HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
LAID ON THE TABLE
12 Nov 2026

South Australian First Nations Voice 2026 Annual Report

FIRST NATIONS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT
c/- Level 16, 30 Wakefield Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
www.firstnationsvoice.sa.gov.au

Contact phone number: (08) 8429 9494
Contact email: secretariat@firstnationsvoice.sa.gov.au

Reporting Period:
14 November 2025 – 12 November 2026

Date of Report Submission:
12 November 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

The First Nations Voice to Parliament acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters across South Australia and pays deep respect to Elders past and present. We recognise the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country, culture, and community, and affirm our commitment to walking together in partnership towards a future grounded in truth, justice, and self-determination.

Message from State Voice Presiding Members

This year has been one of continued growth, strengthened partnerships and increasing influence for the South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament (SA Voice). We have built on the foundations established in our early years, deepened our relationships with the communities we represent, and increased our engagement with the South Australian Parliament and Government.

We have continued our work across three Focus Areas of Health and Wellbeing, Housing and Infrastructure, and Justice and Policing. Yet throughout the year, one message has remained constant in the feedback we have heard from our communities: the ongoing racism they experience. From our Elders and young people to those currently living in our prisons, First Nations people have shared their experiences of racism, discrimination, and the daily challenges they face navigating systems in which they do not always feel respected, valued and heard.

Alongside this, our communities have raised concerns about cultural fraud and black cladding, the need to decolonise our Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), and the increasingly complex and uncertain political landscape. These conversations reflect the complexity of the challenges facing our communities and the importance of having a strong, independent First Nations Voice to Parliament to bring these issues forward.

In March 2026, the second election of the SA Voice was held, marking several significant milestones. The election marked the end of the inaugural two-year term of membership, and an opportunity to farewell those who had helped build the Voice to Parliament model from the ground up. Their courage in standing for election at the inaugural election paved the way for those who followed.

In addition, for the first time the SA Voice election was held on the same day as the State election. This was an important symbolic step in the evolution of the SA Voice, placing First Nations representation firmly alongside the broader democratic process. It also signalled the potential for the SA Voice to become an increasingly recognised and accepted advisory body.

While the election marked an important milestone in the ongoing establishment of the SA Voice, it was also a bittersweet occasion. Reports of negative experiences at polling places highlighted that First Nations voters encountered barriers to participating in the democratic process. These included experiences of being questioned about their Aboriginality, confusion about voting procedures, lengthy delays, difficulties obtaining ballot papers and being unable to vote entirely.

These experiences caused distress and frustration for many people and raised concerns that they may discourage future electoral participation. They were also a sobering reminder that we still have a long way to go. Holding an election for the SA Voice is not enough on its own; the process must also be accessible, culturally safe and respectful of First Nations people if we want strong participation.

The SA Voice's key role in the Independent Review of the State and SA Voice Elections provided an opportunity for community members to share their experiences and contribute to identifying improvements for future elections. It is hoped that this work will help strengthen confidence in the electoral process and support First Nations people to exercise their democratic rights with dignity and respect.

On 6 May 2026, we faced the uncertainty of proposed legislative changes that could fundamentally dismantle the SA Voice when the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council introduced the First Nations Voice Repeal Bill. As 46 elected members, we jointly opposed the Bill on the basis that it would remove a legislated mechanism for First Nations people to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their lives and communities – a mechanism that is working.

The SA Voice provides a democratic, practical and cost-effective way of bringing grass roots knowledge, lived experience and expertise into government decision-making. It is strengthening government accountability, improving communication between our communities and government, and supporting better outcomes for First Nations people. Our work has helped deliver tangible improvements while saving government money.

Much has been achieved through the commitment and dedication of members and the Secretariat, often in challenging circumstances. However, our capacity to undertake this work continues to be constrained by limited resources. Some members receive as little as $115 a fortnight for their work, while extensive travel and the time involved are often not adequately recognised. Our Secretariat, which supports the work of the SA Voice across the entire state, is also under-resourced.

