

Joint Statement

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**FIRST PEOPLES'
ASSEMBLY OF
VICTORIA**



Monday, 13 January 2025

JOINT STATEMENT ON TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

The Allan Labor Government and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria have agreed the focus for the first round of Treaty negotiations in Victoria.

This follows close to a decade of preparatory work by the parties, including Australia's first Treaty legislation passed by the Victorian Parliament in 2018, and the Treaty Authority Act which received bipartisan support in the Victorian Parliament in 2022.

Treaty is about making a better and fairer state for every Victorian. Treaty will achieve practical change, with the initial round of negotiations focusing on securing a foundation for Treaty in Victoria that recognises the relationship between the State and First Peoples.

Key areas will include structural measures to support reconciliation, truth, education and healing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians. The Victorian Government and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria have agreed to discuss the following topics:

- The principles and objectives for Statewide Treaty
- The legal recognition and effect of a Statewide Treaty
- The creation of an ongoing First Peoples' representative body, including:
 - Evolving the First Peoples' Assembly into an ongoing representative body
 - Governance and oversight of a representative body
 - The role of a representative body in decision-making relating to Victorian Government programs and services for First Peoples
 - Interaction between a representative body and the Victorian Parliament and Government
- Implementing the accountability mechanism under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Work to support ongoing truth-telling, education, healing and reconciliation in Victoria
- Dispute resolution under a Statewide Treaty
- Processes for negotiating future iterations of a Statewide Treaty

The parties have also agreed to add additional subject matters by agreement as negotiations proceed, and these will also be shared with the public.

The Victorian Government will be represented by senior Department of Premier and Cabinet executives, and appointed Member Negotiators will represent the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria was established in 2018 and has proven to be an effective way for Aboriginal Victorians to have a say as we continue to work together towards reconciliation.

Negotiations are overseen by the independent Treaty Authority according to rules set out in the Treaty Negotiation Framework. Negotiations will resume in January with weekly talks, and parties will release regular Joint Statements to keep Victorians updated.

Media contacts

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