

Referendum on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice

Soon Australian Voters will be asked to vote in a Referendum. The Referendum will ask whether there should be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament in the Constitution. The Parliament is the body that makes laws for Australia.

What is the Voice to Parliament?

The Voice is a way for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to advise the Government about laws that affect them. Writing the Voice into the Constitution will mean the Voice will have a permanent role in providing advice to the Government on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The Voice to Parliament will be an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to be constitutionally recognised and for their culture to be acknowledged and celebrated.

Why are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People asking for a Voice to Parliament?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have been asking to be recognised by the Government for nearly 100 years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples know their communities and culture best. They know the best solutions to meet the challenges facing their communities that can create a fairer, more equitable experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

What will the Voice to Parliament do?

The Voice will listen to advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People about matters that affect their lives, so the Government can make better decisions that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Who will represent the Voice to Parliament?

The Voice will be a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from every state and territory including remote areas. Representatives will be chosen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in their local area.

Have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People been consulted on the Voice to Parliament?

Thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have given advice on why the Voice is needed and how it should work for many years. More than 80% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People support a Voice to Parliament.

What do legal experts say?

Constitutional lawyers including those representing the Federal Government have said the Voice is legally sound and will make our system of government better.

Can the Voice make laws?

No. The Voice will not have power to make laws. It will only provide advice on matters that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

What question will the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum ask?

“A Proposed Law: to alter the Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. Do you approve this proposed alteration?”

How do I vote in the Referendum?

Referendums are like elections. You will be given a ballot paper with the question above and you will need to write 'YES' or 'NO' in English for your vote to be counted. If you write 'YES' it means you agree Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People should have a voice on matters that directly impact them.

What happens if the majority of people vote YES?

If the majority of people vote Yes for the Voice, the Government will then consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to finalise the design and pass relevant laws to set up the Voice.

What happens if the majority of people vote NO?

If the majority of people vote no, nothing will change. The issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People will continue. Voting no means you vote no to the Voice, there is no alternative to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in this Referendum.

Where can I get more information?

**More
info**

www.lwb.org.au

