

Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

Consultation session details

Barngarla country,

Port Augusta, 22 April, 1:30pm, session 2

Number of participants: 14

Key points raised

Please note, this is a summary of the discussion and the views expressed by participants in consultation 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 14 participants and an acknowledgement of country was given by Ms Jacinta McKenzie. Key points discussed are summarised below.

Overarching points

- One participant expressed disappointment with government's response to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
 - There was some discussion about whether there was political support for the Voice.
 - Some participants felt there was a lack of trust in government and political leaders generally.
- There was a view that communities are disempowered. There was also a sense that community is often blamed for lack of progress on outcomes and criticised for advocating passionately for social issues.
- One participant spoke about the qualities and qualifications of Voice members suggesting that "western qualifications don't make a good voice, passion is just as important". It was agreed that who can represent the community and at which levels should be decided by community.
- One participant commented that there needs to be more mentoring of young and middle aged Aboriginal people to step into the leadership roles and learn from existing leaders.
 - There was some concern that the government favours particular individuals when it is seeking advice on many issues, but there needs to be room for others who represent community.
- One participant said they wanted to support the proposal but also noted the importance of getting it right.
- It was felt that organisations that receive funding need to be accountable to the community, as well as to the funders.
- One participant suggested that every organisation, government entity and NGO that participates or engages with the Voice should be required to have a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). They felt having a RAP would give some credibility to organisations/governments sitting at the table.
- Participants agreed it was important that they see themselves reflected and represented in the Voice proposals.



Local & Regional Voice

- One participant felt the proposals were good and wanted to see local people representing the local area – ‘We live and breathe local issues’.
- One participant supported a larger number of regions suggesting there should be more than three regions in South Australia and more than 35 regions nationally.
- It was clarified by Co-design members that the role of the Local and Regional Voice will be to articulate the issues and priorities of the community and the region. It was noted that these priorities might differ across the three proposed regions in South Australia.
- There was agreement that shared-decision making should be part of the arrangements at the local and regional level.
- There was a view that the Data and Evidence-based decision making principle was important, noting that evidence needs to move beyond numbers and include community insights – NDIS was referenced as an example that lacked community consultation and qualitative insights.

National Voice

- Model 1 – drawing members of the National Voice from Local and Regional Voices - was the preferred model for the National Voice. Participants felt it offered a pathway to leadership for individuals to gain experience/exposure to different levels of the Voice.
- There was some discussion about the linkages between the Local and Regional Voice and the National Voice.
- It was clarified that under the proposals only the Minister for Indigenous Affairs (rather than other ministers) would be able to appoint members and only with the agreement of the National Voice itself.
- There was some discussion about the Northern Territory Intervention, with participants indicating that it occurred unilaterally, with no consultation or accountability.
- It was clarified that the Coalition of the Peaks (CoPs) won’t be replaced by this process, rather the Voice and CoPs will work in partnership.
- One participant suggested an alternative membership model that reflected the ‘older way’. They called for the best person in each state to be called on to represent community on specific topics. For example, on heritage matters, the authority on cultural heritage should sit at the table. They felt the two member model was too restrictive and would result in issues getting diluted and individual agendas being pursued.

Co-design process

- There was interest in further workshops with government to design what a Local and Regional Voice would look like for this region.
- Co-design members noted that once there is a government decision, there will need to be further consultation and design in each region to determine what it will look like.