

# Significant Events Factsheet

Date	Key events in Australia's reconciliation history
1932	Australian Parliament passes the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth), leading to the establishment of land rights legislation in most Australian states in the 1970s and 1980s.
1938	The Aborigines Progressive Association and the Australian Aborigines' League declare 26 January a day of mourning for Aboriginal people.
1963	Yolngu leaders present the Yirrkala bark petitions to the Australian Parliament, protesting against the seizure of more than 300 square kilometres of Aboriginal land in Arnhem Land for mining.
1965	University of Sydney students, including Charlie Perkins, launch the Freedom Rides, travelling around NSW by bus to draw attention to discrimination against Aboriginal people.
1966	Aboriginal stockmen and their families stage the Wave Hill station 'walk-off' to protest against poor working conditions. The Gurindji peoples' struggle later develops into Australia's first successful Aboriginal land claim
1967	In a national referendum, 90.77 per cent of Australians vote 'yes' to give the Commonwealth Government the power to legislate for Aboriginal people and to include Aboriginal people in the Census.

<b>1971</b>	The Gove land rights case, while denying recognition of native title, sets the intellectual framework for recognising land rights. Neville Thomas Bonner becomes the first Aboriginal parliamentarian following his election as Senator for Queensland.
<b>1972</b>	The Aboriginal Tent Embassy is established. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs is established.
<b>1973</b>	The Woodward Royal Commission into Aboriginal Land Rights is established, paving the way for the Aboriginal Land Rights Act in the Northern Territory.
<b>1975</b>	Australian Parliament passes the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth).
<b>1976</b>	Australian Parliament passes the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth), leading to the establishment of land rights legislation in most Australian states in the 1970s and 1980s.
<b>1988</b>	The Barunga Statement calling for self-management and land rights is presented to Prime Minister Bob Hawke, who indicates his support for a treaty.
<b>1990</b>	The Australian Government establishes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC, CBE, DSG is the first chairperson.
<b>1991</b>	The report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody is tabled. The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) is established. Professor Patrick Dodson is appointed inaugural chairperson.

<p><b>1992</b></p>	<p>The High Court recognises native title in the landmark case <i>Mabo v Queensland (No. 2)</i> (1992).  Prime Minister Paul Keating delivers the 'Redfern Speech' recognising the history of dispossession, violence and forced removal of Aboriginal children.  The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner position is created. Professor Mick Dodson AM is appointed to the position.</p>
<p><b>1993</b></p>	<p>Australian Parliament passes the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth).  The first Week of Prayer for Reconciliation is held, which later becomes National Reconciliation Week.</p>
<p><b>1995</b></p>	<p>The Australian Government officially recognises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.</p>
<p><b>1996</b></p>	<p>The first National Reconciliation Week is celebrated.  The full High Court hands down its decision in <i>Wik Peoples v Queensland</i> (the 'Wik decision'), in which it determines that pastoral leases do not extinguish native title.</p>
<p><b>1997</b></p>	<p>The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families releases the <i>Bringing them Home</i> report.  The Australian Reconciliation Convention is held in Melbourne.</p>
<p><b>1998</b></p>	<p>The Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) is amended based on Prime Minister John Howard's 10-point plan.</p>
<p><b>2000</b></p>	<p>The CAR delivers its final report to Prime Minister John Howard and the Australian Parliament at Corroboree 2000. Bridge walks are held across Australia.  Reconciliation Australia is established.</p>

<b>2004</b>	ATSIC is abolished.
<b>2006</b>	The Close the Gap campaign for Indigenous health equality is developed following the release of the Social Justice Report 2005. Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan program begins.
<b>2007</b>	The Northern Territory Emergency Response begins. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) commits to 'closing the gap' in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
<b>2008</b>	Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivers the Apology to the Stolen Generations. COAG commits \$4.6 billion towards Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage for projects in health, housing, early childhood development, economic participation and remote service delivery.
<b>2009</b>	Australia indicates its support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
<b>2010</b>	The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples is established.
<b>2011</b>	The Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples leads wide-ranging public consultations and delivers its findings in January 2012.
<b>2012</b>	The campaign to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution begins.
<b>2013</b>	The Australian Parliament passes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Act 2013 to maintain momentum towards a referendum.