When the initial budget was established, there was limited understanding of the work involved and what would be required to fulfil our responsibilities. This year our calls for greater consideration of member's remuneration and entitlements have been answered, with the independent Remuneration Tribunal now tasked with determining appropriate remuneration based on the work members undertake and the responsibilities they carry. We look forward to the Tribunal making its determination soon.

Shortly an independent, Aboriginal-led review of the *First Nations Voice Act 2023* will also commence. This is an important opportunity to reflect on the operation of the SA Voice since its establishment and consider how its legislative framework can be strengthened for the future. The experiences of members will provide valuable insight into the practical operation of the model, including the challenges of representing diverse communities, maintaining transparency and accountability, and fulfilling significant responsibilities.

Both processes provide important opportunities to consider the funding, resources, legislative arrangements and support needed to strengthen the SA Voice into the future. While much has been achieved, we know there is more that can be done. With

the right foundations in place, the SA Voice will be better positioned to represent the diverse needs and priorities of First Nations South Australians.
In early November we met with the visiting United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Albert K. Barume during his visit to Australia. His visit provided an important opportunity to reflect on the ongoing relevance of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), which sets out the minimum standards for the recognition and protection of Indigenous peoples' rights worldwide. It was also a moment to reflect on the lasting impacts of colonisation, the discrimination experienced by First Peoples and the challenges that remain in realising our rights. Importantly, it reinforced the significance of the SA Voice as an expression of our right to self-determination, and how it can serve as a blueprint for how governments provide First Nations people with a democratic means of having a say in decisions that affect our lives and communities.

As we come to the end of another year of the SA Voice, we reflect on how far we have come and the opportunities that lie ahead for Aboriginal representation, both through a Voice to Parliament and beyond. We also approach two important milestones in the coming year. 2027 marks the 20-year anniversary of UNDRIP, an important international framework for the recognition and protection of Indigenous people's rights, which Australia formally endorsed in 2009. 2027 is also the 10-year anniversary of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, the landmark document that called for a First Nations Voice to Parliament, alongside Truth-Telling and Treaty. These milestones provide an opportunity to reflect on the commitments made and the progress still needed to achieve meaningful change. They also serve as a reminder of the decades of reports, recommendations, and calls for reparations that have too often gone unanswered.

As an independent advisory body to government, the SA Voice has an important role in continuing to advocate for these commitments, holding governments accountable for the actions they take and ensuring First Nations perspectives remain central to the work ahead. This must also include calling on the South Australian Government to show leadership and courage in holding the Commonwealth Government to account for its obligations under UNDRIP, and to actively advocate for its full implementation.

Throughout our time as Presiding Members of the State Voice, we have advocated for progress on the two remaining elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We are proud that the South Australian Government remains committed to First Nations people, and this year announced it would be establishing Commissions to progress Truth-Telling and Treaty. This represents an important step towards advancing the vision set out in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and continuing the work of strengthening Aboriginal representation and self-determination in South Australia.

Ms Danni Smith
Joint Presiding Member

Mr Leeroy Bilney
Joint Presiding Member

State Voice

State Voice

12 November 2026

Table of Contents

1. Preliminary 8
2. Local Voices 10
2026 Voice Elections 10
Review of the 2026 SA Voice Elections 11
Region 1 - Kumangka Warrarna Wangkanthi (Central) 12
Region 2 – Far North 16
Region 3 – Flinders and Upper North 18
Region 4 – Murraylands, Riverland and South East 22
Region 5 – West and West Coast 25
Region 6 – Yorke and Mid North 28
Annual meeting 31
3. State Voice 32
Focus Areas in 2026 35
Advisory Committees 36
4. Addresses to Parliament 37
Notification of Bills introduced 37
Addresses in relation to Bills 37
Reports presented to the Parliament 38
Requests for reports to the Parliament 38
5. Interaction with South Australian Government 39
Meetings with Cabinet 39
Chief Executive Briefings 40
Engagement Hearings 41
6. Administration and resourcing 42
Audited Financial Statements 2025-26 44

1. Preliminary

This report is presented to the joint sitting of Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements under sections 38 (1) (a) and (b) of the *First Nations Voice Act 2023* (the Act).

