



Indigenous Advisory Committee Bulletin Meeting 53

The Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) held its 53rd meeting on Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 June 2025 in Canberra, ACT.

This meeting was the first meeting chaired by Dr Rohan Henry and the first since Minister Watt's appointment. The Committee is awaiting further direction from the Minister regarding priorities and expectations.

Environmental Law Reform

The Department (Environment Law Reform Taskforce) updated the IAC on reform of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) and the development of a national environmental protection agency (EPA) and the integration of cultural heritage reforms to ensure alignment across frameworks. The Minister is prioritising stakeholder engagement, particularly in developing the National Environmental Standards, and is committed to ensuring the reforms reflect the findings of the Samuel Review. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to continue working closely with the department to ensure First Nations perspectives are considered.

Cultural Heritage Reform Priorities

An update was provided on the First Nations cultural heritage reform agenda. The Committee discussed proposed priorities and the consultation strategy, offering insights to help shape a respectful and inclusive approach. The Committee emphasised the importance of meaningful engagement with First Nations communities through the reform process.

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The Committee considered how best to frame its advice in relation to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. In particular, the Committee discussed the 4 Priority Reforms and the Department's strategic efforts (through the First Nations Strategy 2025 – 30). The Committee identified next steps to support this approach.

About the IAC

The IAC is a statutory body established in 2000 under the EPBC Act. All IAC members are First Nations Australians and are ministerially appointed based on expertise in land and sea management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and cultural heritage management.

Members

Dr. Rohan Henry (Chair)
Ms. Teagan Shields (Deputy Chair)
Ms. Liz Wren
Dr. Cass Hunter
Prof. Stephen van Leeuwen

Mr. Damian Morgan-Bulled
Mr. Stan Lui
Prof. Anne Poelina
Ms. Rebecca Halliday