

## FACT SHEET

### CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AUSTRALIANS

#### WHAT IS THE PANEL ON CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AUSTRALIANS AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

On 23 December 2010, following nominations from the public, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of the 20 member Expert Panel on the Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians (the Panel).

The Panel is made up of a range of respected people, including Indigenous and community leaders, people with legal expertise and parliamentary members. The Panel is co-chaired by Professor Patrick Dodson and Mr Mark Leibler AC.

The Panel will lead a wide-ranging national public consultation and engagement program throughout 2011 to seek the Australian people's ideas on the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution.

This will inform the Panel's report to the Australian Government to be submitted in December 2011 which will provide advice on possible options for change most likely to succeed at referendum.

The Panel is working closely with organisations which have expertise and a history of engagement on this issue, including Reconciliation Australia.

The Australian Human Rights Commission and the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples are represented on the Panel as ex-officio members.

