# Meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee

## Brisbane – 10 to 12 October 2022

### Communique

The First Nations Consultative Committee leading Queensland’s Indigenous Voice reform met in Brisbane from 10 October 2022 to 12 October 2022. A First Nations Consultative Committee workshop was held on 11 October 2022 and a First Nations Consultative Committee formal meeting was held on 12 October 2022. These meetings were informed by a presentation by Professor Megan Davis and Mr Eddie Synot at a working dinner of the Co‑Chairs and members on 10 October 2022.

#### First Nations Consultative Committee Workshop

Co-Chairs and members came together for a one-day workshop to progress ideas and determine a methodology to achieve their objectives and explore ways to engage with their regions to develop Queensland’s preferred Indigenous Voice model. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the Co-Chairs and members to share and build on their strengths and expertise, areas of interest, and connections with community networks.

The Co-Chairs and members committed to drafting community consultation plans for their respective regions and reiterated the importance of ensuring the plans are inclusive of different voices that reflect the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities across Queensland. The Committee noted community feedback will be an ongoing priority as they progress and develop an Indigenous Voice model.

The First Nations Consultative Committee also met with the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships’ Board of Management to brief them on their work and for an informal meet and greet over lunch.

#### First Nations Consultative Committee Meeting

The Co-Chairs and members continued discussions and agreed on next steps and outcomes from the workshop including drafting an implementation paper that will outline a proposed consultation and engagement approach and a discussion paper informed by Tony McAvoy SC that will inform strategies moving forward.

Mrs Denise Andrews, Director, Culture and Community Policy, Strategic Policy and Legislation, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships provided the Co-Chairs and members with an overview of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative and reform landscape in Queensland including current priority areas, such as Local Thriving Communities, Path to Treaty and Queensland’s implementation of Closing the Gap.

Mr John Walker, Branch Manager, Voice Branch, National Indigenous Australians Agency provided a presentation outlining the Australian’s Government’s progress on the national referendum and regional voice arrangements. Mr Walker noted the Minister for Indigenous Australians has established the First Nations Working Group and the First Nations Engagement Group to advise on how to take forward enshrinement of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution and a new Committee of Cabinet dedicated to Constitutional Recognition. Mr Walker reiterated that the proposed regional voice would be designed by communities with final arrangements to be determined informed by further consultation with communities and all levels of government.

#### Presentation by Professor Megan Davis and Mr Eddie Synot at Co-Chairs and Members Working Dinner

Professor Megan Davis and Mr Eddie Synot joined the First Nations Consultative Committee for a working dinner and provided information on the Uluru Statement from the Heart including discussions with Co-Chairs and members on the Australian Government’s commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement in full including current work on constitutional reform and the national referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution.

Professor Davis is a First Nations Constitutional and Human Rights Lawyer and Professor of Law, and Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous at UNSW. Professor Davis was instrumental in the development of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, designing the dialogues and chairing the Council's sub-committee for the First Nations Regional Dialogues and the First Nations Constitutional Convention in 2017. Professor Davis was recently announced as a member of the First Nations Referendum Working Group to work with the Australian Government to determine how best to ensure referendum success.

Mr Eddie Synot is a Wemba Wemba First Nations Public Lawyer, Researcher and Lecturer at Griffith Law School, Griffith University and a Research Fellow at the Indigenous Law Centre University of New South Wales (ILC UNSW). Mr Synot has worked with the Uluru Dialogue and the ILC UNSW since 2018.

#### Next steps

The First Nations Consultative Committee discussed the next steps to progress their work including finalising the implementation and consultation and engagement approach. The next meeting of the First Nations Consultative Committee is scheduled for December 2022 in Cairns.