

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



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YOORROOK JUSTICE COMMISSION DELIVERS INTERIM REPORT

The Andrews Labor Government today acknowledged the Yoorrook Justice Commission's Interim Report, an important step forward in their work.

The report was delivered to the government and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, who together established the Yoorrook Justice Commission in 2021 with the purpose of investigating both historical and ongoing injustices against First Peoples since colonisation.

The government acknowledges the work of the Commissioners, as well as the contributions of Elders who have participated in the yarning circles and *wurrek tyerrang* (hearings) across Victoria.

In close consultation with the First Peoples' Assembly, the government will consider the report, including its two recommendations, which were tabled in the Victorian Parliament today. The Letters Patent requires that the interim report must detail any initial findings or immediate priorities through the Treaty making process.

The government shares the Yoorrook Justice Commission's goals of truth and justice and remains committed to considering all findings and recommendations that are made under the Commission's terms of reference.

The government notes that the Commission has requested to submit a second report in early 2023 that will make recommendations to be considered as part of the treaty making process.

The Commission's ongoing and critically important work will develop a shared understanding among all Victorians of the impacts of colonisation, and the strength and resilience of First Peoples.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is the nation's first truth-telling inquiry into the systemic injustices experienced by First Peoples. It has a broad mandate that reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to reform, reparation and the advancement of treaty, founded on a shared understanding of the truth.

Victoria is leading the nation in implementing the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, and this important truth-telling process will inform future treaty negotiations and fundamental cultural, legal and institutional reform.

First Peoples have made clear that without truth, there can be no treaty, and without treaty, there can be no justice.

Victoria has made significant steps towards treaty with the recent passage of the *Treaty Authority Bill* in the Legislative Assembly. Treaty negotiations are likely to commence in 2023.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

"We thank the Yoorrook Justice Commission for submitting their interim report and note their request to submit a further report to build on this work."

"As the nation's first formal truth-telling process, the work of the Commission will play an important role in paving the way for treaty and a fairer, more just future for all Victorians."