

Submission in response to the Indigenous Voice Co-design Process Interim Report to the Australian Government

29th April 2021

We welcome the opportunity to make this submission to the Australian Government in response to the *Interim Report to the Australian Government: Indigenous Voice Co-design Process* and to express our strong support for a referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Parliament in the Australian Constitution.

Indigenous Defence & Infrastructure consortium (iDiC) is a Majority owned and controlled Indigenous business which has over 100 Indigenous Businesses in our consortium. Since commencing trading in 2017 the iDiC, via our own Indigenous supply chain, has contributed in excess of \$100 million in economic benefit to Indigenous Businesses, Peoples and Communities.

iDiC and our Indigenous Businesses acknowledge First Nations peoples as traditional custodians of *Country* throughout Australia and recognise their continuing cultural connection to the lands and waters of this continent.

As a leading Indigenous business, we acknowledge that we play an active role in driving forward the journey towards reconciliation and equality. We accept the responsibility to promote reconciliation within our workplace with our Indigenous brothers and Sisters and Non-Indigenous businesses.

We support the generous invitation extended by First Nations people in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* for indigenous and Non-Indigenous people to walk together in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

We recognise, respect and are proud of the fact that the First Nations peoples have cared for the lands and waters of this continent for more than 60,000 years and invite others to walk alongside our peers on a journey towards reconciliation, equality and constitutional protection of their right to be heard.

We believe First Nations peoples must have a direct say in laws and policies that affect them. As such, we stand up and support the respectful proposal in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* for a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice to Parliament.

We respectfully urge the Australian Government to honour its election commitment to hold a referendum once a model for the Voice has been settled and to pass enabling legislation for the Voice after a referendum has been held in the next term of Parliament.

We also urge the government to ensure the membership model for the Voice supports previously unheard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in having an equal chance at being selected as representatives as established leadership figures.

We also support the two other key elements for reform in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*; a Makarrata Commission to oversee agreement-making between the Australian Government and First Nations and a formal truth-telling process, each critical step towards reconciliation.

We stand proudly alongside other First Nations peers to champion the rightful place within our nation so that we can move forward, together.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Goodes
Chief Executive Officer

Michael McLeod
Chairman