# Meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee

## Cairns – 13 to 14 December 2022

### Communique

The First Nations Consultative Committee met in Cairns from 13 to 14 December 2022 to continue their important work to progress Queensland’s historic Indigenous Voice reform. At this meeting the Committee took the opportunity to congratulate Ms Talei Elu on being awarded the 2023 Queensland Young Australian of the Year. The Committee observed a minute’s silence to acknowledge the police officers and community member who lost their lives in Chinchilla.

#### Principles of the Voice and principles in action

The meeting built on the Committee’s work to date and provided them with the opportunity to discuss the principles that should be embedded into the work for an Indigenous Voice for Queensland. Members identified a range of principles to guide their co-design work and help shape Queensland’s Indigenous Voice model.

Key themes that arose regarding principles for an Indigenous Voice in Queensland included the need for: diversity and flexibility; power to influence policy and legislation; equitable access; and the inclusion of self-determination. The importance of government accountability and the need for government to ‘adapt to do business’ were also seen by members as important elements of Indigenous Voice.

The unique role of the *Public Sector Act 2022* in supporting the state government in reframing its relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples was also discussed and how it could inform the principles underpinning Indigenous Voice moving forward.

#### First Nations Consultative Committee and Implementation and Communication Plan

Co-chairs and members came together to discuss and refine the First Nations Consultative Committee Implementation and Communication Plan. The Implementation and Communication Plan will guide members with engagement activities across Queensland’s regions and consultation with existing representative bodies to ensure their input informs the Committee’s development of an Indigenous Voice structure for Queensland.

The Committee also discussed how it’s work will inform Queensland’s input to the Australian Government’s Indigenous Voice process and link with existing and emerging local and regional voices structures in Queensland, including those provided through Local Thriving Communities and Path to Treaty.

#### Joint meeting with Dr Chris Sarra, Director-General, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

Members of the Indigenous Voice First Nations Consultative Committee, Path to Treaty Independent Interim Body and Local Thriving Communities Joint Coordinating Committee with Dr Chris Sarra, Director-General, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships on 14 December 2022.

The reform members came together with the Director-General to discuss the First Nations reforms that they are overseeing to help give effect to a reframed relationship between the Queensland Government and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Members shared information and key learnings on their current reform work and noted the importance of an ongoing collaborative approach between the groups to ensure that complementary reform agendas are implemented that put First Nations at the heart of decision-making.

The Director-General thanked the members for their joint leadership efforts in progressing these historic reforms ensuring First Nations Queenslanders’ views and voices are at the centre of decision-making to improve First Nations outcomes. In an ongoing partnership approach, the Director-General committed to a joint Forum in early 2023 to continue the discussion across the reframing the relationship reform agendas which will include all members of the Path to Treaty Independent Interim Body, Local Thriving Communities Joint Coordinating Committee community members and the First Nations Consultative Committee.

#### Next steps

The First Nations Consultative Committee discussed the next steps to progress their work including finalising the implementation and communication approach. The next meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee is scheduled in Brisbane for early 2023 and will include a joint forum with all members of the Indigenous Voice, Path to Treaty and Local Thriving Communities reforms.