



REFLECT, RESPECT, CELEBRATE.
WE'RE ALL PART OF THE STORY.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2021 REPORT

NADC | National
Australia Day
Council





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Australia Day

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

MINISTER'S FOREWORD



The Story of Australia is one of a beautiful land, ancient and enduring culture and a resilient people.

It's a story of tragedies and triumphs. A story that begins with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and their stewardship and deep connection of lands and the waters. People who are today part of the world's oldest surviving culture.

It's the story of the British and those who followed from every corner of the world who came here for a better life. We respect their contribution to building a nation on the shared values we cherish: democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law.

It's the story of harsh challenges that call upon our character as a nation. Time and again, our resilience shines through.

It is a story of which all we can all be proud. It is a story from which we can all learn. And our nation continues to develop our story.

The National Australia Day Council is responsible for how Australia Day is celebrated.

Through its work, Australia Day has never been more inclusive of the history and stories of all Australians, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose way of life was forever changed by European settlement. We must include greater recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's history, traditions and culture. There are important opportunities to tell truth and learn from it.

In 2020, the NADC launched a new theme for Australia Day: Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. We're all part of the story. Its premise is that Australia Day is a day to reflect on our past, respect that we all have a contribution to make and celebrate our nation's envied place in the world.

The Federal Government is proud to support the NADC in delivering this message to all Australians through Australia Day organising committees, local governments and community groups across the country. This support has vital to encouraging participation in Australia Day, so that every Australian has the opportunity to reflect, respect and celebrate – because we're all part of the story.

**The Hon Ben Morton MP,
Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet**



CHAIR'S MESSAGE



On 26 January each year, people from all walks of life, faiths and backgrounds gather with friends, family and in their communities to celebrate and reflect on what it means to be Australian.

There has never been one way, nor one place, to celebrate Australia Day.

In streets, towns and suburbs the day is marked differently – at beaches, parks and backyards or at formal events like citizenship ceremonies held by local councils.

As Australia matures as a nation, so too does our awareness of our history. Australia Day provides an opportunity to reflect on the significance of 26 January 1788 from differing perspectives, and acknowledge the immediate and enduring effects of European settlement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

It is in this environment that public debate around Australia Day – should it be celebrated, how, when and why – has gained momentum. And it is against this backdrop that, in 2018, the NADC began a two-year process of consultation, research and planning to refresh our national day.

The NADC's aim was simple: to ensure that our national day is one that reflects the shared values of a modern, mature nation and is truly inclusive of the histories and stories of all Australians – in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The result of this work is our Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. We're all part of the story theme

Delivered over the past two years through the Story of Australia campaign, this message reminds us that Australia Day is a day to reflect on our history, respect the stories and contributions others have made to our nation and celebrate our place in the world – from the world's oldest living continuous culture and their love and care of Country, to a confident nation with freedoms others aspire to.

The NADC is pleased to provide this report on our work to encourage all Australians to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate on Australia Day 2021.

**Danielle Roche OAM, Chair,
National Australia Day Council**



ABOUT THE NADC



ABOUT THE NADC

Who we are and what we do

The National Australia Day Council works to ensure that celebrations of Australia Day encourage:

- **Participation** To unite all Australian through celebration and reflection
- **Meaning** To promote the meaning of Australia Day and being Australian
- **Recognition** To acknowledge active citizenship and achievement.

The NADC actively promotes our national day to inspire national pride and unity through:

- The celebration of Australia Day, which encourages all Australians to reflect, respect and celebrate
- The Australian of the Year Awards
- Australian citizenship and civic values programs
- The Australia Day Ambassador program.

Our Priorities

The NADC Corporate Plan 2020–2024 outlines priorities with the purpose of inspiring ‘national pride and unity through participation and engagement in its central message: Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. We’re all part of the story’. The priorities included:

- Telling the stories of inspiring Australians
- Empowering Australians to reflect, respect and celebrate.

The Australia Day Network

The Australia Day Network is an affiliate group of state and territory organisations that helps facilitate the celebration of Australia Day and being Australian and recognise inspirational Australians through the Australian of the Year Awards.

Through the Australia Day network, the NADC helps Australia’s 537 Local Government Authorities and hundreds of not-for-profit and community-led organisations deliver Australia Day events that encourage participation, promote meaning and celebrate citizenship.



NADC Statement of Expectations

The NADC's work is guided by a Statement of Expectations, a set of objectives and priorities set by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Hon Ben Morton MP.

