

Victorian Reconciliation Network Forum NOTES - 26TH AUGUST 2017

Attendees – Refer to Appendix

Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

Reconciliation Victoria update

1. **Strategic Plan Overview – provided by Co-Chairs Belinda Duarte & Michelle Isles. See Strategic Plan Summary for details [here](#)**
2. Despite having limited resources (3-4 part-time staff), RecVic continues to work across a range of areas to support meaningful reconciliation in Victoria
3. **National Reconciliation Week & Sorry Day Highlights – provided by Aileen Traynor, Statewide Coordinator (Acting)**
 - There were 145 events registered on the RecVic online calendar this year (up from 100 in 2016) which RecVic also promoted events via social media and eNews
 - We coordinated HART Awards – see below, and supported three Aboriginal led or partnered events via participation on a working group or sourcing volunteers and volunteering at the event (We Here Now – Fed Square Consortium, Long Walk, Mabo Day Community Picnic)
 - We provided 11 small grants to support local NRW events (funded primarily by Reconciliation Australia)
 - As usual LRGs hosted many great events and we tried to get along to as many as we could
 - New strategic and comprehensive approach to NRW Communications this year including boosted Facebook posts, Community Service Announcements (in addition to the usual media releases, NRW direct online mail outs, etc) and Special Council meeting to shape NRW Key Messaging
4. **Community HART Awards (in partnership with VLGA)**
 - Our major event for NRW, held Friday 2nd June at Koorie Heritage Trust – successful event and opportunity to recognise local government and community partnerships and initiatives that contribute to reconciliation outcomes at a local level year round
 - Event attended by approximately 76 people. Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Local Government, Natalie Hutchins opened the event and handed out awards.

- Moving and meaningful ceremony, with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal representatives from all nominated projects in attendance, appreciative and proud to be recognised.
- There were 14 finalists split over three categories and for the first time this year we split the community category into small and large community organisations/groups to support a fair and equitable judging process.
- For a list of winners and highly commended please go to the [HART Awards webpage](#)

5. Strategic Plan Implementation

- Operational Plan underway, which includes a focus on building our internal capacity to ensure we can effectively implement our new Strategic Plan.
- Organisational Structure & Workload Priorities Review - As part of the Operations Plan, an external Organisational Structure and Workload Priorities Review will be conducted to ensure that RecVic has the appropriate structure to implement its new Strategic Plan effectively and sustainably.
- Communications Strategy development – to ensure we can be most effective in implementing our new Strategic Plan and to better engage existing and potential new supporters to reconciliation.
- ANTaR Vic & RecVic Discussions - reviewing how we can work collaboratively and strategically given broad mandates and limited resources.

6. Local Government and Maggolee

- Maggolee website continues to be updated regularly with relevant news, events and information (volunteer supporting website updates).
- RecVic is involved in the Victorian Aboriginal & Local Government Action Plan – we have provided feedback throughout its development and participate on the Implementation Group along with all action leads and supporters.
- RecVic has publicly supported Yarra & Darebin City Councils in their recent decision to change their approach to 26th January, after close consultations with Wurundjeri Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal communities. We're excited by these developments and momentum building around 26th Jan – we'll be working with leading councils and LG peak bodies to look at possibility of co-hosting an event to gather interested councils around how to mark 26th Jan.
- We encourage LRGs to work with their local Councils in progressing reconciliation – please utilise the Maggolee website (www.maggolee.org.au) as a resource to support good practice for local governments to work with Aboriginal communities.
- We continue to work with local government peak bodies such as VLGA, MAV, LGPro and LGV to promote Maggolee and support meaningful reconciliation across local government.

7. Reconciliation in Education

- Relevant education news and resources continue to feature in our monthly eNews and shared regularly on social media, sharing relevant information and providing opportunity to strengthen our networks in the sector.

8. Local Reconciliation Groups & Networks

- Conducted Victorian Regional Reconciliation Forum on Dja Dja Wurrung country (second overnight forum) on Fri 29th March – Sun 2nd April including LRG Forum and Cultural Tours. The weekend was a great success with 45 people representing 15 LRGs attending together with additional local council and community members.
- Forums, monthly eNews, social media, website, etc
- Requests for support (highlighted activity from Reconciliation Group re City of Boroondara and Council's response)

9. Constitutional Reform & Treaty

RecVic continues to stay across what's happening in these areas as it relates to Victoria & keeping our networks informed

ANTaR Vic, Local Reconciliation Groups & Network updates

Elissa Buggy, Chairperson provided an update for ANTaR Victoria.

Participants discussed local reconciliation activities (or interests if new to reconciliation) in small groups and then shared update summaries with the larger group.