This report outlines key activities, recommendations made to government, community engagements, and reflections on progress towards greater representation and equity for First Nations people.

The report also serves as a record of achievements, challenges, and opportunities for strengthening the SA Voice's role in shaping policies and decisions that impact First Nations people in South Australia.

Background

The SA Voice is established and operates under the Act as an advisory body to the South Australian Parliament and Government and as a representative body for First Nations people of South Australia.

The SA Voice is independent of the direction or control by the Crown or any Minister or officer of the Crown and is not an agency or instrumentality of the Crown (and is not, to avoid doubt, a public sector agency under the *Public Sector Act 2009).*

The Act outlines the SA Voice's mandate to provide advice to the South Australian Parliament, Government and other organisations on matters of significance to First Nations communities, ensuring that the voices of First Nations people are heard and embedded in decision-making processes and practices on laws and policies that impact them.

The SA Voice achieves this goal through its six (6) Local First Nations Voices (**Local Voices**) that represent First Nations communities across defined geographic areas. Local Voices have direct engagement with community members on regional priorities and concerns. The Local Voice regions are:

- Region 1: Kumangka Warrarna Wangkanthi (Central)
- Region 2: Far North
- Region 3: Flinders and Upper North
- Region 4: Murraylands, Riverland and South East
- Region 5: West and West Coast
- Region 6: York and Mid North

Members of Local Voices are responsible for gathering the views of the communities in their regions and presenting them to the State First Nations Voice (**State Voice**). The State Voice is comprised of the Presiding Members of each region and is responsible for providing advice to the South Australian Parliament, Government and

other organisations on matters of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
A visual representation of the SA Voice model is shown below:



The Act sets out the governance, membership, and accountability requirements of the SA Voice, providing the statutory foundation for its establishment and functions. Through these provisions, the Act embeds a mechanism for ongoing and structured dialogue between First Nations people and the South Australian Government.

The establishment of the SA Voice advances key government policy directions and pledges to work in partnership with First Nations peoples in policy design and delivery. The SA Voice provides the institutional mechanism to support reconciliation and truth-telling, address the impacts of colonisation, progress the implementation of South Australia's plan for Closing the Gap, and deliver culturally safe, community led and locally responsive services. Importantly, the SA Voice embeds Aboriginal representation into the heart of government processes and strengthens accountability for progress against shared goals.

2. Local Voices

The Local Voices comprise representatives elected by First Nations communities across the designated Local Voice regions of South Australia. Members bring local knowledge, cultural authority, and leadership to ensure regional priorities are reflected in State Voice deliberations.

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, each Local Voice is required to meet at least four (4) times per calendar year. During 2026, meetings were held in community settings and online to maximise accessibility and participation.

2026 Voice Elections

2026 was an election year for the SA Voice, the first since the inaugural elections in 2024.[1] Elections of the SA Voice are conducted by the Electoral Commission South Australia (ECSA), which is also responsible for nominations and election promotion.

Between December 2025 and March 2026, members of Local Voices assisted ECSA in its promotion of nominations and the elections. This included members attending community information sessions held in various parts of the state, as well as talking directly with their communities and networks to encourage participation in the election process.

Elections of members of all Local Voices were held on 21 March, in conjunction with the State election. Mobile polling and early voting also took place at the same time, and in the same locations, as the State election.

The SA Voice elections resulted in 24 returning members and 22 new members being elected to a four-year term.

Following the elections, induction activities were conducted for new and returning members. Preliminary inductions for new members commenced in April and were held in person, wherever possible in the member's home communities. These continued through to the main, all-member induction event on 2 and 3 June in Adelaide.

The June induction event brought together new and returning members for structured sessions reflecting on the SA Voice's work to date and identifying priorities for the coming years. The program also provided time for regional forward planning, meetings with selected government Chief Executives who reflected on their experience working with the SA Voice, and updates from the Premier and Deputy Premier.

The event included the first meetings of the six Local Voices during which each elected their two Presiding Members. The 12 Presiding Members (two from each region) formed the State Voice. The first State Voice meeting was held on 3 June. At this meeting the State Voice appointed Danni Smith and Leeroy Bilney as Joint Presiding Members, returning them to the positions they held in the inaugural term.

