SHOUT RECOGNITION
Our Constitution was written more than a century ago. By then, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had lived in this land for more than 40,000 years, keeping alive the world’s oldest continuous cultures. But Australia’s founding document did not recognise the first chapter of our national story.

It mentioned Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples only to discriminate. Until the 1967 Referendum, Indigenous Australians were excluded even from being counted in the tally of citizens, the census, under section 127 of the Constitution.
What is proposed?

An Expert Panel – which included Indigenous and community leaders, constitutional experts and parliamentarians – consulted extensively across the nation and reported to the Prime Minister in January 2012. It recommended that Australians should vote in a referendum to:
*Remove* Section 25 – which says the States can ban people from voting based on their race;

*Remove* section 51(xxvi) – which can be used to pass laws that discriminate against people based on their race;

*Insert* a new section 51A – to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to preserve the Australian Government’s ability to pass laws for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

*Insert* a new section 116A, banning racial discrimination by
A Dignified people
Learning from elders
Using the land in a way that doesn’t damage it
Living sustainably so that all the animals may live
Telling the Dreaming stories through dance
Telling Dreaming stories through art
Having sacred ceremonies for those who have died
A special relationship with animals, birds and fish who are their totems
I'm a big supporter of this. It should be a unifying moment for Australia. It should be a healing moment for Australia. And that's what I want to bring about.

TONY ABBOTT, Prime Minister

Today we call Australia a place of fairness and equality ... we need to fix and make right the error in our Constitution's wording ... we need to acknowledge the people who were here 50,000 years before our Federation was enacted ... and their descendants.

BILL SHORTEN Leader of the Opposition
Here in Australia we pride ourselves on equality and opportunity. And it’s time to ensure that our Constitution reflects those values.

GAVIN WANGANEEN, AFL legend and Brownlow Medallist

Until that (constitutional recognition) is addressed, then we truly can't go forward as a people, as a nation, as Australians, as a whole.

ARCHIE ROACH, Singer and Songwriter

Recognition of the first peoples in the Constitution sends a message that you are valued, you are important, that we want to respect you, and we want to deal with the things that have caused us division and discord in the past.

PATRICK DODSON, Yawuru man
We want to be recognised. It’s just as simple as that. We’ve never been recognised. We are
the first Australians, okay? And it is time we were recognised.

LOWITJA O’DONOGHUE, legendary campaigner

I hope that future generations of Australians will grow up learning about the rich and
impressive first cultures of our country – and constitutional recognition is part of achieving
that.

ADAM GOODES, Australian of the Year 2014

This is much more than a question of symbolism, this is a question of
national wellbeing and national identity. It's about coming to terms with
who we are as a nation and deciding who we want to be in the future.

NOEL PEARSON, Cape York Institute