BREAKOUT SESSION:

A) FOR LRG MEMBERS - Grassroots Reconciliation Project survey feedback & LRG Feedback from March Forum

(Refer to Appendix for PPT)

Aileen Traynor and Andrew Beswick (project volunteer) provided a summary of the project and initial findings from the survey. The full report will be released shortly (emailed to LRGs when ready). Aileen then provided an overview of themes from the March forum brainstorm regarding what could build capacity of LRGs.

The group then had an opportunity to ask questions about the survey findings and theme summaries.

Aileen then provided an overview of where to from here:

- Feedback from survey, March forum brainstorm and previous LRG forums will inform the Business Plan for the LRG & Networks Capacity Building Strategic Priority Area.
- Business Plan basically lays out actions/steps we will commit to in order to implement this priority area.
- Worth noting RecVic currently funded to support LRGs via monthly eNews, 3 forums/year, website updates and to respond where possible to requests for advice and provide basic support – we need additional resources to do more than this.
- In the meantime, RecVic has pulled together two separate resources for LRGs – to be emailed to LRGs.
 - 1) Engaging young people resources
 - 2) Intro to using social media for community engagement

B) FOR NON-LRG MEMBERS & NEW GUESTS: How to get involved in Reconciliation

This session ‘How to Get Involved in Reconciliation’ again brought together people new to Reconciliation Victoria with longstanding LRG members and other friends of reconciliation/champions of reconciliation. There was opportunity for participants to update on what they are doing in their communities to progress reconciliation, together with some discussion around what needs to happen in our communities to progress meaningful reconciliation.

Treaty and Constitutional Reform update and discussion

Jill Gallagher, a proud Gunditjmara woman and CEO of VACCHO provided an update around the current process for both Constitutional Reform and Treaty agendas. Jill was one of the Victorian delegates to attend the First Nations National Constitutional Convention in Uluru, as well as being the Co-Chair of the Victorian Aboriginal Treaty Interim Working Group. Jill made a call to action to advocate to our local and state members to ensure government adhere to the recommendations from both the Uluru Statement of the Heart and the Referendum Council's Final Report. Jill shared her experience around the evolution of both processes and the audience had an opportunity to ask questions at the end of Jill's presentation.

Handout – A briefing paper for LRGs and networks was handed out to participants provided a briefing on where things are at re Constitutional Reform. The handout is available on the RecVic website [here](#).

APPENDIXES

Attendees: *Over 60 people attended the forum, representing 13 LRGs as well as individuals, organisations and local governments interested in reconciliation (including 10 representatives from DHHS Reconciliation Initiative ‘Wirrigirri’). Note LRG representatives who attended are listed below.*

Banyule Rec Gp - Jane McLachlan, Aaltje Harvey, Sue Harris, Terry Makin, Wally & Margaret Johnson
Stonnington Rec Gp - Keith Gove (RecVic Council), Ro Bailey
Port Phillip Rec Gp - Rosemary Rule, Helen Bennett
Moreland Rec Gp - Aileen Traynor (RecVic Staff), Deb Chapman (RecVic Council), Chris Adams
RecVic Co- Chairs - Belinda Duarte, Michelle Isles (Moonee Ponds Rec Gp)
Whitehorse Rec Gp – John Baxter (RecVic Council)
RecVic Council – Kath Travis
Macedon Ranges Rec Gp – Erin McKinnon
Nillumbik Rec Gp - Vera Herman
Yarra Ranges Rec Gp – Ian James
Maroondah Reconciliation Gp – Tom Gay
Maroondah Movement for Reconciliation – Bob Heaton
Boroondara ANTaR – David Crawford
ANTaR Victoria – Elisa Buggy and Ian Chadderton (Committee of Management), Brigit Knight (Staff)
Get Up Out West – Greg Thorpe (and RecVic volunteer)
RecVic Project Volunteers – Andrew Beswick, Alistair King
RecVic Staff – Emily Chauvel

If you are an LRG member who attended and we've missed your name, please let us know.

Links to Forum Handouts

- **Briefing Paper for LRGs & Networks: Constitutional Reform**
[http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/user-data/Constitutional Recognition/CR Briefing Paper LRGs Networks AUG2017 copy.pdf](http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/user-data/Constitutional%20Recognition/CR%20Briefing%20Paper%20LRGs%20Networks%20AUG2017%20copy.pdf)
- **Reconciliation Victoria Strategic Plan**
[http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/user-data/Reconciliation Victoria Strategic Plan Summary August2017 WEBSITE.pdf](http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/user-data/Reconciliation%20Victoria%20Strategic%20Plan%20Summary%20August2017%20WEBSITE.pdf)
- **Forum PPT – please add to website under LRG Forum Notes/Para and include link here**