

Events of Significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Date	Title	Meaning
January 26	Australia Day (Survival/Invasion Day)	Australia Day for many Australians is a day that celebrates the disembarking of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove and the subsequent settlement that would be the colony of NSW and eventually Australia. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, this day represents the start of a history of invasion, dispossession, removals, cultural destruction and loss of sovereign rights. For the above reason and more, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people refer to Australia Day as Invasion Day.
February 13	Anniversary of the National Apology	On this day in 2008, then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, moved a motion of apology to Aboriginal Australians with specific reference to the Stolen Generations. The Apology passed with bipartisan support from the Parliament and received a standing ovation from the House of Representatives as well as the public gallery. The anniversary of this significant event is remembered each year with a range of activities across the country and communities.
March 21	Harmony Day	Harmony Day is an Australian Government initiative that started in 1999 and is aimed at creating and promoting harmony, embracing cultural diversity and addressing racism. Harmony Day focuses on building relationships between people and is primarily a community based education program intended to increase our understanding and appreciation for the community we live in. Harmony Day is held on 21 March which is also the United Nations International day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
May 26	National Day of Healing (National Sorry Day)	National Sorry Day was established by the National Sorry Day Committee on 26 May 1998, a year after the “Bringing them Home Report” was tabled in Federal Parliament. The report was produced by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. There were 54 recommendations made in the report on a range of issues including establishing a community based National Sorry Day Committee. The primary aim of Sorry Day is to acknowledge the hurt and distress felt by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as a result of Government removal policies and practices.

Date	Title	Meaning
May 26 - June 3	National Reconciliation Week	<p>National Reconciliation Week is held each year between 26 May and 3 June and was established in 1996. The main aim of Reconciliation Week is to acknowledge and celebrate the rich history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to discuss reconciliation and to consider ways to address disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>
June 3	<p>Mabo Day</p> <p>(Named Mabo Judgement because it was Eddie's name that appeared first on the legal documents).</p>	<p>Mabo Day is the day that marks the anniversary of the historic Native Title case on 3 June 1992 when the High Court recognised Native Title existed for the Meriam Mir People of Murray Island in the Torres Strait. The case was brought to court by Eddie Mabo. This judgement was significant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the judgement legally dismissed the idea of "Terra Nullius." The case also recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights to claiming Crown lands and potentially pastoral leases as Traditional Owners.</p> <p>There was also recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have traditional laws and customs that assert rights over lands and waters which have continued after colonisation and can be recognised by the common law.</p>
First full week in July	<p>NAIDOC Week</p> <p>National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee</p>	<p>NAIDOC stands for the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. It started as a single day of celebration but is now celebrated over a week. NAIDOC Week is held in early July (usually the first full week) each year and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's culture, history and achievements.</p> <p>The week provides opportunities for all Australians to participate in celebrating Aboriginal communities along with promoting a better understanding of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>Throughout Australia local community celebrations are organised by community groups or organisations, government agencies, local councils, school and workplaces. It is also worthy to note that some communities choose to celebrate NAIDOC week in September.</p>

Date	Title	Meaning
4 August	National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day	NAICD was established in 1988 by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC). Each year there is a theme to highlight a significant issue, concern or hope for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children.
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous People	The International Day of the World's Indigenous People was first proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1994, to be celebrated every year during the international Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995 – 2004).
September (no set date)	Deadly Awards	Vibe Australia has been hosting the Deadly Awards since 1995. The awards include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music, sport, entertainment and community awards. They promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement as a marketable and growing force within Australia.