

TREATY: HOW WE GOT TO THIS POINT

Since **February 2016**, the **Aboriginal Victorian community** and the Victorian Government have been working towards **treaty together**.

The first step is to lay out the ground rules for treaty—who can represent community, what is on the table, and how negotiations will be kept fair and honest. The community needs a representative body which can work as an equal partner with the State of Victoria to decide these ground rules. That is the job of the Aboriginal Representative Body.

The Aboriginal Treaty Working Group has worked in partnership with the community in designing what the Aboriginal Representative Body should look like—how it should operate, and how it should represent community. The Working Group led 16 consultations across Victoria, and held community-led treaty circles. Finally, an Aboriginal Community Assembly was held with community members to make recommendations to the Working Group on the design of the Aboriginal Representative Body.

The work of setting up the Representative Body, including holding elections, will be led by the independent Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner, Jill Gallagher AO.

APRIL 2016

Self Determination Forum held across the state

JULY 2016

Creation of the **Aboriginal Treaty Working Group**

DECEMBER 2016

Aboriginal Victoria Forum 2 Report back to Community on Phase 1 Consults

APRIL 2017

Aboriginal Victoria Forum 3 Report back to Community on Phase 2 Consults

NOVEMBER 2017

Community Assembly held

2018/2019

Representative Body to be formed

FEBRUARY 2016

Self Determination Forum held. Victorian Government commits to discussing treaty.

MAY 2016

Aboriginal Victoria Forum 1

NOVEMBER 2016

Phase 1 Community Consultations begin

MARCH 2017

Phase 2 Community Consultations begin and **Treaty Circle Facilitator Training** held

SEPTEMBER 2017

Applications to be on the Community Assembly open

EARLY 2018

Report back to Community from Community Assembly
Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission established

TREATY

WHAT WILL THE ABORIGINAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY LOOK LIKE?

Q: What is the role of the Aboriginal Representative Body?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will be a representative voice for community. Its first and foremost role will be to work with the State of Victoria to develop the rules and bodies necessary to support future treaty negotiations.

Q: Who will the Aboriginal Representative Body represent?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will represent all Aboriginal people in Victoria. It will work with existing Aboriginal organisations and networks to represent the diversity of Aboriginal Victorians.

Q: What is the legal structure of the Aboriginal Representative Body?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will be a company limited by guarantee. This was considered the best way to make sure the Aboriginal Representative Body is flexible and independent of the government, and accountable only to the community.

Q: How many representatives will there be?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will be made up of 30 representatives. These representatives will be spread across six voting areas – five in regional Victoria and one in metropolitan Melbourne. Each voting area will wherever possible not cut across Traditional Owner boundaries.

Q: Who can vote for the Aboriginal Representative Body?

A: All Aboriginal people living in Victoria will be able to vote for the Aboriginal Representative Body.

Q: Who can stand for election to the Aboriginal Representative Body?

A: All Victorian Aboriginal Traditional Owners can stand for election. The candidate must prove that they have support from at least two of the following:

- A Traditional Owner Corporation
- An Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation
- 20 eligible voters.

If a candidate gains support from 20 eligible voters, and tries but is unable to gain support from either of the other two options, they can still stand for election. This makes sure that candidates stand for election with the support of the community.

Q: How long can representatives of the Aboriginal Representative Body serve?

A: Representatives are allowed to serve a maximum of two, three-year terms in a row. If the representative wants to stand for election again, they will need to sit out for one term. All positions will be open at each election cycle so that new individuals and perspectives are regularly brought into the Aboriginal Representative Body.

Q: How will the Aboriginal Representative Body be held accountable to the community?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will be accountable to the community through good corporate governance practices. In addition, to this an accountability body should exist which will focus on cultural accountability. The Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission will work to develop the concept further.

Q: What won't the Aboriginal Representative Body do?

A: The Aboriginal Representative Body will not negotiate for Country and it will not determine native title or Aboriginal cultural heritage matters.