# Inaugral meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee

## Cairns – 12 August 2022

### Communique

The First Nations Consultative Committee leading Queensland’s Indigenous Voice reform held its first meeting in Cairns on 12 August 2022. Members made progress on determining the approach to starting this historic work in Queensland.

#### Message from the Minister and Director-General

The Minister provided Committee members with a message to express his gratitude for their dedication to the task and noted the significance of the Committee’s work in providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a strong voice in informing the development of an Indigenous Voice structure in Queensland.

The Minister reaffirmed the Queensland Government’s commitment to the momentum across the Australia for Voice, Treaty and Truth and the need for Committee members to build on this momentum and ensure synergies with the Australian Government’s Indigenous Voice process.

The Director-General joined Committee members in Cairns and outlined how Indigenous Voice builds upon the Queensland Government’s continued efforts to support a reframed relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and noted the significant progress made to date in progressing the Path to Treaty and Local Thriving Communities reforms.

#### Composition of the First Nations Consultative Committee

Members discussed the composition of the First Nations Consultative Committee and the need to elect a male and female Co-Chair of the First Nations Consultative Committee.

Mr Terry O-Shane and Ms Talei Elu were elected as Co-Chairs by their committee members Mrs Pattie Lees, Ms Karen Dini-Paul, Mr Eddie Smallwood, Mr Joshua Gorringe and Ms Kerry Crumblin.

#### Role of the First Nations Consultive Committee

The First Nations Consultative Committee discussed their role in developing a Queensland Indigenous Voice model that best meets the needs of First Nations peoples in Queensland and the importance of bringing First Nations Queenslanders on the journey with them.

Members noted that they will be looking at what Indigenous representative structures already exist, as a well as listening to what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want from a Queensland Indigenous Voice in terms of its structure and membership, how it should interact with governments, and its powers and ongoing authority on the decisions and policies that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across the state.

The Committee noted the process of designing an Indigenous Voice model for Queensland will be a considerable undertaking and that it will be important for members to listen to the communities in their region to co-design a voice that can work for them.

#### Approach to consultation and engagement

The First Nations Consultation Comittee will lead community consultations about Indigenous Voice and build positive momentum for this historic conversation in Queensland. Community feedback will inform the Committee’s advice back to Government on how to best progress Indigenous Voice in Queensland.

Members discussed the importance of engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in all regions and ensuring that engagement is inclusive of different voices.

The Committee committed to co-designing a voice that reflects the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities across Queensland and noted that this will be an ongoing priority as they progress and develop an Indigenous Voice model for Queensland.

#### National Indigenous Voice reform

Committee members discussed the work underway at the national level to progress Indigenous Voice reform including the recent commitment by the Federal Government to constitutionally enshrine a Voice to Parliament.

Members noted key themes and findings from the Uluru Statement from the Heart process could inform their work and expressed a keen interest to hear from the Australian Government on their Indigenous Voice process and associated timeframes to ensure complementary reforms at a state and national level. Members will invite a representative from the Australian Government to a future meeting to inform their work moving forward.

#### Next steps

The First Nations Consultative Committee discussed the next steps to progress their work including inviting keynote speakers to future meetings and refining the consultation and engagement approach to ensure a diversity of voices are heard from all regions across the state. The second meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee is scheduled for October 2022 in Brisbane and will include identified experts to workshop issues with the group.