

Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

Consultation session details

Wulgurukaba country,

Townsville, 19 April 2021, 9.00am – 12.00noon, Session 1

Number of participants: 43

Key points raised

Please note, this is a summary of the discussion and the views and opinions 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 43 participants who were welcomed to country by Brenton Creed. Key points discussed are summarised below.

Overarching points

- Participants agreed there needs to be a Voice, but that it also would need to be backed up with action to address systemic issues communities face related to government relations and service delivery. This would include ensuring location-specific cultural competency for government officials and service providers engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- Participants stressed the need to ensure a Voice body is one that is sustainable and properly resourced.
- Participants reflected upon the intergenerational trauma and lateral violence that has been experienced in community. There was recognition that the community needs to have internal conversations to bring people together and establish a united approach in future Voice discussions.

Local & Regional Voice

- Several participants commented that they agree with all the principles, and see the principles-based framework as a useful tool for decision-makers in the various levels of government, as well as for people working in service delivery organisations, to also be guided by in their work and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- There was general agreement amongst participants that the Townsville community needs to get together to resolve longstanding community issues, before the community is able to move forward in unity to establish a Local and Regional Voice.
- One participant queried what the timeframe is in which Local and Regional Voices are to be set up. It was clarified that there is no immediate urgency to determine Local and Regional Voices. This would be worked out in discussions with communities at the implementation stage, which would only occur once the Indigenous Voice had been legislated. There was acknowledgement that it may take time for some communities to determine the structure of their Local and Regional Voices.
- Another participant queried how the number of Local and Regional Voices would be resolved, if more than 25-35 regions were identified. It was acknowledged that there could be a lot of work at the implementation stage, for communities and regions, to identify suitable boundaries.



- Several participants commented that there would need to be more than 35 Local and Regional Voices. In particular, it was noted that there are a lot of remote and regional communities in Far North Queensland and out in Western Queensland. One participant stated that limiting Local and Regional Voices to 35 could lead to the voices in those communities being under-represented.

National Voice

- One participant reflected on the need for support and services for people identifying as LGBTQ+ in the Townsville area, and noted the importance of ensuring LGBTQ+ voices are heard safely.
- Another participant commented that there are a few thousand Torres Strait Islander people living in the Torres Strait, but significantly many more Torres Strait Islander people living on the mainland, and that it was important to acknowledge they experience different issues. The participant expressed the view it was not appropriate to have Torres Strait Islander members on the National Voice represent all Torres Strait Islander people regardless of location and different lived experiences. The participant stated that Torres Strait Islander people living on the mainland needed to have their own voices heard, and not via Torres Strait Islander members by virtue of cultural similarities only.