[1] Other than supplementary elections.

Review of the 2026 SA Voice Elections

Following significant negative feedback about the March 2026 State and SA Voice elections, the South Australian Government commissioned an independent review of both elections. Of particular concern was First Nations voting experiences at polling places.

The Terms of Reference for the review, led by former Australian Electoral Commissioner Tom Rogers AO, specified that "*consultation with Aboriginal voters about their experiences voting in the 2026 Voice election to be Aboriginal-led*". Mr Rogers asked the SA Voice members to lead this aspect of the review.

Members of the six Local Voices completed this consultation work in seven weeks between 1 July and 19 August 2026. This project involved members across all levels of the SA Voice and required planning, preparation and review of documentation, considerable travel within regions, and extensive community engagement.

Across the state, members consulted with more than 280 First Nations people about their experiences of the 2026 SA Voice election. Members also encouraged First Nations voters to take the Independent Review survey to contribute to the broader quantitative data set being collected and considered by Mr Rogers.

The project culminated in six submissions to the Independent Review, one from each Local Voice region. Information gathered through SA Voice consultations is being incorporated into the Election Review Report, with the six Local Voice submissions to be included as appendices.

The SA Voice-led consultation provided an important opportunity for First Nations people to share their experiences at the 2026 elections in a culturally safe way, including the difficulties and barriers they encountered when voting. While the findings of the Independent Review are yet to be finalised, the SA Voice hopes this work will contribute to meaningful improvements to the electoral process so First Nations voters can participate in future elections confidently and safely.

In being tasked with assisting the review, the SA Voice was entrusted with additional responsibility in recognition of its expertise and the trust it holds within First Nations communities. While this reflects the value of its representative role, it also placed additional demands on members by expanding the scope of its responsibilities.

Region 1 - Kumangka Warrarna Wangkanthi (Central)

The Central region uses the name Kumangka Warrarna Wangkanthi (KWW), which means ‘Voices Speaking Together’ in Kaurna.

Following the 2026 March elections KWW welcomed many new members. This new cohort has shown the same determination to carry on from the foundations laid by the inaugural members of the region, who have been recognised for their significant contributions over their two-year term.

Our purpose is to ensure that elected members' connections and relationships are maintained with open communication with our community. Our members represent the Aboriginal voices and they have demonstrated a strong commitment to ensure views are reflected in their work as KWW members.

It has proven to be challenging for elected members to ensure the SA Voice agenda is reflective of the needs and interests of our community. Members remain committed to strengthening partnerships with both government departments and communities. KWW Members have contributed to community and Government discussions and members have shown up to community places and held genuine conversations.

Members from this region undertook significant informal engagements with government agencies and non-government organisations, dedicating considerable time to advocating on issues identified by community members. These activities demonstrate members' commitment to advancing positive outcomes and holding the SA Government accountable for policies, laws, and practices that affect First Nations people residing in South Australia. They also highlight the substantial contribution members make beyond their standard responsibilities as First Nations Voice members.

Members were asked to collaborate in the Independent Review of the SA Voice Elections. Through a mix of formal engagements and informal conversations at community events, members collected information from a diverse range of community members. The information provided was formed into an extensive written submission. Several detailed recommendations were developed and submitted based on community feedback and personal stories shared by community members.

In July, members held a stall at the NAIDOC Family Day, Tarntanyangga. The event provided an opportunity for new and returning members to introduce themselves to the communities who elected them, and a platform to have important conversations about the election review. Members also attended many other NAIDOC events as representatives of the SA Voice, including the Premier’s NAIDOC Awards, NAIDOC Ball, and community and workplace NAIDOC gatherings. Members also attended NAIDOC in the South at Christies Beach, held in August.

In October, KWW members were invited to attend the SA Aboriginal Football and Netball Carnival (Nunga Carnival) at Kilburn Oval. Joined by SA Voice representatives from other regions, they attended the Elders Luncheon and met with community members who had travelled to Adelaide from across the state to attend and participate in this important cultural event.

