



Media release

RACHEL STEPHEN-SMITH MLA

Minister for Community Services and Social Inclusion
Minister for Disability, Children and Youth
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations
Member for Kurrajong

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Reconciliation Day public holiday a step closer

The ACT Government has introduced legislation to amend the Holidays Act to establish a Reconciliation Day public holiday. The first Reconciliation Day holiday will be on 28 May 2018.

The Reconciliation Day public holiday will be an opportunity for the Canberra community to come together in the spirit of reconciliation to recognise and celebrate the important place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history in our city and nation.

Introducing legislation to establish the Reconciliation Day public holiday delivers on a commitment made in the last term of Government. I acknowledge Dr Chris Bourke, who championed the idea of a public holiday to promote reconciliation and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and achievements.

The bill creates the Reconciliation Day public holiday without a change to the total number of public holidays in the ACT. It removes from the Act the current Family and Community Day and its definition, also taking effect from 2018.

The significance of the Family and Community Day, its origins as a union picnic day and the important role of the labour movement will not be lost.

The Government has committed to celebrating these important themes on Labour Day, giving the day and its message far greater emphasis than it has had in recent years.

Reconciliation Day will be on the first Monday on or after the 1967 Referendum anniversary of 27 May – the start of National Reconciliation Week. Next year it will be on Monday 28 May.

I look forward to working with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as we consider together the best way to celebrate the first Reconciliation Day next year.

Statement ends

Media contact

Tim Cooke T (02) 6207 1185 M 0466 023 084 E tim.cooke@act.gov.au

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Phone (02) 6207 1185 Email: stephen-smith@act.gov.au

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