

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1143****Dated: 8 November 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

I know the historical timeline and the depth of injustice and mistreatment at a high level that I have read about and through cultural education discussions with First Nation Peoples. I understand that these injustices are still impacting all First Peoples in a significant way and that truth telling is only the small step to accountability and is in no way the end of the fight for truth, equity, and the rights of First Peoples.

What has been your experience learning about First Nations history and culture in Victoria's education system? Do you feel it was comprehensive?

I was not educated in Australia. The education system in the UK did not discuss Australian colonisation in any way at all, despite being responsible for so many atrocities and injustices. My son did go through High School in Victoria, and did learn about the history in some way, but I do not feel it was extensive enough. We have made sure that he is aware of the extent of what happened and the ongoing impact that it still is having to this day.

What changes would you like to see in Victoria to promote better understanding and respect for First Peoples?

Reconciliation and treaty go some way to helping the education of Australians; however I fear that the selfishness and righteousness of people who are scared of losing what has never rightly been theirs to own, blinds them to accepting the truth or acknowledging the ongoing injustices and inequality. I am lucky to work for a company who can, in their small way, attempt to incorporate and effect real actions into our companies RAP, that educate and offer opportunities for First Nations Peoples ongoing support and engagement, and not just pointless box ticking. I believe that Reconciliation Action Plans play a big part in addressing needs and educating workers, that would otherwise not hear the issues. Perhaps these should be compulsory plans for business, certainly the larger ones, that have the money to spend on doing the right thing. After all they have got wealthy on the land that belongs to the First Nations Peoples.

In what ways do you think non-First Nations Victorians can contribute to the process of truth-telling and treaty?

Listening, and actually hearing the truth. My company has compulsory cultural training and has spent a lot of money and effort committing to not only producing the Reconciliation Action Plan but in

educating and discussing truth telling and treaty. This is being lead from the top down, which is as it should be. Putting their money where their mouth is, by actually enforcing actions for change within our sphere of influence. EVERYONE needs to be doing this. EVERYONE needs to be educated to understand First Nations History and the ongoing impact of this. EVERYONE needs to listen and actually hear and do something to make a difference no matter how small. Before being involved in my companies RAP, I was ignorant to the history and impact of colonization, or the richness and wonder of First Nations Culture and Knowledge, moving forward it will always be a very important issue for me and will affect who I work for, the decisions I make and actions I take.

In what ways could First Peoples history and culture be promoted in Victoria?

Reconciliation week events are fantastic at raising this awareness and sharing First Nations Culture. It needs to be visible, it needs to be around us, all the time, we need to promote the richness of First Peoples culture everywhere. Whilst there is an effort to visualise and action this, albeit on a small scale, in the city of Melbourne, I do not see it outside of the Narrm. I live on Mount Corhanwarraul, I could find nothing organised in my area to do for reconciliation week, why? there should be recognition and marking of this everywhere.

END OF SUBMISSION