

The Hon. Ben Morton, MP  
Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

27 July 2020

Dear Assistant Minister,

**National Australia Day Council response to Statement of Expectations**

Thank you for your letter dated 27 May 2020, providing your Statement of Expectations (the Statement) for the National Australia Day Council (NADC).

I want to acknowledge the Federal Government for both the support it has provided and the trust it has placed in in the NADC's pursuit of our core mission.

As noted in your letter, the NADC's core mission is to actively promote our national day to all Australians to inspire national pride and unity through participation and engagement across all sectors of the community on 26 January.

The NADC is proud of its renewed communications and engagement around our national day. Launched in January 2020, *The Story of Australia* and its central theme – Reflect, Respect, Celebrate: We're all part of the story – represented a significant shift towards an Australia Day that unifies people of different backgrounds and with different views and beliefs.

*The Story of Australia* and its central message encourage Australians to unite on our national day. It asks that Australians reflect on our nation's history, including the impacts of European settlement on the First Nations, respect the contributions that all Australians have to make and celebrate our country and all that we have achieved.

The NADC intends to build on the success of *The Story of Australia* for 2021. Just as Australia Day 2020 sat against the backdrop of unprecedented bushfires, Australia Day 2021 will provide an opportunity for communities to come together and reflect on the challenges of the preceding year, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NADC will refresh *The Story of Australia* to reflect the extraordinary individual and collective effort made for our nation in 2020. In doing so, Australia Day 2021 will be a day for peoples across the nation to gather and reflect on the challenges, respect the sacrifices and contributions that all Australians have made and celebrate the strength of our communities, united by our shared values and a common purpose.

If *The Story of Australia* is the hub of the NADC's strategic vision for Australia Day, the spokes are our communications and engagement program, and the wheel is communities around the nation.

In 2020-21, the NADC will work to expand the reach of our Respect, Reflect, Celebrate: We're all part of the story message into Australia Day events in every State and Territory, every town and city,

every street and suburb. In respect of the expectations articulated in your letter of 27 May 2020, I highlight the following by way of response to your stated expectations (in bold):

- 1. Integrate Reflect, Respect and Celebrate themes, emphasising the resilience of the Australian people and their spirit, into business as usual activities and identify and implement opportunities to share these messages and themes with wider audiences.**

The NADC has commenced a refresh of the Australian of the Year and Australia Day branding to incorporate the core Australia Day message of Reflect, Respect Celebrate: We're all part of the story. This message will feature prominently in all elements of the Australian of the Year program, Australia Day program, local government-and partner activities.

Grant agreements with State and Territory partners will outline the requirements for the use of campaign branding featuring the core message.

- 2. 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 ensure the themes of refreshed communications reach a wider and more diverse audience in the lead up to Australia Day 2021, including regional Australians and ethnically diverse communities.**

The NADC has commenced preparation of a strategic communications plan to engage a broader audience in the core campaign message. A suite of materials, including websites, campaigns, event manuals, event branding, public relations material, letter templates, speaking notes, social media content and annual reports will all be revised to incorporate the Reflect, Respect, Celebrate: We're all part of the story message.

The State and Territory network, as well as local government, will be engaged to ensure consistent use of the core message and associated branding in program deliverables. These requirements will be tied to the grant agreements referred to above.

- 3. Measure the effectiveness of the communications and the campaign and report back to the Government on the findings before the end of June 2021.**

The NADC is committed to pre- and post-campaign research and will provide a report to the Federal Government through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet no later than 30 June 2021.

- 4. Encourage Australians to reflect, respect and celebrate on Australia Day.**

As noted above, in 2020-21 the NADC intends to expand the reach of *The Story of Australia* and its core message of Reflect, Respect, Celebrate: We're all part of the story through a national campaign that will be supported by a broader strategic communications (below-the-line) campaign.

The objective of this the broader campaign is to ensure that all Australia Day events and activities run by local government and local organising committees are supported to deliver the Reflect, Respect Celebrate: We're all part of the story message. This will be achieved through the development of communications tools and materials, NADC supplied branded collateral and consistent messaging provided to stakeholders before pre-event promotion commences.

The NADC is undertaking scenario and contingency planning in the event COVID-19 restrictions inhibit the ability to hold physical events. It is exploring opportunities to leverage new and existing partnerships to broaden campaign reach.

**5. Unite all Australians through more events and celebrations of Australia Day which acknowledge Australia's Indigenous history, multiculturalism and using the day as an opportunity to reflect on the impact modern Australia had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture and traditions and the waves of migration that have brought people from all the world to make Australia their home, each making their own unique contribution to Australia and its way of life**

*The Story of Australia* emphasises the histories and stories of all Australians, from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the waves of migration that have built our nation.