In 2020-21, the NADC's statement of expectations included:

- implementing the Reflect, Respect and Celebrate themes into business as usual activities and identify opportunities to share these themes with wider audiences
- build a suite of resource materials and engage with State and Territory Australia Day organisations, local governments, local Australia Day Committees and the Ambassador Network to reach a wider and more diverse audience

The Statement of Expectation also acknowledged the opportunity for the NADC to provide leadership by:

- Encouraging Australians to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate on Australia Day
- Uniting Australians through more events and celebrations of Australia Day which acknowledge Australia's Indigenous history and multiculturalism
- Supporting Local Government to deliver Australian Day programs
- Promoting civic knowledge and good citizenship.



Australia Day – Opinion Editorial

The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister



As Australians, our fates have always been bound together.

During this past year, we have been reminded once again of our shared fortunes. How

much we depend on each other.

In a year where much of the world has struggled under the strain of the global pandemic, Australians, together, have prevailed, in our own Australian way.

Australians patiently doing the right thing.

Health workers collecting samples and tracing the virus; nurses, aged and disability care workers tending to our elderly and vulnerable; medical teams, our ADF and police running our quarantine facilities; farmers, truck drivers, wholesale and retail workers keeping our supermarket shelves stocked and all those working to produce our vaccine.

And, of course, the many business owners of Australia, small and large, struggling with the uncertainty that a pandemic brings, keeping their show together and Australians in work.

On this Australia Day, we say thank you to the many who have once again pulled Australia through.

But this is not a new experience.

From whatever our beginnings or circumstances, Australians have always demonstrated our ability to overcome. To rise above. To better our history. To create our future.

Today, on Australia Day we reflect on that journey, the price that has been paid for our freedom, the lessons of our history and the privilege of being able to call ourselves

Australians.

We do it on the day when the course of this land changed forever.

There is no escaping or cancelling this fact. For better and worse, it was the moment where the journey to our modern nation began.

And it is this continuing Australian journey that we recognise today.

Our stories since that day have been of sorrow and joy. Loss and redemption. Failure and success.

We are now a nation of more than 25 million stories, all important, all unique and all to be respected.

Whether it is the story of our first nation peoples' strong, ancient and proud culture and their survival in the face of dispossession and colonisation.

Or the forsaken souls who came as convicts, not to start a new world, but because they had been banished from the old one. Condemned and outcast by empire, they too overcame.

The settlers and waves of immigrants who have followed seeking a better life for themselves and their families, creating a nation in the process, including the 12,000 people from over 130 nations who become citizens today.

These stories do not compete with each other, they simply coexist. They weave together.

Today we reflect on how far we have come, and humbly acknowledge the work still ahead of us.

We have risen above our brutal beginnings.

We have overcome, survived and thrived.

We have learned and are still learning.

And as the many peoples of the world joined our journey, we have become even stronger,

The most successful and cohesive immigration and multicultural nation on earth.

The home of the world's oldest living human culture.

A modern, prosperous and generous nation. Fair minded, hard working.

A standard bearer for liberal democracy, in a world where authoritarianism is once again pushing itself forward.

An honest nation that continues to confront the truth of our past and to reconcile this with our future.

Much to appreciate and be thankful for.

This year we will face many more challenges.

But it is Australian to be optimistic and look forward.

It is a choice we make to believe in hope.

Our optimism has enabled us to push past the adversities we have faced and overcome.

We have been made extraordinary by the extraordinary contributions of ordinary Australians.

In 2021 we will be relying once again on all Australians to be at their best.

To once again exercise their responsibility and make their own unique contributions to our success.

In our families, in our communities, in our places of work, education and worship and in our environment, caring for country.

The exercise of these responsibilities and contributions are the ones that will continue to make for a successful and resilient nation.

We do this, because in Australia we believe in the unique value of each Australian as individuals, rather than seeing or indeed allowing ourselves to be defined solely through the identity prism of our age, race, gender, ethnicity or religion.

As Australians we are more than any and all of these things, and together we share and steward our Australian inheritance.

As Australians we write our own story. We create our own future. And we will do so again this year, together.

Happy Australia Day.

Released on 26 January 2021

Source: The Australian

Australians we write our own story. We create our own future. And we will do so again this year, together.



**REFLECT.
RESPECT.
CELEBRATE.**

**WE'RE ALL
PART OF THE
STORY.**



REFLECT. RESPECT. CELEBRATE. WE'RE ALL PART OF THE STORY.

In 2020, the NADC refreshed its central theme and message for Australia Day: Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. We're all part of the story. This message was delivered through a new creative advertising campaign titled The Story of Australia.

Through this message, the NADC asks Australians to reflect on the most pivotal date in our nation's history and to see the events that preceded and followed it from each others' perspective.

It also asks that Australians take a moment to reflect on the incredible and enduring legacy that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have given the nation over 65,000 years – 65 millennia. And it asks Australians to reflect on what it means to be Australian, and to celebrate our shared values, our freedoms, and our achievements on the world stage.



How do we Reflect, Respect and Celebrate?

Australia Day is a day to reflect on our nation's story, respect the contribution that others make to our nation, and celebrate our place in the world.

