

8/09/2023

MDAS calls for kindness ahead of referendum

We will all need to walk together on the continued journey to ensure the Mallee and everyone who lives here, has a bright future.

With the date of the Referendum now confirmed, Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) Board of Directors and Chief Executive, Ms. Darlene Thomas, are encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Mallee to seek as much information as they can about the proposed Voice to Parliament and to cast their vote on October 14th.

From the outset, Ms. Thomas says the MDAS Board has opted for a neutral position on the Referendum.

“As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, MDAS supports self-determination and understands that the Referendum raises several complex issues for our community and an approach that may be suitable for one person may be entirely unsuitable for another.

“MDAS is not interested in lobbying for a certain outcome but rather, our Organisation is committed to supporting the wellbeing of our community and encouraging empowerment through knowledge.”

In the coming days MDAS will host an Australian Electoral Commission Information Session, in both Mildura and Swan Hill, during which its members, clients and Aboriginal and Torres Strait community will be provided with resources and detail regarding the Referendum, with a focus on explaining the process and how to enrol to vote. The session will also offer an opportunity for people to ask questions.

Beyond that, Ms. Thomas hopes people across the region can embrace the diversity that makes the Mallee strong and engage in respectful debate.

“At the end of the day, once the Referendum has been conducted, regardless of the result, we will all need to walk together on the continued journey to ensure the Mallee and everyone who lives here, has a bright future.

“We can disagree on issues, but we should never do so at the expense of the person.

“It costs nothing to be kind.”

ENDS