

Media Statement

Date 18 August 2017



COUNCILS' RIGHT TO MAKE CONSTITUTED DECISIONS

The City of Yarra council at their meeting on August 16, 2017 voted unanimously to change the way it marks January 26, from 2018 onwards.

The VLGA recognises and supports the powers of councils to carry resolutions, provided it is done within a properly constituted meeting, following community consultation and engagement.

We appreciate that there are people who might be uncomfortable or opposed to the notion of referring to January 26 as Australia Day, given the history and culture of First Australians, which predated European settlement.

We Look forward to the ongoing dialogue with the council and other stakeholders including relevant state government departments, as outlined in the council's resolution.

Councils hold many citizenship ceremonies throughout the year and each ceremony is celebrated by the new citizens, their families and friends. It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has decided to revoke all citizenship ceremonies from the city of Yarra when the council's resolution was to not host citizenship ceremonies specifically on January 26, as this date marks the beginning of British colonisation and the displacement of Indigenous Australians.

The Federal response questions councils' abilities to make decisions on behalf of, and in consultation with, their diverse communities, abilities which the City of Yarra have exercised.

ENDS

Attribution:

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