For some, Australia Day is a day to celebrate all the opportunities provided by living in a free, multicultural society. For others it is a chance to reflect on their own citizenship and what it means to be Australian. And for many, 26 January represents a day of sadness, mourning, and the interruption of more than 65,000 years of continuous culture.

The Story of Australia asks all Australians to pause and reflect on origins of modern Australia – European settlement – and the impact this had on and their way of life.

It asks Australians to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' extensive knowledge of land, sea and sky, and celebrate Country – from the saltwater to the freshwater, from the rainforest to the desert.

Australia owes much of our modern day success to our shared values of respect for freedom of the individual, democracy, commitment to the rule of law and equality of for all individuals regardless of race, religion or ethnic background. Australia Day is an opportunity to celebrate our nation, its achievements and its people and to better appreciate and understand the values and ideals brought to Australia by the first Europeans that settled here. We have every reason to celebrate Australia's place in the world.

In 2021, Australia Day provided an opportunity to reflect on the challenges of 2020, which included bushfire, flood, drought and the coronavirus pandemic and pay respects to, celebrate and give thanks to frontline workers and others who went above and beyond to support others and their communities.



The stars of the Story of Australia

The Story of Australia features everyday Australians from all walks of life. The 2021 campaign featured

- **Maddy DiLallo**, an eight-year-old from Sydney
- **Dr Nasya Bahfen**, a university lecturer who arrived in Australia as a four-year-old and is an AFL Multicultural Commission Ambassador
- **Leanne Morrall**, an emergency nurse from Perth. She grew up in Fremantle and as an eight-year-old started volunteering for St Johns Ambulance.
- **Aku Makki**, 19-year-old representative of the Sydney Pride basketball team made up of mostly Sudanese players
- **Phillip Firth**, A NSW grazier with strong links to his community, which suffered the effects of long-term drought
- **Christine Ohrin**, a member of the stolen generation who works as a counsellor and carer for the Biripi Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre in Taree
- **Andy Clappis**, a South Australian restaurateur and second-generation migrant who still works in the family business
- **Tony Adams**, 97-year-old veteran with distinguished military and business careers
- **Johnny Hammond**, 42-year-old with down syndrome, lifesaver and volunteer with his Sydney surf club
- **Jorja Reeves**, 13-year-old Aboriginal Australian girl from Queensland
- **Jesse Bird**, farm manager and volunteer firefighter in a Queensland town with a population of 130
- **Devinder Singh**, 60-year-old Indian-born driving instructor, founder of a major Indian community festival
- **Alex Yui**, a primary school teacher who grew up in Adelaide and still calls it home.
- **Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann AO**, Aboriginal elder from Nauiyu (Daly River, NT), where she was the principal of the local Catholic primary school. Named 2021 Senior Australian of the Year.



What is the story of Australia?

The Story of Australia campaign features every day Australians reading the lines original poem, The Story of Australia.

***The story of Australia
Is the story of me
It's the story of you
It's the story of we
In parts it is painful
In parts it is raw
In others it's beautiful
Inspiring great awe
It tells of many people
From far and wide
And those who've been here
Since the beginning of time
It brings us together
And tears us apart
We all have our views
So where do we start?
By listening to each other
And sharing our part.***



Australia Day – Let’s reflect, respect and celebrate, as one

The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, Minister for Indigenous Australians



On 10 June 1838, at least 28 unarmed Wirrayaraay people of the Gamilaraay nation were killed at the hands of twelve colonists.

The Myall Creek Massacre, as it has come to be known, led to the first time in our nation’s history that individuals were found guilty of such crimes.

The Massacre is one of Australia’s dark chapters – a period of time where our land was stained by heinous crimes and injustice, with no justification or reason.

It is a chapter that needs to be remembered, the pain needs to be acknowledged, and the lessons of a darker-period of our history heeded today.

The Myall Creek memorial site, which opened in June 2000, represents a local memorial for the events of 1838, as well as a national monument to truth-telling. The site is a place where Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians can come together to acknowledge and reflect on our nation’s shared-history.

Every year in June, hundreds of people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, including descendants of the victims, survivors and perpetrators, gather at the site to attend an annual memorial service.

Pausing to reflect and remember, together, is an important step in healing our past and forging our future.

Last year I wrote that I didn’t believe in changing the date of Australia Day; my thinking hasn’t changed.

Over the past year I’ve seen Australians come together in support for one another in ways not seen for decades.

The Prime Minister welcomed the New Year with a small, but important change to our National Anthem – reflecting that we, as Australians, are one.

Whether you belong to the world’s longest living continuous culture as an Indigenous Australian, or whether you have come here in recent years from across the seas to share in our success – we are one as Australians.