Throughout 2026, members have continued conversations with community regarding local priorities, including the North Adelaide Golf Course redevelopment and the development of a cultural centre at Lot Fourteen. Members have shown the same strong advocacy for the SA Voice Focus Areas of health and wellbeing, justice, policing, and housing through their community discussions, and this informed what was discussed at meetings between the State Voice and Government throughout the year.

Region 1 covers the following local council areas:

- Adelaide Hills Council
- Campbell City Council
- City of Adelaide
- City of Burnside
- City of Charles Sturt
- City of Holdfast Bay
- City of Marion
- City of Mitcham
- City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters
- City of Onkaparinga
- City of Playford
- City of Port Adelaide Enfield
- City of Prospect
- City of Salisbury
- City of Tea Tree Gully
- City of Unley
- City of West Torrens
- Mount Barker District Council
- Town of Walkerville

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	**Membership from 1 April 2026[2]**
Ms Susan Dixon, Presiding Member	Mr Matthew Karpany-Carter, Presiding Member
Mr Douglas Clinch, Presiding Member	Ms Deb Moyle, Presiding Member *
Ms Jennifer Caruso	Mr Clinton Bennell
Ms Rosalind Coleman	Ms Jennifer Caruso *
Ms April Lawrie	Ms Melissa Clarke
Mr Robert Leidig	Ms Kahlia Gibson
Mr Anthony Minniecon (*resigned 9 December 2025*)	Ms Marnie O'Meara *
Ms Deb Moyle	Ms Ashum Owen
Mr Major 'Moogy' Sumner	Mr Matthew Rankine
Ms Marnie O'Meara	Mr Timothy Ritchie
Mr Scott Wilson	Mr Major 'Moogy' Sumner *
	**Re-elected Member*

[2] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 1 were not declared until 1 April 2026.

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4:	3 December 2025, Neporendi Aboriginal Community Centre, Christie Downs, SA

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1:	17 February 2026, Kura Yerlo, Port Adelaide SA
Meeting 2:	2 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA
Meeting 3:	10 August 2026, Yarrow Place, North Adelaide SA
Meeting 4:	29 October 2026, Max Amber Community Hall, Paradise SA
Meeting 5:	26 November 2026, online *

Community engagements in 2025

Christie Downs:	3 December 2025, Neporendi Aboriginal Community Centre

Community engagements in 2026

Adelaide:	10 July 2026, NAIDOC Family Day, Tarntanyangga
Salisbury Downs:	17 July 2026, Hollywood Plaza Shopping Centre, Salisbury Downs
Christie Downs:	6 August 2026, Christie Downs Community House, Christie Downs
Christies Beach:	26 August 2026, NAIDOC in the South, Rotary Park, Christies Beach

* Scheduled dates

Region 2 – Far North

During this year, Far North region members continued to advocate for their communities.

Community engagements in Indulkana (APY Lands) and Coober Pedy late in 2025 enabled members to build on conversations about SA Voice Focus Areas and gather community views reflective of local needs. The availability and maintenance of appropriate housing were high on community agendas. At government meetings the SA Voice was able to share ideas for community-led solutions around upgrading building infrastructure, training and employment.

In meetings with government, Presiding Members spoke about bail and remand conditions, supported electronic monitoring initiatives for the APY Lands, and called for housing and Homelands infrastructure. Members also renewed calls for better return to Country services for Anangu living in Adelaide, and for the end of the Edwards Park temporary campground in the Adelaide Parklands, which was closed during the year. Services and management of services in the Far North region featured in all discussions, especially about health and wellbeing and employment.

Presiding Member Melissa Thompson also visited Port Augusta, a regional hub for many Anangu people. There she met with First Nations women on remand, and men in custody in the Anangu Unit in Port Augusta Prison. Conversations centred on in-prison programs, post-release housing, services to break negative cycles and promote independence, and language barriers inhibiting justice processes. Along with other Local and State Voice Members, she observed the new Spinifex Court Program, a recommendation of the SA Voice that provides a culturally supportive court process for Anangu people. Insights from engagements in Port Augusta informed discussions with government about justice and policing during the year.

