



Commissioners appointed to lead consultation with Aboriginal people on agreement making

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The NSW Government is delivering on its election commitment to consult with Aboriginal people about their desire for a treaty process, with the appointment of three commissioners to lead a process with Aboriginal people and communities across NSW.

The commissioners will lead a 12-month consultation to hear from Aboriginal people. This will include asking whether Aboriginal communities want an agreement-making process with government, and if so, what form that process could take.

NSW is home to the largest Aboriginal population in Australia. The commissioners will engage with Aboriginal communities across metropolitan, rural, regional and remote parts of NSW, before delivering a report on their findings to the Government.

The appointees bring with them experience, expertise and connections to Aboriginal people and communities.

The Government has appointed former senator Aden Ridgeway, academic Todd Fernando and Koori Mail newspaper CEO Naomi Moran to the roles.

The commissioners have been appointed for a fixed term of two years following an open, competitive process led by an independent Aboriginal advisory panel.

[Consultation about agreement making](#) aligns directly with NSW's bipartisan commitment to the 2020 Closing the Gap National Agreement signed by then prime minister Scott Morrison and then premier Gladys Berejiklian.

The Closing the Gap Agreement includes a commitment to formal partnerships and shared decision-making with Aboriginal people to help close the gap faster in areas such as life expectancy, health and education.

Aboriginal people and communities hold answers to issues they face. When Aboriginal people have a direct say in these issues, the whole community gets better outcomes.

Over coming months, the commissioners will develop a detailed consultation plan, with consultations to commence in 2025.

Interstate treaty and agreement-making processes have not been simple nor fast. This is the first step in work that could drive improved outcomes for Aboriginal people, and all NSW taxpayers, so the NSW Government will not be rushing.

The NSW Government allocated \$5 million for this work in the September 2023 budget.

[Find out more about the consultation](#)

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty David Harris said:

“The appointment of the treaty commissioners is central to the process of listening to Aboriginal people on treaty and agreement-making.

“The commissioners have been appointed following a rigorous process that attracted strong candidates.

“We get better outcomes when we listen to the needs of Aboriginal people and communities. We must ensure Aboriginal people have a direct say on matters that affect them.”

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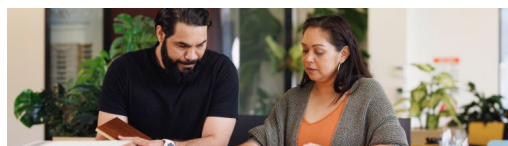


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