That’s why this Australia Day, I want us as one, to reflect, respect and celebrate the Australian journey. It is a journey that is defined by success – achievements that make us proud and signal to the world the strength and resilience of the Australian people.

It is also a journey that for some is difficult, it is raw, and it does hurt in parts – but rather than shy away from this, or dismiss our success, we should come together as one this Australia Day and reach out to better understand the Australian story of others.

We do have to acknowledge that too many Indigenous Australians continue to live in disadvantage and face barriers to success.

We do have to acknowledge that Indigenous incarceration remains too high, and more has to be done to make Indigenous communities safer.

We do need to acknowledge that more has to be done to close the gap, and we commit ourselves to working in partnership with Indigenous Australians to address these issues and see meaningful and lasting change.

There is much healing yet to be done – but we must start from a place of common ground and seek to unite, to teach each other, to help each other – efforts to divide on this day are counter-productive and will never succeed in bringing us together.

We will not realise reconciliation by seeding division. At what point do we harness our past as a powerful force to focus on a better future that is inclusive of all.

We must do this respectfully, and engage in productive dialogue. We must sit down, together, through shared decision-making and co-design, and work through difficult matters to get the best possible outcomes. This includes understanding perspectives and learning each other's story.

This Australia Day you have an opportunity to contribute to our nation's story of reconciliation.

This does not mean you can't celebrate our success, and feel pride in being an Australian – we have so much to celebrate – we have so much to be proud of – we should never shy away from embracing this.

But you can take some time on Australia Day to reflect upon the sacrifices many have made, the challenges we have faced, losses felt and the adversity we have overcome to stand as Australians, one and free. We can also think about how we approach each other – through a lens of respect and considered understanding.

Acknowledging and reflecting on our past while forging a new respect for the chapters of our story will only strengthen us as a people and a nation into the future.

It is heartening to see so many Indigenous Australians nominated for the Australian of the Year awards – it is recognition of the role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people play in enriching our national story.

For example, from Western Australia, we have Professor Helen Milroy and Dr Richard Walley OAM nominated for Australian of the Year and Senior Australian of the Year respectively. Professor Milroy was Australia's first Indigenous doctor and Dr Walley reinvigorated Welcome to Country ceremonies, among the many other roles and positions they have both held while championing our people, culture and place.

Their success is our success.

For over 65,000 years Indigenous Australians have cared for sea and country and have been as one with this great land. There is much we can take from the past as we look to the future.

I ask that this year you look around your neighbourhood and community and respectfully take some time to understand and reflect on the history, culture and knowledge that has existed for tens of thousands of years – then celebrate the achievements of all in this nation.

This Australia Day we should walk together, side-by-side, as one to reflect, respect and celebrate all that makes us Australian – Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Because when we are one we are strong.

And when we walk together we have limitless potential. Happy Australia Day.

Released on 25 January 2021

Source: <https://ministers.pmc.gov.au/wyatt/2021/australia-day-lets-reflect-respect-and-celebrate-one>



AUSTRALIA DAY 2021 CAMPAIGN



AUSTRALIA DAY 2021

Just as 2020 was a year of challenges the likes of which our nation has never seen, 26 January 2021 was also an Australia Day like no other. In the 12 months to 26 January, our nation faced fire, flood, drought and the coronavirus pandemic.

Australia Day 2021 provided an opportunity for Australians to gather and reflect on a difficult year, pay their respects to the sacrifice of thousands of first responders and frontline workers who put the safety and wellbeing of others before their own and to celebrate our collective effort to protect our communities and each other from the pandemic.

The NADC's Australia Day 2021 campaign comprised the following core elements:

- The Story of Australia advertising campaign (TVCs, radio outdoor, digital)
- Grants for major Australia Day events, local government-run events and events held by the not-for-profit and community sector
- The annual National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony on 26 January
- An expanded program of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recognition events, held in Victoria, NSW, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.
- The Australia Day Ambassador program.



