

# **STATEMENT ON THE VOICE REFERENDUM**

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In solidarity with the sentiments expressed in the "Week of Silence for the Voice" message, AbSec NSW wishes to convey our unwavering support for the cause of justice and recognition of the original and continuing owners of this land. The recent referendum outcome, while disheartening, serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for the rights and recognition of Indigenous peoples in Australia. We recognise the significant efforts that led to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the modest proposition that was rejected.

We must remember that this setback is not the first time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations have faced challenges. This is a familiar story, but it has never deterred our Elders and leaders from being voices for change. We acknowledge and commend their courage and example. The fight for justice and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will endure.

As an organisation committed to advocating for the welfare and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we acknowledge the significance of this moment and the need for reflection. In light of the call for a Week of Silence, AbSec NSW has decided to reschedule the planned Community Yarn Ups in Wagga Wagga and Albury to November.

This decision aligns with our dedication to standing with those who have long sought recognition and justice. We understand the profound implications of this outcome and the importance of unity in the pursuit of a fair and just future for all Australians. We extend our gratitude to those who have supported this cause and remain committed to working tirelessly for our children and families throughout NSW.

We encourage others to join us in this gesture of solidarity.

At this juncture, as a nation, we have stumbled on our reconciliation journey. It is crucial that we acknowledge and reflect upon this. However, we maintain confidence that, in time, millions of Australians who voted Yes, as well as those who voted No but remain committed to better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, will come together for a more just nation. As we mourn the recent outcome and reflect on  
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*(continued)* its meaning, we look forward to re-gathering our strength and resolve. The imperatives for Indigenous Australians have not changed, and the issues highlighted in the Uluru Statement continue to demand attention.

Together, we will determine a new direction for justice and the rights of our people in our own country, honouring the spirit of "Always was. Always will be."

In solidarity, **AbSec NSW**

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