

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1182****Dated: 12 November 2024****Submission:**

I am a young Dharug woman. I grew up on Guringai land and recently identified that my people may have also been close to or living on Guringai land. I grew up with minimal knowledge of culture, not meeting my Aboriginal Grandfather until I was 8 years old. He at the time also did not know much about our history either. After completing a DNA test through Ancestry, my Grandfather found his sister (who at the time he completing a DNA test through Ancestry, my Grandfather found his sister (who at the time he believed was his cousin). Through her, we have been able to know more about our family and history.

I am a descendent of Black Kitty (we do not have records of her birth name, this is due to the poor record keeping of the government and police at the time). Black Kitty's death was printed in the newspaper at the time, it stated that she had let her mob know she was going to get provisions, she never returned. She was found dead outside a police station, the paper advised that she had many glass bottles around her and believe that she had died from an overdose of alcohol. This was incredibly sad to read as it had also advised that there was an initial investigation into her death that was closed very quickly. Progressing through my family tree, there have been many further injustices and inequality that has hindered my families ability to thrive, connect to culture and the land.

I have moved to Wurundjeri country, I work for an Aboriginal controlled organisation. This organisation has a program which will grant certificates of Aboriginality for mob. I have been empowered and mentored by my line manager in finding more information and embracing my history. I wanted to submit my application for a certificate of Aboriginality for the purpose of accessing health care, accessing Aboriginal identified job roles and also at the core of it, I want to ensure that my future children and my family will never have to struggle being identified as who they are and not experience any of these structural barriers. The submission required me to provide photos of my family and a genogram. I provided this all extensively. I received the news that the panel at the organisation had reviewed my submission and "tabled it" due to not having enough proof of Aboriginality. While I understand that there are many people who take advantage of processes like this, I have shown an ongoing commitment to my work and to exploring my heritage. I know who my family are and the history we have, this was extremely invalidating to me and upsetting considering the history and trauma my family have experienced.

I have yet to hear back any further information, this panel occurred in May 2024, I submitted my application in January. I believe this is not an isolated occurrence and this process has proven to be stressful and traumatic for mob. No one ever spoke to me or allowed for me to share my story. Aboriginal culture includes story telling, truth telling. This has been so disappointing and unfair for myself and other mob with the same experiences. myself and other mob with the same experiences.

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