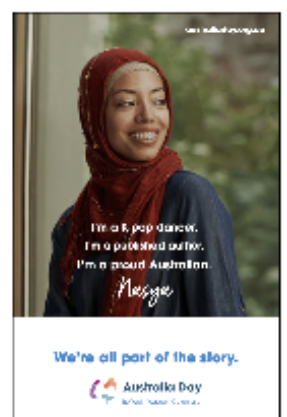
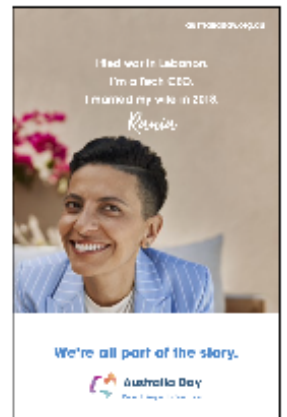
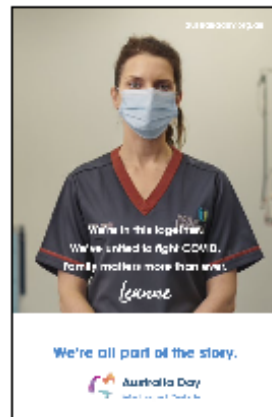
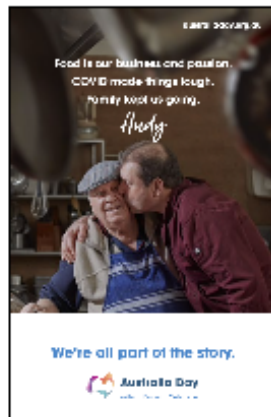
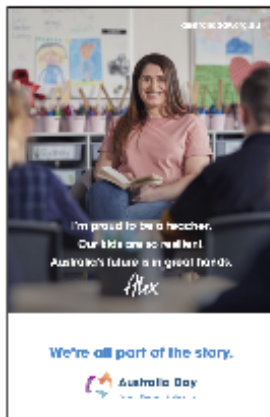
About the 2021 campaign

The second year of The Story of Australia aired between 2 and 26 January 2021. Building and expanding on the 2020 campaign, it comprised:

- A comprehensive multimedia campaign spanning television, radio, digital and social media and outdoor.
- A series of multimedia partnerships, including a ‘thank you’ postcard for first responders delivered to more than 300,000 newspaper readers.
- New talent to reflect the challenges of 2020, including nurse Leanne, from Western Australia, restaurateur Andy and primary school teacher Alex, also from South Australia.

A supporting program of communications and engagement included:

- Direct engagement, campaign briefings and messaging materials (speech notes, media releases, social media background briefings) provided to Australia’s 537 local government authorities and hundreds of not-for-profits.
- Free media, including opinion pieces, profiles of campaign participants and coverage in metropolitan and regional outlets.



Campaign results

Campaign exposure and acceptance

For the second consecutive year, The Story of Australia was well received by Australians.

Three-quarters (75 per cent) of respondents recalled seeing the campaign, either by seeing the 60-second TVC, 30-second TVC, outdoor advertising, social media or hearing a radio advertisement.

According to post-campaign media buying analysis, the campaign achieved the following reach:

- 60 per cent across all television markets, appearing in 13 of the top 15 programs
- 90 per cent reach across radio, including CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences

Overwhelmingly, Australians supported the Federal Government conducting communications campaigns around Australia Day (90 per cent). A similar number (87 per cent) support the campaign or find it acceptable, including 89 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and 82 per cent of 18–24-year olds.

Behaviours and attitudes

Post-campaign analysis shows that people who saw the campaign were more likely to agree that Australia Day is inclusive of all Australians, regardless of background or age (68 per cent, as opposed to 61 per cent pre-campaign +7 points) and that they feel proud to be Australian on Australia Day (76 per cent, +10 points).

Similarly, exposure to The Story of Australia led to a decline in negative perceptions of Australia Day. Those who saw the campaign were less likely to agree that Australia Day doesn't mean much to them (-14 points) and that celebrating Australia Day is not acceptable for people like me (-7 points).

While participation in formal Australia Day events decreased year-on-year in 2021 (43 per cent in 2021 compared to 55 per cent in 2020), in part due to uncertainty resulting from the pandemic), The Story of Australia achieved its aim of encouraging Australians to reflect, respect and celebrate, reaching a wide audience via multimedia and digital events.

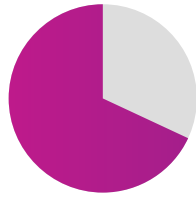
A key focus for the NADC in 2022 is to continue to encourage engagement and participation in formal and informal Australia Day events.



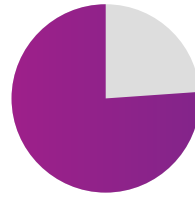
Intended vs actual behaviour

The NADC surveyed a representative sample of the Australian population in the lead-up to and immediately after Australia Day 2021. A comparison of intended behaviours (plans) to actual behaviours (participation) demonstrates significant increases in desired behaviours and attitudes.

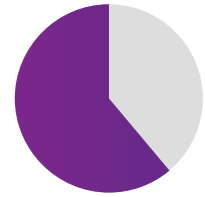
Twice as many Australians (61 per cent) said they “reflected on Australia and what it means to be Australian’ on Australia Day – up from 30 per cent who planned to do this.



68 per cent of Australians think Australia Day is inclusive of all Australians



76 per cent of people feel proud to be Australian



People who saw the campaign were **twice as likely** to reflect on what it means to be Australian (61 per cent v 30 per cent pre-campaign)



It is apparent from media coverage in January that the date of Australia Day is contentious. It would be open to anyone reading a newspaper during the lead-up to Australia Day that there is a groundswell of public support for changing the date, especially among young people. This is not necessarily supported by data. Campaign evaluation conducted for the NADC found:

- Only 14 per cent of Australians do not support the celebration of Australia Day
- Only one in four (25 per cent) of young Australians (15–24 years) do not support Australia Day, as opposed to 41 per cent who support Australia Day.

