

NATSIAC NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES ISLANDER ANGLICAN COUNCIL



PURPOSE OF NATSIAC

In 1991 at a meeting of the House of Bishops it was decided that the Anglican Church of Australia needed an Indigenous voice and The National Aboriginal Anglican Council was established. In 1996 the Torres Strait Islanders were included and in 1998 the 11th session of General Synod established the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) by Canon and that Canon was later amended in 2004. Subsequently a new canon - the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canon 2014 was passed at the 16th Session of General Synod in 2014 and replaced the previous canon.

There have been many struggles over the past years to have our voices heard. Our prayer is for you to walk beside us, share our stories, our dreams and hopes and minister together to all peoples of this great land. We are bishops, priests, deacons and lay members of the Anglican Church of Australia. We are Indigenous representatives from every diocese in the Anglican Church of Australia and are appointed by each diocesan bishop. NATSIAC also holds the right to nominate an additional ten members and to appoint life members of the council. At its core NATSIAC is about the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We seek to be a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians within and without the church. We give an Indigenous perspective to the Anglican Church forum, especially those issues that involve support and social justice for Indigenous communities and ministries. Above all our members minister to, with and alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

MEMBERSHIP OF NATSIAC

Chair, Treasurer and life member: The Reverend Gloria Shipp

Deputy Chair: The Reverend John Noah

National Aboriginal Bishop: The Right Reverend Christopher McLeod

Secretary: The Reverend Daryl McCullough

Elected members: The Reverend Daryl McCullough (see above), Aimee Harris, Sainty Kaigey, Edward King, Eddie Shipp, The Reverend Canon Bruce Boase, The Reverend Shannon Smith, Monica Amey, William Hankin

Life members: The Right Reverend Arthur Malcolm, The Reverend Gloria Shipp (see above), Mrs Rose Elu, The Reverend Lenore Parker, The Reverend Dianne Langham

Diocesan members (appointed by bishop):

The Venerable Brian Kirk (Armidale)

The Reverend Robyn Davis (Bendigo)

The Venerable Karen Kime (Canberra & Goulburn)

The Reverend Phyllis Andy (Gippsland)

The Reverend Helen Dwyer (Melbourne)

Jojo Huddleston (Northern Territory)

The Reverend Colleen Mamarika (Northern Territory)

The Reverend Yulki Nunggumajbarr (Northern Territory)

Mandy Sammy (Northern Territory)

Mrs Salu Blanco, (North Queensland)

The Reverend Victor Blanco, (North Queensland)

The Reverend Dalton Cowley, (North Queensland)

The Reverend Valmai Connolly, (North Queensland)

The Reverend Canon Wayne Connolly, (North Queensland)

The Reverend Brian Claudie, (North Queensland)

Mrs Loryanna Smith (North Queensland)

Ms Carol Innes (Perth)

Mrs Edith Joyce (Rockhampton)

Mr Michael Paduch-Duckett (Sydney)

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE LAST GENERAL SYNOD

NATSIAC at its 2015 annual gathering agreed to recommend to the Primate that The Right Reverend Chris McLeod become the new National Aboriginal Bishop. The Primate agreed and the Right Reverend Chris McLeod is now the National Aboriginal Bishop, whilst still serving as Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Adelaide.

The Reverend Daryl McCullough and Ms Rose Elu, represented NATSIAC at the Anglican Indigenous Network (AIN) Conference in New York, where they delivered a report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission and ministry in Australia, as well as social and environmental impacts effecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Both Daryl and Rose were subsequently elected to the Steering Committee of the AIN.

Members are seeking the support of their dioceses to hold an annual 'NATSIAC Sunday' to raise awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry and mission and the work of NATSIAC. It is suggested that a special collection or retiring offering be taken during this service for the work and ministry of NATSIAC.

NATSIAC members attended the Common Life Missions Conference in New Zealand as guests of Anglican Missions and Te Kanga Maori where they delivered one of the

conference workshops dealing specifically with the role of NATSIAC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission and ministry.

NATSIAC has spoken out against the forced closure of Aboriginal communities, expressing our concerns directly to the premier of Western Australia.

Raised concerns at the National level in the church about the 'Closing the Gap' report which showed little to no progress in addressing the major social, educational, health and life expectancy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

NATSIAC has written to the prime minister and opposition leader supporting constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, but recognising this to be a first step on the path to treaty.

