

# Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

## Consultation session details

**Kamilaroi, Gomeroi and Gamilaraay country,**

**Moree, 15 March 2021, 2.00pm, Session 2**

**Number of participants: 9**

## Key points raised

*Please note, this is a summary of the discussion and the views and opinions expressed by participants in consultations sessions. It is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of all points raised, but draws out the key points.*

The session was attended by 9 participants and Kristal Kinsela gave an acknowledgement of country. Key issues discussed are summarised below.

- Participants agreed there is a need for a Voice. The benefit will be great if it works for us.
- Participants noted that the proposals come back to us - if we want it to work, then we need to get our people engaged with the model.
- Participants agreed with the principles outlined for the Local and Regional Voice.
- There was discussion about the proposals and how they have taken into account the lessons was previous structures, such as ATSIC, and previous reports and proposals such as the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
  - One participant brought up the issue with ATSIC of bigger communities who appeared to get more money
- It was discussed that the Indigenous Voice Co-design proposals are based on the experience from previous structures and processes, and has taken into account the positives and challenges.
  - One of the positives brought up was under ATSIC, the inclusiveness of communities for input
- There was discussion that the Local and Regional Voices had to work with existing arrangements, such as the Local Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW.
  - One participant raised the issue is that LALCs would co-exist with Local and Regional Voices, community members might be confused about who to approach with a matter.
  - There would also need to be negotiation with LALCs on the Local and Regional Voice development.
- It was noted that if we put our differences aside, leave our affiliations and organisations at the door and come together as a community and as a region, we can build a regional voice.
  - The structure of Local and Regional Voices still needs to be designed, and designed by the community.
  - Local and Regional Voices need to be independent and have their own resources.
  - We only have one chance to do this. If we don't do it now, it will take a long time to come back again in the cycle of proposals.
  - Capability of communities needs to be built up to deal with governments.
  - A participant noted that border communities have the complexity of dealing with two state governments, which will need to be taken into account in the Local and Regional Voices.
  - Small communities must be engaged through this process. They should not be left out.



- There needs to be local partnerships - governments and business needs to engage with the Local and Regional Voices. Otherwise what is the point of developing Local and Regional Voices if it is not used by the government?
- There was a discussion on the importance of data sovereignty - the government will need to work in partnership and from the early stages of policy development, data sharing should be part of that.
- There was a lot of discussion on the importance of resourcing the Voice.
  - There will need to be staff to support the Voices. Aboriginal people must be paid to do work for the Voices, rather than work for free.
  - Representatives will likely be working full time jobs as representatives, which must be recognised in the resourcing. They will need support otherwise they will burn out.
  - The Voice must be resourced to engage with community, particularly the National Voice.
- On the National Voice proposals, there was discussion around an election model.
  - It was noted that smaller communities could miss out under an election model based on population/number of voters in larger communities.
  - It was also noted the matter of turnout in an election could be an issue, and it could be used by people with large networks to easily obtain the necessary vote, which in a low-turnout may not require a large vote.
  - Voting would have to be voluntary.
  - One participant noted that young people must be enrolled to vote automatically at 18.
- Participants preferred the structurally linked model, with members of the National Voice coming from the Local and Regional Voices, to ensure people come up through community.
  - However, one participant noted that there should be a guarantee of members, dedicated positions, for representatives from remote and regional regions as well.
- Participants did not support appointments to the National Voice. If there are certain skills required, then the National Voice can bring in subject matter experts, there is no need to appoint them to the National Voice.
- There was a lot of discussion on how to ensure longevity and a guarantee for the Voice. There needs to be a guarantee that governments can't change the National Voice as they like.
  - Without a guarantee, people won't buy into it unless they are sure it will last.
  - It was suggested that the National Voice should also be reviewed periodically.
- Participants discussed the importance of promotion for the community consultations and ensuring people across the community know about and have sufficient notice.
- Participants discussed the importance of hearing young and elderly voices and engaging these groups throughout the process.