Public opinion polls

Each year, public opinion polls survey sentiment towards Australia Day. A summary of findings from opinion polls conducted in January 2021 follows. Notwithstanding variations within individual polls, the findings are largely consistent with the NADC's own research.

Ipsos

- Only 28 per cent of Australians support the campaign to change the date of Australia Day from 26 January.
- The overwhelming majority (82%) feel proud to be Australian.

IPA/Dynata

- 69 per cent support celebrating Australia Day on 26 January
- 82 per cent say they are proud to be Australian, and 73 per cent say Australia has a history to be proud of
- 72 per cent say Australia Day is an authentic way for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to celebrate being Australian
- 86 per cent say Australia Day should be an opportunity to respect the contribution that everyone has, and can, make to Australia.

#australiaday
#reflectrespectcelebrate



Australia Day
Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.



WE'RE ALL PART
OF THE STORY.

Pause and learn of our history

Hon Linda Burney MP, Member for Barton



January 26 is a difficult and complex day for First Australians.

Australia Day represents different things to different people.

It's a time to celebrate how far we've come as a nation; our achievements and our diversity.

I will begin my Australia Day commitments with the Wugulora Morning Ceremony – a traditional Indigenous smoking ceremony in Sydney's Barangaroo area.

I will then be participating in citizenship ceremonies around my electorate welcoming our newest Australians – as will many state and federal members of parliaments around the country.

And for most Australians, it's a day to relax and spend time with family and friends.

January 26 commemorates the arrival of Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet in Sydney Cove in 1788, almost two decades after Captain James Cook in 1770 – a fact that many Australians could be easily forgiven for not having at the front of their minds on a public holiday.

It marks the beginning of a period in which our way of life was fundamentally changed forever.

Since colonisation, First Nations people have endured dispossession, massacres and the separation of families.

Some people are inclined to dismiss the events from the past.

'Oh but it happened so long ago', they say to me.

The reality is however, that these past wrongs don't exist in a vacuum.

The impacts can be very much seen and felt today.

We see it in the disparity in quality of life outcomes between First Nations people and non-Indigenous Australians.

Key to understanding these disparities is understanding our past.

What I'm saying to Australians this Australia Day is, we don't need to change the date, we just need to change the way we observe the day.

Take just a moment to learn about our past.

Australia is home to the oldest surviving civilisation – over 60,000 years – on Earth.

This is and ought to be a source of pride for all Australians.

Take a moment to learn about what colonisation meant for that way of life.

The attitude that the past stays in the past ignores the fact that the trauma and memory from past atrocities are passed down from generation to generation.

The atrocities of the past are inextricably linked to the disparity and challenges of the present.

Both sides of the 'change the date' debate have a tendency to get carried away at this time of the year.

From the phone calls to my office, there's clearly people out there who have no interest in listening to other people's points of view.

I'm not entirely sure how constructive some of those conversations are, or whether minds are being changed or persuaded, one way or another.

There is a tendency to lose sight of the heart of the issue – a greater awareness of the past so that we have a better understanding of the present.

A recent poll showed most Australians are not ready to change the date.

However, I truly believe that there is a greater awareness amongst Australians of our past, and the complexity around January 26, than ever before.

Another recent poll showed support for a change of date was strongest amongst young Australians – 53.6 per cent.

I have no doubt that if the slate were wiped clean and we were to today choose a date to celebrate Australia as a whole, the choice would not be the 26th of January.

This awareness has real and practical implications for government policy in the Indigenous affairs space.

Public awareness strengthens our collective responsibility and national resolve to address the challenges in this space.

If we want to see more meaningful and lasting progress, we need to develop a more comprehensive understanding of our past, and how this is connected to the challenges that face us in the present.

Learning more about the treatment of First Australians over the more-than-two centuries since settlement, and a greater appreciation of the Indigenous worldview, will enable governments and organisations to more effectively tackle the disparities in quality of life outcomes.

This is one of the reasons why I have strongly advocated for a greater national process of Truth-Telling – one of the three aspirations outlined in the Uluru Statement by a meeting of First Nations leaders some three and a half years ago.

Labor is the only political party to support the Uluru Statement in full: a constitutional enshrined voice in the constitution; a national process for Truth-Telling; and Treaty.

But everyone has a role to play in Reconciliation and healing the wounds of the past – from governments to organisations; communities to individuals.

So this Australia Day, I ask all Australians to take just a moment in their day to reflect on and learn more about our past.

