



## Communique

29 March 2023



### **Message from the Chairperson – Tanya Keed**

*An update to the community on behalf of the Elected Body on some key areas of activity.*

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### **Passing of Aunty Agnes Shea OAM**

On behalf of the Elected Body, I wish to express my sincere condolences to the family of Aunty Agnes Shea OAM. A respected Senior Elder and leader in our community her loss impacts the entire community here in the ACT and indeed the country.

Aunty Agnes was awarded an Order of Australia Medal and ACT Chief Minister's Senior Citizen of the Year for her advocacy and bringing positive change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and the ACT community.

Her legacy is strong and we should all look to her inspiration as we work towards better outcomes for our people. Our thoughts are with her family, Ngunnawal People, and her friends in the wider ACT community at this difficult time.

### **Referendum on a Voice to Parliament and constitutional recognition for First Nations people**

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) acknowledge the historic announcements by Prime Minister Albanese regarding the Referendum. This is an important step in their commitment to being able to fully embrace the hope represented by the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Since the establishment of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body in 2008 as an independent body, chosen by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, we have fiercely advocated for change. We can demonstrate where knowledge

of our community's needs combined with our intense engagement, advocacy and consultation with government have come together to deliver change.

There will be opportunities over the coming months for us to gather as a community to understand the nature of the Referendum and its scope and meaning. We are proposing for the first event of this kind to be at the new community buildings at Boomanulla Oval on Tuesday 11 April 2023 from 3pm to 5pm.

If members of the community are interested in seeking information prior to the ATSIEB information session, please consider attending the Referendum and Voice to Parliament Information Night on March 31, 2023 at 5:30pm to 8:30pm at the Canberra Theatre.

Find more information and RSVP here:

[davidpocock.com.au/referendum and voice to parliament information night](https://davidpocock.com.au/referendum-and-voice-to-parliament-information-night)

## **Members update**

I would like to inform the community of changes in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body membership.

Over the last three months, Members Blackman and House have resigned from the Elected Body. We would like to thank Ms Blackman and Ms House for their advocacy and committed work in the Elected Body on behalf of our community, particularly within their portfolio areas. We wish them both the best in their next endeavours and their future contributions to the community.

Following a recount of votes by the ACT Electoral Office due to Ms Blackman's resignation we would also like to welcome Jacob Keed to the Elected Body. This is Member Keed's second term with the Elected Body and so we anticipate he will quickly make a positive contribution to the Elected Body and his portfolio areas which will be confirmed shortly.

We have informed ACT Elections and the appropriate procedures will be followed for a new member to be engaged in the Elected Body following Ms House's resignation. We will inform the community when that process has concluded and we are able to introduce the new member of the Elected Body.

## **ATSIEB hearings**

The Elected Body will be hosting hearings with ACT Government Directorates in August 2023. We are seeking input from community on the questions to be asked during these hearings. We will send out email reminders but please email [atsieb@act.gov.au](mailto:atsieb@act.gov.au) if you have any questions or to contact members direct if you wish to discuss in any detail.

## Happy Easter

As we close in on Easter it does feel like the year is going past very quickly. I hope you get a chance over the upcoming long weekend to rest and spend time with those close to you. We will be releasing our consultation schedule for 2023 very soon and I hope to catch up with you all in the near future.

Tanya Keed  
Chairperson