



## Fact Sheets

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## Reconciliation

Reconciliation aims to encourage cooperation and improve harmony between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It involves improving relationships by developing understanding of how history has shaped our relationship with each other and the importance of respecting each other's culture. Reconciliation is important not only to Indigenous people but also to Australia's future as a cohesive nation.

The process of Reconciliation formally began as a result of the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in 1991. The Australian Parliament unanimously supports Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians as a key national objective leading to the centenary of the Australian Federation in 2001. It supported the establishment of an independent body called the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1997.

The Council's role includes consulting the community on ways to improve relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, education and development of strategies to encourage cooperation.

Eight key issues for Reconciliation identified by the Council are:

- 1. Understanding country**  
The importance of land and sea in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies
- 2. Improving relationships**  
Better relationship between Indigenous Australians and the wider community
- 3. Valuing cultures**  
Recognising Indigenous cultures as a valued part of Australian heritage
- 4. Sharing histories**  
A sense for all Australians of a shared ownership of their history
- 5. Addressing disadvantage**  
A greater awareness of the causes of Indigenous Australians' disadvantage
- 6. Responding to custody levels**  
A greater community response to addressing the underlying causes
- 7. Agreeing on a document**  
Advancing the process of reconciliation by a document of reconciliation
- 8. Controlling destinies**  
Greater opportunities for Indigenous Australians to control their destinies.

The Council's vision is for: "A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all".

**Adapted from:**

*Aboriginal Education Training and Development Resource School Support Document, New South Wales Department of Education and Training Face the Facts 1997 Produced by the Federal Race Discrimination Commissioner*

**Refer to:**

[ATSIC](#)  
[AUSTLII](#)  
[Yarra Healing](#)

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**Theme:** Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders - Reconciliation

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