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# LA PEROUSE LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Address: Yarra Bay House Elaroo Ave La Perouse NSW 2036

Postal Address: Po Box 365, Matraville 2036

Email: lapaland@bigpond.com

Telephone No: (02) 9311 4282 Facsimile: (02) 9661 7423

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15 September 2009

***A Proposal  
for  
A National Act of Recognition  
of the  
First Australians***

***The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People***

To Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Elders and Members across NSW and Australia,

We are Elders, Land Council Members, and Members of the Botany Bay Aboriginal Community, and we have been working through a proposal for "A National Act of Recognition" of the First Australians, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We have been discussing this proposal with Reverend Lindsay McDowell of Southern Cross Ministries Australia, and the Recognition Team. In all, this consultation has been held over several years.

The main aim of an Act of Recognition is to give the Australian people an opportunity to gather together to publicly reject and reverse (overturn) the lie that declared Australia "a land belonging to no one" more than 200 years ago.

We believe that the Australian people taking this step can get to the root of the problems Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have faced for generations, and begin to address those problems in a way that has not happened before.

We, the Aboriginal people of this community, live in the place where the wrongs between the English and our ancestors began. So it seems right that this should be the place where these wrongs will be publicly overturned.

The Recognition Team has spent years with us explaining their understanding of how some events, from Lieutenant James Cook's first contact with our people right up until now, have been very destructive for the First Australians, both at Botany Bay and across this entire land. The Team has worked with us with respect and persistence.

During those years Lindsay and Team members have also travelled to a number of communities around Australia presenting the Recognition Story, making sure remote communities were included in the consultation process.

As Members of the Botany Bay Aboriginal Community we believe this Recognition proposal will be of benefit to all Australians, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. We give our support to Reverend Lindsay McDowell and the Recognition Team, and encourage them in their efforts to bring A National Act of Recognition to fulfilment.

We ask you to do two things:

(1) Please look closely at the enclosed papers, especially *A MESSAGE* (green sheet). It provides, on a single page, an "at a glance" outline of the basic aims and objectives of *A National Act of Recognition*.

(2) Then we invite you to visit our community at Botany Bay so we can discuss all views on the value of those aims and objectives. If together we believe *A National Act of Recognition* should proceed, then together we can give permission for it to be brought to completion with the full support and authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

The timing of that meeting is yet to be arranged. We will be in touch again to discuss a suitable date.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ivan Simon', written over a white background.

Ivan Simon PSM  
Chairperson  
La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council