We are mature and capable of reflecting as well as celebrating.

Stay safe and be kind to one another.

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SUPPORTING AUSTRALIA DAY EVENTS



SUPPORTING AUSTRALIA DAY EVENTS

Local government and community organisations play a vital role in delivering Australia Day events.

Recognising that the environment in which they operate has rarely been more difficult, the NADC wanted to show its support for local government. With the assistance of the Federal Government, the NADC provided \$15 million in grants to help councils and not-for-profits deliver COVID Safe events on Australia Day 2021.

The program, delivered with the support of the Federal Government, comprised:

Iconic Australia Day Events program

These grants were offered to organisers of major, landmark events in each state and territory. A focus of these grants was to support economies that had been impacted by COVID.

Nine events were funded with a total investment of \$7.5 million.

The headline event in 2021 was the Australia Day Live Concert, delivered by the NSW Government in partnership with the NADC. Australia Day Live featured Australian acts performing on Sydney Harbour. It incorporated the Reflect, Respect, Celebrate theme and branding for the first time, ensuring it was seen by a national TV audience of 445,000.

COVID Safe Events Grants

Open to the Australia Day network, local councils and not-for-profit organisations, these grants – of up to \$20,000 provided over two rounds – were to help make Australia Day 2021 events COVID Safe.

Grants could be used to fund resources and services to ensure events met State and Territory COVID Safe guidelines, this may include extra event staff, measures to enforce social distancing, additional cleaning or practical items like hand sanitiser.

A total of 416 COVID Safe event grants were approved with a total investment of \$6.8 million

Australia Day 2021 coincided with Rotary Australia's centenary celebrations. The NADC provided grants to 70 clubs around Australia for Australia Day events. This included a number of COVIDsafe events and a major national online event with keynote speakers for those who were unable to attend in person.



Australia Day 2021 Branding and Collateral Grants

To help with the planning of Australia Day 2021, each organisation was able to receive free Australia Day-branded Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. collateral and a \$1,000 grant for production of branded materials.

This allowed organisations to use local suppliers to produce branded items such as banners, tablecloths and napkins for use at their Australia Day event.

All aspects of the Grants Program, from application to acquittal, were governed by the Grants Guidelines for each respective grant.

A total of 352 applications were approved across two funding rounds. Of these:

- 86 per cent were local Councils in each state and territory
- 84 per cent of events were in regional and remote locations.



National Stakeholder Engagement Program

To support the delivery of the 2021 Australia Day grants program, the NADC developed a stakeholder engagement program delivered by members of the National Australia Day Network in each state and territory. To make sure the program was delivered consistently around the country, project officers were equipped with a suite of materials including:

- Briefing packages and training manual
- Key messages, FAQs, template speeches and media releases
- Correspondence and other communications tools

In less than three months, the NADC's stakeholder engagement team had more than 6,000 individual contacts with Australia's 537 councils, ensuring widespread and consistent use of the Reflect, Respect, Celebrate theme across all Australia Day events.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement

In 2021, the NADC expanded a pilot program to support local government and local traditional owner groups conduct their own Australia Day ceremonies to encourage their communities to actively participate in reflecting, respecting and celebrating.

The inaugural event, We-Akon Dilinja – a morning of mourning, returned on the shores of Melbourne’s Port Phillip Bay. First hosted in 2020 and again in 2021 by Port Phillip City Council and the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council, the event provides opportunities for people from all walks of life gather to commemorate loss, pay respect to Country and those who nurtured it for millennia and celebrate a legacy of sustainable life on Country, history and culture.

New events were also held in:

Scarborough, Perth, WA

A traditional Aboriginal smoking ceremony at the Scarborough Beach Amphitheatre in Perth. Hosted in conjunction with the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Community Group, the event include traditional storytelling and dance, as well as a multicultural panel discussion on walking together as one community. In the evening, Perth hosted Shining the Light: The Story of Us, a captivating water projection featuring the story of the Whadjuk Nyoongar people.

Nhulunbuy, Northern Territory

This celebration featured Rachel Wallis from the internationally renowned dance group Miko Performing Arts and musician and founding member of Yothu Yindi and actor, Wiriya Marika. The event focused on sharing Yolngu culture through music, song, dance, and storytelling and featured Yolngu and Balanda children from communities in Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala and Gunyangara.

Walgett, New South Wales

The official ceremony commenced with a performance by an Aboriginal Dance group, followed by a Welcome to Country and a speech by prominent Aboriginal Identity and Australia Day Ambassador, John Moriarty

More than 2000 people attended these events with the NADC set to explore how they can be extended in 2022.



National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony

Australia Day 2021 again began with the National Flag Raising and Citizenship broadcast live from the Rond Terrace, on the shore of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra.

