

Media Alert



15 February 2019 | Liddy Clark 0403 542 411

Treaty – Leading the Agenda Discussion

Eleven years ago, on 12 February 2008, the First Nation peoples received a National apology. Since then, Treaty has been talked about, Constitutional reform has been discussed and self-determination has been on the agenda.

Last year, legislation passed the Victorian Parliament stating a formal intent to negotiate a Treaty with Aboriginal people – the first of its kind in Australia. Victoria is leading the way with the appointment of Jill Gallagher AO as the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner and the appointment of a Parliamentary Secretary for Treaty – the Hon Natalie Hutchins. It is therefore timely that the VLGA begins the year with a discussion on Treaty. The Commissioner and the Parliamentary Secretary will join the upcoming VLGA discussion panel – together with McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow at Melbourne University Law School, Dr Shireen Morris.

Moderator Marcus Holmes, Principal of Land Equity Legal, puts the discussion in context and outlines how local government can support Treaty in their communities.

“Treaty” has been talked about for a long time in Australia but as yet there is no Treaty or Treaties.

International exemplars of Treaties show that at least some of them can help create self-determination for Indigenous peoples.

The Victorian Government, with Victoria’s Aboriginal people, is taking a leadership role in looking to create Australia’s first Treaty (or Treaties). What these will include in them or result in is for the future once an Aboriginal representative body has been established to negotiate with the government (and perhaps other Treaty parties).

In the meantime, Victoria’s local governments should look to see what a Treaty or Treaties might mean for them and their Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Local governments already have a major consultative engagement with Aboriginal people through a mix of local government, human rights, native title, traditional ownership, Aboriginal heritage and planning law procedures and obligations.

Some Councils are publicly supporting a Treaty and have done for many years.

Do Victoria’s local governments want to be-or do they need to be-at the negotiation table too as a key Treaty party? Or is it more a “watching brief” with Treaty engaged with only once it is in place?

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Join this important conversation:

Thursday 14 March 2019

11 am to 1.00 pm

VLGA Meeting Rooms

601 Leicester Street

Carlton

Media contact

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