

National Sorry Day Acknowledgement

Preamble

On 26 May 1997, the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission tabled in Federal Parliament its report *Bringing Them Home National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*. It recommended that a 'Sorry Day' be held.

In 1998, on the first Sorry Day, around a million people signed Sorry Books and took part in ceremonies on Sorry Day.

In May 1999, this people's movement launched a 'Journey of Healing' to remind us to acknowledge the past and build a framework for the future. "The past is never fully gone. It is absorbed into the present and the future. It stays to shape what we are and what we do".

- Sir William Deane, former Governor-General of Australia, August 1996

City of Prospect is aware that it cannot rewrite history but it can help shape the future by starting in Prospect with a Prospect Sorry Day Acknowledgement and Statement of Reconciliation to work together for justice and equity for all people.

City of Prospect acknowledges those regrettable circumstances that allowed Aboriginal children to be forcibly removed from their families and we say "sorry".

We understand the impacts of forced removal are still part of the lives of many Aboriginal people today.

We as a community commit to allow Aboriginal people to heal and understand that grieving will take time.

We look forward to learning more about our shared heritage and encouraging goodwill between the culturally diverse families of our city.

Statement of Reconciliation

In making this statement, City of Prospect acknowledges that it built on ideals set out in the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation, the Australian Local Government Statement of Commitment and adapted from the Local Government Association of South Australia policy statement, Aboriginal Reconciliation.

City of Prospect acknowledges and recognises:

- The Kaurna peoples as the original occupants of the land.
- The loss and grief held by Indigenous Australians caused by alienation from traditional lands, loss of lives and freedom, and the forced removal of children.
- The customs and traditions of Indigenous Australians and their spiritual relationship with the land.
- The importance of maintaining the beliefs and values of Indigenous Australians to enrich and strengthen the Australian heritage.
- A partnership approach with Indigenous Australians as part of addressing the needs of whole communities throughout Australia.

City of Prospect supports:

- The vision of a united Australia respecting this land of ours, valuing the Aboriginal heritage and providing justice and equity for all.
- All Australians working together for a national Treaty or other instrument of reconciliation.
- The provision of culturally appropriate services and programs for all Australians.

City of Prospect commits to:

- Developing and promoting Indigenous Australians involvement in events and celebrations of significance respecting the dignity and protocols of the local Indigenous community.
- Taking effective action on issues of social and economic concern within the responsibility of local government.
- Participating in education processes which enhance the increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Indigenous Australians
- Developing strategies that improve the level of participation of Indigenous Australians in local government.

City of Prospect reaffirms its commitment to maintaining a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society.