Opening with a smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country provided by elders of the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the traditional owners of the land surrounding Canberra, the ceremony included a reflection on Aboriginal and Torres Strait history and a focus on continuous connection to Country in the land that is today the nation's capital.

Attended by the Prime Minister, Governor-General and members of the overseas diplomatic corps, the ceremony culminated with a citizenship ceremony presided over by the Prime Minister.

The National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony is the first of hundreds of similar ceremonies around the nation on Australia Day. In 2021, more than 12,000 people from 130 nations accepted their citizenship on Australia Day.

In 2021, a national audience of 150,000 people watched a live broadcast of the National Flag Raising and Citizenship ceremony on ABC.

“Today, on Australia Day we reflect on that journey, the price that has been paid for our freedom, the lessons of our history and the privilege of being able to call ourselves Australians.

We do it on this day when the course of this land changed forever.

There is no escaping or cancelling this fact. For better and worse, it was the moment where the journey to our modern Australia began.

And it is this continuing Australian journey that we recognise today.

Our stories since that day have been of sorrow and of joy. Of loss and redemption. Of failure and success.

We are now a nation of more than 25 million stories, all important, all unique and all to be respected.”

– Prime Minister the Hon Scott Morrison MP,
Australia Day address





Australia Day a vital part of conversation about who we are

Alison Page, NADC Director.



Alison Page is chair of the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, Walbanga and Wadi woman, is a designer and filmmaker.

Last week, a friend phoned and told me they were to receive an Australia Day Honour on January 26 – and to apologise for any offence caused.

But I wasn't offended – though it wasn't the first time that assumption had been made.

I am a descendant of the Walbanga and Wadi people of the Yuin nation on New South Wales' South Coast. My father grew up around Botany Bay. My mother is a ten-pound pom.

I have spent my career exploring the Australian identity. In 2020, I joined the board of the National Australia Day Council.

As a nation, we're only just beginning to talk about the uncomfortable chapter in our history when the colonists arrived. As the 2021 Australia Day TV commercial says: In parts it is painful, in parts it is raw.

Australia Day is a vital part of the conversation about who we are as a people. As Australians, all of our lives are, in some way, shaped by the events of 26 January 1788 and all the decisions made in England that led to that day. Whether a descendant of First Nations people, the First Fleet or the many migrants who built a life here, it is a history that we know so little about. It is vital that we explore our true history together.

The story of modern Australia is uncomfortable. Cancelling Australia Day won't change that.

Our nation has an amazing legacy in its Indigenous history, culture and connection to Country stretching back for millennia. It's a gift that deserves reflection, respect and celebration.

The National Australia Day Council has been asking Australians to do just that – to reflect, respect and celebrate. This message was born out of a desire to make Australia Day more inclusive of the histories, stories and contributions of all Australians, but especially First Nations people.

The campaign features Australians reading lines of a poem, *The Story of Australia*, and tells stories of what being Australian means to them. Christine, a member of the Stolen Generations discusses how difficult Australia Day is for her, while Miriam-Rose, a Nauiyu elder from the Northern Territory, speaks of daddiri – the act of deep inner listening, understanding and healing that allows us 'to walk together in peace'.

The Story of Australia asks that Australians reflect on our history from the viewpoint of others.

The Story of Australia asks that Australians reflect on our history, not just from our own perspective, but from the viewpoint of others. It took the 250th anniversary of the first landing of the Endeavour last year for us to acknowledge that there were two perspectives to that historic moment: the view from the ship and the view from the shore.

On Australia Day, we reflect on how European settlement forever changed the lives of First Australians. On the shores of Sydney Harbour and Port Phillip Bay – among others – Australia Day 2021 will begin with ceremonies led by First Nations people. These are as much a celebration of culture, history and continuous life on Country for more than 65,000 years as they are a commemoration of loss and mourning.

We also reflect on our modern history – the waves of immigration that have shaped us into one of the world’s great multicultural success stories. Each Australia Day, thousands of new arrivals accept their citizenship at ceremonies around the nation. They, too, are part of the Story of Australia.

And it is a day for celebration. For me, Australia Day will always be a day to celebrate Country, a day to pay respect to my ancestors’ knowledge of land, sea and sky. This knowledge evolved over millennia, and allowed for First Australians to care for Country as we would a member of our own family.

I am proud to have been a founder of the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance, which holds an annual Aboriginal arts and cultural festival in communities across the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. Our day would begin with deep, meaningful reflection and end with celebration and dancing.

As a nation we owe so much of our success to our shared values of respect for freedom of the individual, of expression and of democracy. I am optimistic about who we are as a nation. We have made so much progress. Engagement with Aboriginal communities is greater than ever before; this alone is worth celebrating.

I hope each Australian finds their own way to reflect, respect and celebrate on Australia Day. Because we’re all part of the story and we can write these next chapters together.

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