



Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Milestones to be celebrated in New England during Reconciliation Week

24 May 2017

Residents in the New England Electorate are being encouraged to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1967 referendum and the 25th anniversary of the Mabo High Court decision as part of National Reconciliation Week activities, Deputy Prime Minister and Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said today.

The Coalition Government is supporting these celebrations through a range of activities and programmes including a local council grant funding round.

Mr Joyce said he was pleased to announce that Glen Innes Severn Shire Council, Inverell Shire Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Tenterfield Shire Council and Tamworth Regional Council have each received a one-off \$5,000 grant to support anniversary celebrations during National Reconciliation Week running 27 May – 3 June 2017.

These local councils will partner with the relevant Indigenous organisations in their local area to commemorate two of the most significant events in our nation's history," Mr Joyce said.

The 1967 Referendum achieved an unprecedented 90.77 per cent 'yes' vote to recognise First Australians in the Census and provide the Australian Government with the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Mabo High Court case was a landmark moment in the history of Indigenous land rights, overturning the doctrine of 'terra nullius' that led to the passing of the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Native title is the legal recognition that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights and interests on certain land because of their traditional laws and customs. Since the Mabo decision, native title has been recognised in more than two million square kilometres of land and has led to opportunities for economic development and independence.

I am delighted that these five councils in the New England Electorate are able to mark the significance of these two occasions in a manner that recognises the importance of these events to Australia's shared history," Mr Joyce said.

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Glen Innes Severn Council will work with Glen Innes Aboriginal Lands Council, Glen Innes Council Aboriginal Consultative Committee, Cooramah Housing and Enterprise Centre and the Aboriginal Playgroup; Inverell Shire Council will work with the Inverell-Tingha NAIDOC committee; Liverpool Plains Shire Council will work with the Clontarf Foundation; Upper Hunter Shire Council will work with Wanaruah and Council; Tenterfield Shire Council will work with Jubullum Local Aboriginal Land Council and Tamworth Regional Council will work with Tamworth Local Aboriginal Lands Council using the grants to celebrate local events.

Residents are encouraged to share their story of their community's celebration of these anniversaries under the banner of #NRW2017.

For more information about National Reconciliation events in the above council areas go to www.reconciliation.org.au/nrw/

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