In support of the Independent Review of the SA Voice Elections, members of the Far North region engaged with people in their home communities of Amata, Pipalyatjara, Mimili, Indulkana, Ernabella, Fregon and Coober Pedy, along with Anangu people temporarily living in Adelaide. In contrast to the experiences reported by many First Nations voters, community feedback highlighted positive experiences among those who participated in mobile polling. However, the review identified an issue for Anangu living outside the APY Lands, who were unable to vote for candidates representing the APY Lands because they could only vote in the region where their address was registered.

Region 2 covers the following local council areas:

District Council of Coober Pedy
Municipal Council of Roxby Downs
APY Lands

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	Membership from 30 March 2026[3]
Mr Mark Campbell, Presiding Member	Mr Johnathon Lyons, Presiding Member *
Ms Melissa Thompson, Presiding Member	Ms Melissa Thompson, Presiding Member*
Mr Christopher Dodd	Ms Dawn Brown
Miss Dharma Ducasse-Singer	Mr Mark Campbell *
Mr Donald Fraser	Mr Christopher Dodd *
Mr Johnathon Lyons	Ms Angela Watson
	Mr Alan Wilson
	**Re-elected Member*

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4: 27 November 2025, TAFE campus, Indulkana (APY Lands)

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1: 19 February 2026, Mercure, Alice Springs NT

Meeting 2: 1 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA

Meeting 3: 18 September 2026, online

Meeting 4: 13 November 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA*

Community engagements in 2025

Indulkana (APY Lands): 27 November 2025, TAFE SA Indulkana

Umoona: 28 November 2025, Umoona Community Council

* Scheduled dates

[3] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 2 were not declared until 30 March 2026.

Region 3 – Flinders and Upper North

In January 2026, the Flinders and Upper North members hosted members of the State First Nations Voice in Port Augusta for the State Voice's first meeting of the year. Local and State Voice members participated in a joint community engagement activity, providing a valuable opportunity for community members to share local priorities and perspectives directly with State Voice representatives. The engagement strengthened connection between Local and State Voice members, ensured regional priorities and perspectives informed statewide advocacy and supported participation in the 2026 SA Voice elections.

As part of this visit, Members also met with First Nations people incarcerated at Port Augusta Prison to hear insights into matters affecting them from their first encounter with the justice system through to post-release from prison. Members also attended a sitting of the Spinifex Court at the Port Augusta Magistrate's Court to see first-hand how it is operating. The Spinifex Court works in conjunction with local support services and is designed to remove some of the barriers for Aboriginal people associated with the Western justice system. Voice members also met with the Magistrate and provided direct feedback on the court processes.

Public housing was a constant area of concerns for community, discussed at every engagement session in the region. Members heard about overcrowded properties, long waits for maintenance, houses in very old and poor condition and the desperation of people waiting to access safe and affordable housing. Through State Voice and government meetings, the Presiding Members repeatedly questioned government's commitment to regional housing priorities.

Throughout the year, members continued to advocate on issues raised through community engagement and discussions across the region. These included challenges relating to actual or perceived crime and home invasion offending taking place in the broader community and the necessity for customer-focussed improvements for services and interagency service collaboration. Engagement with key stakeholders, including the Outback Community Authority, Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network, and Department for Energy and Mining, strengthened collaboration and enhanced understanding of regional priorities, available services and community supports.

The region also made a submission to the Select Committee on the Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) (Amendment of Indenture) Amendment Bill 2026. Members objected to the Bill proceeding due to the broad approval it would grant for the expansion of mining operations and processing capacity. They emphasised the importance of meaningful consultation with Traditional Owners and ensuring First Nations perspectives are heard prior to decisions affecting their communities. The submission continued the advocacy of the region on related matters of community concern - water provision, land management and heritage.

In support of the SA Voice Election Review members undertook formal community engagements in Whyalla and Port Augusta along with informal conversations with community members across the region and online. The information collected informed a written submission to the independent review reflective of the experience of First Nations voters in the region.

Region 3 covers the following local council areas:

- Port Augusta City Council
- Flinders Ranges Council
- City of Whyalla
- District Council of Orroroo and Carrieton (a portion).

