

## **SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE INDIGENOUS VOICE DISCUSSION PAPER**

As one of Australia's largest energy retailers, that operates on traditional Country of First Nations peoples and respects their continued connection to Country, culture and spirit, we support the call to action in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and want to see work to progress it. Quite simply, we endorse a First Nations voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a magnificent feat and a gift to our nation. With courage and in unity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples pulled together a statement, one from the heart, that seeks that recognition as First Nations peoples and to take a rightful place on Country. There are so many reconciliation triumphs led by First Nations people like this one, Reconciliation bridge walk twenty years ago, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 30 years ago, the 1967 referendum and William Cooper's 1930s lobbying which seem to go unheeded. This cannot continue.

We support the key positions of the Interim Voice Co-Design Report:

- The government must honour its election commitment to a referendum once a model for the Voice has been settled;
- Enabling legislation for the Voice must be passed after a referendum has been held in the next term of Parliament; and
- The membership model for the National Voice must ensure previously unheard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the same chance of being selected as established leadership figures.

Having consulted within EnergyAustralia, we believe constitutional recognition should occur prior to legislating the Voice to drive legitimacy and durability.

While we commend the work of the Indigenous Voice Co-design groups and its proposed models, we believe work could be done to establish the Voice at a national, local and regional level while a referendum takes place. EnergyAustralia believes this is a practical reform that offers a historic unifying moment for our nation that can and must be seized now.

At EnergyAustralia, our vision for reconciliation is that we are a nation of unity and fairness for all; a nation that owns its history and acknowledges First Nations peoples, their resilience and their living cultures. Our submission of support of the discussion paper is one small way we can live our values and for that we do this with pride.

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