



Australia Day
Council of
Western Australia



ReconciliationWA

Recommendations on how to approach Australia Day activities on 26 January respectfully:

As the Secretariat for Reconciliation in Western Australia, Reconciliation WA provides advice to our members, partners, stakeholders and the broader community about how to approach 26 January respectfully.

In collaboration with the Australia Day Council WA, we encourage local councils, organisations and Western Australians commemorating the day, to recognise the special place of First Peoples in our nation's history; to be sensitive to the feelings of those people who may see the day as one of mourning; and to see the day as an opportunity to promote understanding, respect and reconciliation for all Australians, no matter where or when your Australian story began.

There are some simple ways to mark 26 January respectfully and acknowledge members of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and we encourage you to consider the following ideas:

- Talk and consult with your local First Peoples' community members to inform yourself of their views on the date and to help you develop a respectful approach;
- Invite Elders to play a special role in any Australia Day events you are organising, including conducting a 'Welcome to Country'. Please understand and respect their feelings if they do not wish to take part, and be prepared to respectfully hear their story of what this day represents for them;
- Suggest guest speakers acknowledge that, while First Peoples have great pride in their heritage, Australia Day may remind them of past loss, and impact; and these feelings are also a legitimate part of our national day;
- Acknowledge local Aboriginal community and the honoured place of the First Peoples in event programs and/or fliers;
- Incorporate into your event something which acknowledges past injustices in our nation's history;
- Consider holding a moment of silence at the start of formal celebrations to reflect on our nation's history.

Other resources and ideas around participating in Australia Day celebrations in WA:

- Attend the [Birak Concert](#) for an 'alternative' experience
- Be curious and educate yourself. Reading more about the history of Australia during colonial times, such as during the frontier wars or about the experience of First Peoples, can enhance our understanding. The information is readily available and in most cases, a mere 'click' away - <http://www.shareourpride.org.au/> ;
- Share your new knowledge and have a respectful conversation with family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours about what you've learned and the different perspectives.

Let's work together to ensure Australia Day is one of inclusion and unity and for all Australians.

For further information please contact admin@recwa.org.au or 9389 4090