It also includes:

- Leigh Creek
- Wilpena
- Arkaroola

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	Membership from 31 March 2026[4]
Ms Candace Champion, Presiding Member	Ms Charmaine Hull, Presiding Member
Mr Robert Singleton, Presiding Member	Mr Robert Singleton, Presiding Member *
Ms Kerri Coulthard	Mr Ralph Coulthard *
Mr Ralph Coulthard	Ms Charlotte Coulthard-Dare
Mr Charles Jackson	Ms Noeleen Lester
Ms Lavene Ngatokorua	Ms Jacinta McKenzie
Mr Tjiangu “TJ” Thomas	Mr Tjiangu “TJ” Thomas *
	**Re-elected Member*

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4: 21 November 2025, West Augusta Football Club, Port Augusta SA

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1: 14 January 2026, Standpipe Golf Motor Inn, Port Augusta SA

Meeting 2: 2 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA

Meeting 3: 30 July 2026, Port Augusta Yacht Club, Port Augusta SA

[4] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 3 were not declared until 31 March 2026.

Meeting 4: 23 October 2026, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta SA

Meeting 5: December 2026, Online *

Community engagements in 2025

Port Augusta: 21 November 2025, West Augusta Football Club, Port Augusta SA

Community engagements in 2026

Port Augusta: 15 January 2026, Central Oval Complex, Port Augusta SA

Whyalla: 29 July 2026, The Beach Hotel, Whyalla SA

Port Augusta: 29 July 2026, Port Augusta Yacht Club, Port Augusta SA

Quorn: 22 October 2026, Oval Community Hall, Park Terrace, Quorn SA

Port Augusta: 22 October 2026, Port Augusta Yacht Club, Port Augusta SA

* Scheduled dates

Region 4 – Murraylands, Riverland and South East

The Murraylands, Riverland and South East region has shown significant advocacy this year regarding the Energy Resources (regulated Activities) Amendment Bill 2026 about hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in the south-east. Community expressed strong views against fracking. In response, members initiated meetings involving regional interest groups, politicians, local governments and traditional owners to get a deeper understanding of the issue and work together to protest the Bill. A key outcome of this action was member Lisa Rigney addressing the media from the steps of Parliament House in August.

In February and March 2026, Region 4 members visited Mobilong and Cadell Prisons. During these visits community raised concerns about their experience in these facilities, including racism directed towards residents and staff, a lack of cultural awareness about funerals and men's/cultural business, and a lack of understanding and training about mental health needs. These engagements contributed to productive conversations with the Department for Corrections throughout the year at the State Voice level.

In Community conversations throughout the year we heard again and again about racism directed at mob, issues with cultural identity fraud enabling ineligible people to access services, and the need to decolonise ACCOs. Consultations across the region highlighted communities' feelings of being racially vilified during the SA Voice election, going unacknowledged in polling booths, and frustration with the lack of knowledge about the election process from ECSA staff.

Community engagement in Berri, and many other community conversations throughout the region, showed an urgent need for the State Voice to speak with representatives from the SA Housing Trust about tenants receiving timely maintenance when reported. To follow this up Presiding Member Danni Smith met with representatives of the SA Housing Trust in Mount Gambier.

During the year members met with representatives from the Nunga Court to gain insights into the working of the court in Murray Bridge. Learnings from this meeting then helped inform conversations with government about justice and policing matters.

In support of the review of the SA Voice Elections, members undertook formal community engagements in Murray Bridge and Meningie, and held informal conversations with community members in Berri and Mount Gambier. The extensive information collected informed a written submission to the independent review highlighting key experiences of First Nations voters in the region.

Members also worked with the Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit (FERU) to facilitate a visit to Mount Gambier, providing community members with an opportunity to discuss issues relating to unpaid fines directly with government representatives and learn how they can get assistance through local service providers.

