



**Federation of
Victorian Traditional
Owner Corporations**



Media Statement

Wednesday 1 February 2023

Standing together makes our voices louder and our position stronger

Victoria's Traditional Owner Corporations share many similar projects and aspirations whilst experiencing the same systemic barriers. Membership of the Federation is an essential way to raise our voices over shared concerns and celebrate our communities and achievements.

As all Corporations are different, it is appropriate that membership is flexible to accommodate the changing needs and expectations of those Corporations. Today, we are happy to announce that the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation have reinstated their membership and commitment to a shared voice.

The work the Federation does to progress the ambitions of Traditional Owners across Victoria, through engagement and advocacy, provides a state-wide perspective. The Federation's member corporations direct this work, including the policy positions and statutory changes required to move forward real self-determination for Traditional Owners.

Our members share their collective visions for self-determination of Country and Culture, and the Federation undertakes the work to find government pathways to realise these visions. Without members setting this direction and strengthening the Federation's collective voice, the work would fall to individual corporations or not be undertaken at all.

As a Victoria-wide collective, the Federation also raises the voices of its member corporations on national and international stages. This provides members with a means of discussing their concerns in broader considerations of First Nations rights and ambitions without having to support their own policy and legal staff. Capacity support and resource sharing is a central provision of the Federation to its members in the areas of policy and regulatory change.

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Quotes

Paul Paton, CEO, Federation of Victoria Traditional Owner Corporations

“The Federation is strengthened by its members – through their contribution, shared vision and values. We are pleased to welcome back the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and to walk with them on the road to Traditional Owner Corporation economic development and community wellbeing.”

Quotes

Daniel Miller, CEO, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

“GLaWAC is committed to activating the voice of the Gunaikurnai as we build on the aspirations of the Ancestors who came before. We are excited to join voices with Traditional Owners across the state as we each maintain our self-determining pathway to a better future for community, culture and Country.”

About the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations is the Victorian state-wide body that convenes and advocates for the rights of Traditional Owners while progressing wider social, economic, environmental and cultural objectives. We support the progress of agreement-making and participation in decision-making to enhance the authority of Traditional Owner Corporations on behalf of their communities.

The Federation was established in 2013 by Traditional Owner Corporations who recognised that through a path of working together Traditional Owner Groups could be stronger and could advance their shared interests in policy engagement, and in creating economic opportunities and caring for Country.

About the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

The Gunaikurnai people are recognised by the Federal Court and the State of Victoria at the Traditional Owners of a large area of Gippsland spanning from Warragul in the west to the Snowy River in the east, and from the Great Divide in the north to the coast in the south, approx. 10% of the state.

GLaWAC is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Gunaikurnai as determined by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

Gunaikurnai community are proud of the way we represent and include mob in achieving broad respect for our culture, for the protection and healing of our Country and to gain genuine economic independence.

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