In 2020-21, the NADC will work to ensure this emphasis materialises in Australia day events, activities and promotion. The NADC will provide five grants to local governments to explore events that appropriately acknowledge the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples history and culture, building on the success of the We-Akon Dilinja (Mourning-Reflection) run by Port Phillip City Council and the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council in Melbourne with the support of the NADC.

These events will provide an opportunity to reflect on Australia's pre-European history on the morning of Australia Day, before traditional events of gathering and celebration.

The NADC will provide tools to help local government engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and leaders of multicultural faiths and to incorporate them into the local events.

I am pleased to advise that the NADC will also develop a Cultural Capability Statement, empowering leadership and knowledge to flow through all interactions delivered by the organisation.

**6. Support local governments and event organisers to deliver Australia Day programs that incorporate the noted themes.**

As noted earlier, this is a primary focus of preparations for *The Story of Australia* for 2021 and is likely to include – but not be limited to – the following:

- The NADC will deliver a refreshed Ambassador program in partnership with the network of Australia Day Councils to approximately 300 councils nationally.
- All communications, briefings and engagement with local government will emphasise the core message of Respect, Reflect, Celebrate: We're all part of the story.
- All Ambassador program events will receive updated branding and messaging featuring the Reflect, Respect and Celebrate: We're all part of the story message.
- The branding will consist of physical assets that can be used on the day at public events (e.g. banners, lectern sign, bunting, etc.) and provided to local governments at no cost to them.
- Local government will be provided with messaging toolkits to ensure consistent messaging.
- An event pack will also be distributed to local governments and made available to other event organisers to provide leadership and guidance on how to run a celebratory event on Australia Day while incorporating the core message into events, including promotion and social media.

- A feedback survey will be conducted with local government participants to garner information that may be helpful for future planning.
- A public relations and activation plan will be delivered to broaden the reach of the campaign. The plan will include resources and support for Ambassadors attending local events on Australia Day.

## **7. Promote civic knowledge and good citizenship, Australian values and achievement and how this contributes to Australia's story.**

The National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony will be delivered on 26 January in Canberra in conjunction with the Department of Defence and Department of Home Affairs. This ceremony will be broadcast live on ABC.

The Aussie of the Month school program will continue nationally, encouraging good citizenship and Australian values at primary schools across the country. The program will be operational in all States and Territories.

The NADC will continue to support the Department of Home Affairs to identify suitable Australian of the Year alumni to present at local citizenship ceremonies throughout the year.

## **8. Utilise Australia's national symbols that represent what is unique about our nation, reflecting different aspects of our cultural life and history in materials, communications and at events.**

Australia's national symbols are an intrinsic part of Australia Day events.

The NADC's will develop content showcasing the national symbols for the Australia Day website.

The Ambassador program and Australian of the Year program will continue to utilise these symbols through the collateral that is distributed to the participating Australians, celebrating Australia.

## **9. Use the Australian of the Year Awards to highlight the stories of exceptional people in our community that best embody our great Australian spirit.**

The NADC is proud to be the custodian of the Australian of the Year Awards, Australia's most prestigious individual awards program.

The NADC will continue to support national Award recipients to tell their stories to more Australians. It will continue working with corporate partners to help share the stories of achievement and the values that underpin the Australian of the Year Awards.

The NADC will partner with the National Museum of Australia to expand the Australian of the Year exhibition with an international initiative that will see a graphic display made available via Australian diplomatic missions in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## **10. Encourage Australian of the Year nominations that reflect Australia's depth of community and individual contributions, enterprise, service and achievements across a range of fields**

A national campaign encouraging nominations for inspiring Australians, from all corners of the country, commenced on 15 June 2020.

The campaign is tailored to the specific requirements of each of Australia's States and Territories and translated into six different languages to encouraging nominations from diverse communities.

The campaign will be aired on ABC, throughout regional and metropolitan print mastheads, as well as through targeted outdoor and social media channels.

**Conclusion**

The NADC is committed to ensuring that Australia Day provides all Australians, regardless of where they are from, where they live, the language they speak and the faith they follow, the opportunity to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate.

On behalf of the Board of the National Australia Day Council, I would like to assure you that for us it is both a tremendous honour and responsibility to be the custodians of the celebrations of our national day.

I would again like to acknowledge the support of the Federal Government for our vital work.

I look forward to again joining you on Australia Day 2021 and taking a moment to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate our wonderful nation.

Yours sincerely



Danni Roche OAM  
Chair  
National Australia Day Council