceived by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as real and substantive constitutional change deserving support

---

12 *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, January 2012, p. 33.

13 *Ibid*, p. xiv.

14 (1998) 195 CLR 337.

15 See *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, p. 137; Geoffrey Lindell, 'The Constitution Commission and Australia's first inhabitants: its views on agreement making and a new power to legislate revisited', *Australian International Law Review* vol. 15, no. 2, 2011, p. 36; Megan Davis, 'Constitutional reform and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: why do we want it now?', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, vol. 7, no. 25, 2011, p. 10.

from all Australians, as another step on our national journey of reconciliation. Co-Chair of the Expert Panel Mr Mark Leibler AC submitted that:

At every single consultation that we held, there was a reference to substantive recognition—'We want substantive recognition.' What did that mean? It turned out that substantive recognition means something to preclude racial discrimination.<sup>16</sup>

1.23 Mr Leibler AC submitted to the committee that 'if we do not give effect to something that is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, we are wasting our time to begin with.'<sup>17</sup> This view was shared by a large number of other witnesses.<sup>18</sup>

1.24 The committee considers that Parliament should consider the Expert Panel's proposed new sections 51A and 116A. The former provides the Commonwealth with the power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and gives effect to recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the latter prohibits racial discrimination by the Commonwealth, states and territories in the exercise of either legislative or executive power.

1.25 The committee notes a lack of public support for the fourth line of preambular language proposed by the Expert Panel, which reads 'Acknowledging the need to secure the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.'<sup>19</sup> In its interim report, the committee discussed that the legal meaning of advancement<sup>20</sup> does not equate to popular understanding of the term. For example, the 2013 *Youth Report*

---

16 Mr Mark Leibler AC, Senior Partner, Arnold Bloch Leibler, *Committee Hansard*, 14 August 2014, p. 37.

17 *Ibid*, p. 38.

18 The Hon Delia Lawrie MLA, Leader of the Opposition, Northern Territory Parliament, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2014, p. 29; Ms June Oscar AO, Chief Executive Officer, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, *Committee Hansard*, 23 July 2014, p. 8; Mr Peter Arndt, Executive Officer, Brisbane Archdiocese Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014, p. 24; Mr Ian Trust, Chairman and Executive Director, Wunan Foundation, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 2014, p. 16; Ms Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2014, p. 2; Ms Olga Havnen, Chief Executive Officer, Danila Dilba Health Service, *Committee Hansard*, 20 August 2014, p. 20; Ms Tammy Solonec, Member, Aboriginal Lawyers Committee, Law Society of Western Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 10 September 2014, p. 2; Mr Nolan Hunter, Chief Executive Officer, Kimberley Land Council, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 2014, pp 1–2.

19 *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, January 2012, p. 153.

20 Anne Twomey, 'A revised proposal for indigenous constitutional recognition', *Sydney Law Review*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2014, p. 394–395; United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *General Recommendation No 32: The Meaning and Scope of Special Measures in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, 75th session, United Nations Doc. CERD/C/GC/32, 24 September 2009.

on *Constitutional Recognition*, RECOGNISE THIS,<sup>21</sup> submitted that 'the term "advancement" does not adequately reflect Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination as it implies that governments can determine what is best for us'.<sup>22</sup>

1.26 Accordingly, the committee recommends that Parliament consider as a first structural option a new section 51A without the fourth line of preambular language recommended by the Expert Panel, and new section 116A as recommended by the Expert Panel, along the following lines:

#### **51A Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

**Recognising** that the continent and its islands now known as Australia were first occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

**Acknowledging** the continuing relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with their traditional lands and waters;

**Respecting** the continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

#### **116A Prohibition of racial discrimination**

(1) The Commonwealth, a State or a Territory shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic or national origin.

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude the making of laws or measures for the purpose of overcoming disadvantage, ameliorating the effects of past discrimination, or protecting the cultures, languages or heritage of any group;

1.27 Also, the committee received submissions that noted an amendment to constitutionally prohibit racial discrimination by any of the Commonwealth, states and territories would represent a significant change to the Constitution.<sup>23</sup>

---

21 RECOGNISE THIS is a youth-led movement to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution, a partnership between RECOGNISE, the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence and YourExtraLife.

22 RECOGNISE THIS, *Youth Report on Constitutional Recognition*, Indigenous Youth Engagement Council, 2013, p. 31.

23 See, for example, Reconciliation Victoria, *Submission 35*, p. 1; ANTaR, *Submission 7*, p. 6; Oxfam Australia, *Submission 10*, p. 5; Mr Ian Brown, President, Queensland Law Society, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014, p. 9; Mr Selwyn Button, CEO, Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014, p. 19; Mr Peter Arndt, Executive Officer, Brisbane Archdiocese Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, *Committee Hansard*, 30 June 2014, p. 24; Ms Dierdre Robertson, Co-Convenor, Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group, 13 August 2014, p. 8; Mr Peter Quinlan SC, President, Western Australian Bar Association, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 2014, p. 10.

---

***OPTION 2 – New section 51A with a limited prohibition of discrimination by the Commonwealth against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples***

1.28 Noting paragraph 1.27 above, the committee recommends that Parliament consider a proposed new section 51A to allow the Commonwealth to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to prohibit discrimination against them by the Commonwealth in the exercise of its legislative power.

