

Fact Sheet

Steering Committee and Victorian Settlement Framework

The Victorian Government and the Victorian Traditional Owners Land Justice Group have agreed to jointly develop a **Victorian Native Title Settlement Framework**. The Framework will be developed by a Steering Committee.

This Framework aims to provide a more streamlined approach to settling native title claims by setting out what could be included in a settlement package, how negotiations could be conducted and what conditions the State would require to be met by groups to enter into negotiations about a package.

This new Framework will provide an alternative way to resolve native title claims in Victoria that will deliver better outcomes in relation to traditional owner use, management and ownership of State land in Victoria. Discussions will include how to achieve across Victoria:

- Rights and protocols for **Speaking for country** including how traditional owners can be involved in management of State lands and have rights to be consulted on development or future use of land;
- **Recognition** of traditional owners and their boundaries through native title determinations and/or alternative settlements;
- **Access to land** for traditional owner groups, ranging from management of national parks through to transferring land for economic development or cultural purposes;
- **Access to natural resources** including customary use of resources such as animals, plants and fisheries;
- **Strengthening culture** including signage on country and cultural keeping places; and
- **Claims resolution** including reparation, funding and the terms of agreements.

"Land Justice is an absolute priority. Aboriginal people need to be recognised for who they are and the country they belong to"

Negotiator Sandra Onus

"Aboriginal people they base their future, their future generations, all on land because land is connected with their old existence. Land and people can't be separate, they're all one."

Negotiator Len Clarke

"What's important is creating job opportunities for our young people's future, certainly for more people; and working in a landscape, in a natural environment, and the opportunity to benefit from that."

Negotiator Uncle Albert Mullet

"We're also mindful of the importance of restorative justice through compensation or reparation because traditional owners will need resources to establish their base and to operate as viable organisations or bodies to represent their traditional owner members."

Negotiator Graham Atkinson

"We think it's important for Government to be willing to give recognition and strengthening in lots of areas ... signage on roads indicating traditional country, cultural centres and keeping places, protocol at public events, curriculum modules in schools and public monuments to Indigenous people and language preservation and restoration projects. As we are the original owners of this land and that we have been dispossessed from our traditional land."

Negotiator Bobby Nicholls

Victorian Traditional Owner Land Justice Group

The Steering Committee is comprised of State Government and Traditional Owner representatives and has been established to oversee and guide the process and work to reach agreement on the Framework. The Steering Committee is independently chaired by Professor Mick Dodson. The Chair will also mediate between the Steering Committee members when necessary.

The Steering Committee is made up of:

- Five negotiators from the Land Justice Group - Bobby Nicholls, Graham Atkinson, Len Clarke, Albert Mullet and Sandra Onus. It also includes the CEO of Native Title Services Victoria, Chris Marshall; and
- Senior officers of Department of Justice, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Planning and Community Development and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held on 31st March 2008. This committee will meet every six weeks throughout the rest of 2008 to negotiate. The Steering Committee will report to State Cabinet and the Land Justice Group.

Steering Committee members and chair. Absent from photo Steering Committee members Albert Mullet and Sandra Onus.

Photographer: Daniel Mendelbaum of Daniel M Photo-Graphics



Make sure we can stay in touch with you. Are you on our mailing list?

Contact **Mark Brett**, Secretariat if you would like to contact the LJG members. You can also talk to **Drew Berick** the Community Liaison Officer for the Land Justice Group.

Any formal business should be addressed to:

Co-Chairs
Land Justice Group Secretariat, Mark Brett
C/- Native Title Services Victoria
PO Box 431
North Melbourne Victoria 3051
mbrett@ntsv.com.au
dberick@ntsv.com.au
Freecall: 1800 791 779 or (03) 9321 5300