Discussions were held with representatives of ABM regarding the constitutional changes for ABM. After the discussion, NATSIAC passed the following motion: Having had them explained to us NATSIAC supports the proposed changes to the ABM Constitution. Recommends that the word Indigenous be replaced with 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples'. Whilst disappointed that the emphasis on evangelism and church growth has been removed from the objectives we understand that these activities will still be an integral part of the work and mission of ABM.

A letter of Thanks was sent to the Victorian Government in recognition of their proposal of Australia's first treaty with Indigenous people.

NATSIAC gives thanks for Anglican Alliance, and supports moving toward a closer relationship with them moving forward through sharing information and resources on the issues which we both seek to address. Anglican Alliance brings together those in the Anglican family of churches and agencies to work for a world free of poverty and injustice, to be a voice for the voiceless, to reconcile those in conflict and the safeguard the earth.

Members have been and continue to minister in their local context, promoting the Gospel and advocating on behalf of their local communities. This includes ministries varying from an urban parish context, to very remote communities, some members minister in prisons, others in hospitals and schools. From tropical islands to burning deserts and everywhere in between our members are working hard to promote the Gospel and advocate for our peoples. At each gathering members deliver a report on their own ministry and its contribution to the promotion of the Gospel and promotion of NATSIACs aims.

PLANS AND GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

NATSIAC's vision is to be the primary voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans, promoting Gospel mission, encouraging ministry and generating resources so that we may walk together with God and the wider church. We will seek to achieve this through:

- Educating, Empowering, strengthening and Nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in building the kingdom of God.
- Seeking to have NATSIAC Sunday established formally in the national Church's lectionary. The creation of liturgies which are approved by the Liturgical Commission for use throughout the church.
- Seeking to increase the representation of younger people on the council, with a target of an additional 5 people under 40 by 2020.
- At each gathering a time will be set aside for the purpose of generating resources for the wider church.
- Utilising media resources to engage with the wider church and community on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Keeping the wider church and community informed on NATSIAC's gatherings and meetings through press releases and other media.
- In the next 5 years, we will encourage the establishment of 5 'sister church' relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Churches which have non-stipendiary ministry.
- Developing relationships with inter-denominational bodies to provide mutual support and encouragement to each other.

MOTIONS FOR GENERAL SYNOD 2017

1. We the members of NATSIAC, as the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans in Australia urge this Synod, in the interests of preserving God's Creation, to:
 - a. Consider the implications of Climate Change upon the entire nation, it's land, sea and waters but especially in the Torres Strait and;
 - b. Supports the findings and recommendations of the Symposium on climate change held in Darwin 2016.

Once considered and supported that this Synod conveys its thoughts to the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, State Premiers, relevant ministers and regional councils.

2. This Synod recognises the deep concern of NATSIAC members regarding the appalling number of youth suicides in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; ten times higher than the wider Australian community.

We are aware suicides touch 95% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This Synod calls upon the government, both state and federal, to investigate the causes of these horrific statistics, and requests appropriate continuing funding to finance functional programs in consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

3. That this synod, acknowledges that NATSIAC has been expressing concern over the use of fracking on traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands for many years.

Further, this Synod joins with NATSIAC in condemning practices which seek to pressure elders to submit their traditional homelands and waterways to fracking and other practices that risk destroying hunting and fishing grounds and areas of major cultural significance.

4. We the members of NATSIAC
 - a. Note with grave concern the rate of domestic and family violence in our communities;
 - b. Call upon the government both federal and state to continue to invest in educational and family support programs;
 - c. Call upon the Anglican Church of Australia to develop a national response via greater education among clergy and church workers with regard to domestic and family violence; and,
 - d. Call upon General Synod to encourage dioceses to develop domestic violence policies, with advice for good pastoral practice, consistent with Faithfulness in Service, and in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

5. We the NATSIAC request General Synod to recognise the sad and undeniable facts concerning the disproportionate rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in gaols and detention centres all over Australia.

Further, that this Synod strongly urges all governments, federal and state to end mandatory sentencing and to actively investigate and examine 'best practice' from other jurisdictions, utilise resources such as diversionary programs and changes to policies that would seek to have gaol as the last resort.

Our General Synod representatives will be talking to the above motions: The Reverend Canon Bruce Boase, The Reverend Victor Blanco, Mrs Rose Elu, Miss Aimee Harris.