1.29 The proposed new section 51A in Option 2 would remove the fourth line of preambular language used by the Expert Panel (as discussed above in paragraph 1.25), and incorporate subsection (2) of the Expert Panel's proposed new section 116A, along the following lines:

**51A Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

**Recognising** that the continent and its islands now known as Australia were first occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

**Acknowledging** the continuing relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with their traditional lands and waters;

**Respecting** the continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

- (1) The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, but not so as to discriminate adversely against them.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not preclude the making of laws or measures for the purpose of overcoming disadvantage, ameliorating the effects of past discrimination, or protecting the cultures, languages or heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

1.30 In its interim report, the committee noted that the prohibition of racial discrimination proposed by the Expert Panel would allow for the enactment of laws for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or special measures:

The inclusion of an exception for 'special measures' would minimise the risk that a general non-discrimination clause would invalidate laws for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. While Australians are wary of the overuse of affirmative action policies which are perceived to unfairly favour one group of people over others, the approach proposed by the Panel is one that is needs-based, rather than one based on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identity.<sup>24</sup>

---

24 *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, January 2012, p. 172; Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Interim report*, 15 July 2014, p. 17.

1.31 Subsection (2), as drafted above, is designed to ensure that laws that are designed to be special measures are not inadvertently prohibited by subsection (1).

1.32 This option is limited expressly to prohibit racial discrimination by the Commonwealth in the exercise of its legislative power in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The committee notes that it would not limit the legislative power of state and territory parliaments.

***OPTION 3 – Redraft section 51(xxvi) to allow the Commonwealth Parliament to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the option of enacting an Act of Recognition***

1.33 In its interim report, the committee noted a proposal to frame a constitutional amendment so as to require the Commonwealth to legislate on the subject of recognition, including recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in an Act of Recognition, along the following lines:<sup>25</sup>

**51 Legislative Powers of the Parliament**

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:

(xxvi) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and within this power must enact and maintain an Act of Recognition.

1.34 The committee has received and accepted advice that, while there are few limits on alterations that can be made to the Constitution at referendum, there are a broad range of 'problems and uncertainties' with an amendment that compelled the Parliament to legislate on a particular topic.<sup>26</sup> For example, it is uncertain how the requirement to enact and maintain an Act of Recognition would be enforced, or how disagreement would be resolved between members of Parliament on the enactment or form of that Act.<sup>27</sup> Professor Anne Twomey identified a number of unanswered questions about an amendment that compelled an Act of Recognition, including:

Who would decide what amounted to 'recognition'? What if Parliament passed a law that it entitled an 'Act of Recognition', but a court decided that it did not involve adequate recognition, or it included other matter that should not be 'tacked on' to a special law of this nature? What if the law was amended in the future in a way that lessened the nature of the 'recognition'? Would the obligation only be to enact such a law once, or would there be a perpetual obligation to maintain it in existence? Could it

---

25 Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Interim report*, 15 July 2014, p. 26.

26 Professor George Williams AO, Advice to the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 29 September 2014, p. 2.

27 *Ibid.*

be amended or repealed, and if repealed, would it have to be replaced by another Act of Recognition at the same time?<sup>28</sup>

1.35 Further, Professor George Williams discussed the uncertain effect that an Act of Recognition would have on future constitutional interpretations, considering that:

Ordinarily, legislation enacted in accordance with the Constitution does not itself impact upon interpretation of that document. It is not clear whether this would be the case for an Act of Recognition, due to its unusual status. It is possible that the Court might view the Act of Recognition as a quasi-constitutional instrument that justifies greater reference to it in constitutional interpretation, statutory construction and common law development.<sup>29</sup>

1.36 Noting this advice, as a further alternative to the two options discussed above, the committee recommends that the Parliament consider a new section 51(xxvi) providing a power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, along the following lines:

#### **51 Legislative Powers of the Parliament**

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:

(xxvi) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

1.37 This power would allow, but not require, the Parliament to enact an Act of Recognition.

1.38 The committee notes that it was suggested to the Expert Panel that 'legislative recognition could have a useful role in public education in the lead-up to a referendum'.<sup>30</sup>

1.39 In addition, in a submission to the committee, Mr Damien Freeman and Mr Julian Leeser propose a declaration of recognition 'decoupled from the Constitution' following a public competition to draft 'a historical and aspirational statement of no more than 300 words'.<sup>31</sup> In their view, a declaration would 'recognise the place of [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples] in our history, and the enduring value of their culture for Australia'.<sup>32</sup>

---

28 Dr Anne Twomey, Advice to the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 30 September 2014, pp 2–3.

29 Professor George Williams AO, Advice to the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 29 September 2014, p. 3.

30 *Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution: Report of the Expert Panel*, January 2012, p. 224.

31 Mr Damien Freeman and Mr Julian Leeser, *Submission 29*, p. 2.

32 *Ibid.*

---

## Timing

1.40 The committee is also required to build parliamentary consensus around the timing of referendum proposals for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The committee is of the view that the momentum for recognition will only build once the proposed wording is publicly known, and therefore recommends that a referendum take place at or shortly after the next federal election in 2016.

### Recommendation 6

**1.41 The committee recommends that a referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution take place at or shortly after the next federal election in 2016.**

1.42 The Review Panel recommended that Parliament should amend the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recognition Act 2013* so that the Act does not sunset in March 2015. The committee agrees that the Act should be extended to align with the proposed timing of a referendum.

### Recommendation 7

**1.43 The committee recommends that the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Act 2013* should be extended to align with the proposed timing of a referendum.**

**Mr Ken Wyatt AM MP  
Chair**