



**MEDIA RELEASE – 7 December 2015**

**Referendum Council: the next step towards Constitutional Recognition**

Joint Campaign Director of RECOGNISE, Tanya Hosch, today welcomed the announcement by the Federal Government of the establishment of the Referendum Council.

The Council was a key recommendation from the meeting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives with the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten in July. The role of the Council will include overseeing further community consultations as the proposed changes to the Constitution are finalised and the Australian people prepare for the referendum.

Welcoming the announcement Ms Hosch today said “the Referendum Council is a critical step along the road to a successful referendum campaign.

“The Council was a suggestion supported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives during the meeting in Sydney on 6 July this year. An important element in the success of the Council will be bi-partisan support.”

Ms Hosch said the RECOGNISE campaign will continue to build community awareness and support for the need for constitutional change.

“Support for the RECOGNISE campaign is spread across Australian communities and continues to strengthen, with over 284,000 Australians now supporting the work,” she said.

The Journey to Recognition relay is also continuing its engagement with communities across the nation. It’s already traveled over 34,000 kilometres and is currently on the NSW Central Coast. It will continue to travel around Australia including the Torres Strait in 2016.

RECOGNISE campaigners on the Journey have visited 235 communities, participated in 312 events and directly engaged with 22,704 Australians about the urgent need to amend the Constitution.

Level 12, 50 Goulburn St, Sydney NSW 2000. [www.RECOGNISE.org.au](http://www.RECOGNISE.org.au)

RECOGNISE is the movement to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Constitution and to address racially discriminatory provisions in it.  
RECOGNISE is part of Reconciliation Australia.

The latest round of polling, by independent research firm Polity, showed that if the referendum had been held at the time of the survey, 79 per cent of the general Australian community and 85 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians would have voted YES. The research, conducted in late July, also showed awareness of constitutional recognition rose to 63 per cent from 37 per cent in March. Among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians it increased from 52 per cent to 73 per cent.

**For more information:**

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