Region 4 covers the following local council areas:

Kangaroo Island Council	Berri Barmera Council
District Council of Yankalilla	Southern Mallee District Council
City of Victor Harbor	Tatiara District Council
Alexandrina Council	Kingston District Council
Rural City of Murray Bridge	Naracoorte Lucindale Council
Coorong District Council	District Council of Robe
Mid Murray Council	Wattle Range Council
District Council of Karoonda East Murray	District Council of Grant
District Council of Loxton Waikerie	City of Mount Gambier
Renmark Paringa Council	

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	**Membership from 1 April 2026[5]**
Ms Danielle Smith, Presiding Member	Ms Danielle Smith, Presiding Member *
Mr Robin Wright, Presiding Member	Mr Robin Wright, Presiding Member *
Mrs Eunice Aston	Mr Malcolm Aston
Ms Sheryl Giles	Ms Sheryl Giles *
Mr Timothy Hartman	Mr Timothy Hartman *
Mr Daniel Mitchell-Matthews	Ms Lisa Rigney *
Ms Lisa Rigney	Ms Stephanie Russell

**Re-elected Member*

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4: 10 December 2025, Waikerie Hotel, Waikerie SA

[5] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 4 were not declared until 1 April 2026.

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1:	24 February 2026, Ngarrindjeri Ruwe Empowered Communities, Murray Bridge SA
Meeting 2:	2 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA
Meeting 3:	22 July 2026, Meningie Bowling Club, Meningie SA
Meeting 4:	14 October 2026, ac.care, Berri SA
Meeting 5:	2 December 2026, Kangaroo Island SA*

Community engagements in 2026

Murray Bridge:	24 February 2026, Ngarrindjeri Ruwe Empowered Communities, Murray Bridge SA
Mobilong:	25 February 2026, Mobilong Prison, Mobilong
Cadell:	4 March 2026, Cadell Training Centre, Cadell
Murray Bridge:	21 July 2026, Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service, Murray Bridge
Meningie:	22 July 2026, Meningie Bowling Club, Meningie SA
Berri:	14 October 2026, ac.care, Berri SA

* Scheduled dates

Region 5 – West and West Coast

Members of Region 5 have continued to work closely with community members and organisations to bring positive change to the region. This includes work relating to the Focus Areas of health and wellbeing, housing and infrastructure, and justice and policing, which has been elevated to government during meetings with the State Voice.

In early 2026, members held community engagements in Port Lincoln and visited the Port Lincoln Aboriginal Community Council facility at Wanilla Forest. There they learned about the potential for the multipurpose facility to support a bail and rehabilitation hub and met with participants of work programs that are bringing new life to the facility, and employment opportunity to the region.

Presiding Members Lorraine Haseldine and Leeroy Bilney also met with the Department of Treasury and Finance and Fines Enforcement and Recovery Unit (FERU) in the SA Government to raise awareness of the personal and social impact of accumulated debt from unpaid fines by First Nations people in the region, and across the state. This followed regional community engagements in 2025 that identified many vulnerable individuals that would be trapped in a cycle of debt without support.

Together with the FERU, members coordinated community engagement in Yalata and Ceduna to assist community members and organisations alike to improve access to information, support services and pathways to resolve fines and debt. In doing so, the members helped build trust and strengthened relationships between government and regional and remote communities. The partnership between the FERU and SA Voice has continued, with joint activities occurring across the state.

In support of the review of the SA Voice Elections, members utilised NAIDOC week events in Ceduna and Port Lincoln to engage with community members about their election experiences. The information collected informed a written submission to the independent review capturing the key experiences of First Nations voters in the region.

In September, members held further community engagements in Ceduna to discuss local priorities, and visited the Stepping Stones Drug and Alcohol Day Centre to gain a first-hand understanding of its current priorities and challenges. Local members continue to lend their support to the centre to ensure it is meeting the needs of the community.

Region 5 covers the following local council areas:

- District Council of Tumby Bay
- District Council of Ceduna
- District Council of Streaky Bay
- Wudinna District Council
- District Council of Kimba
- District Council of Franklin Harbour
- District Council of Cleve
- District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula
- City of Port Lincoln
- District Council of Elliston
- Maralinga Tjarutja

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	**Membership from 30 March 2026[6]**
Mr Leeroy Bilney, Presiding Member	Mr Leeroy Bilney, Presiding Member*
Ms Lorraine Haseldine, Presiding Member	Ms Lorraine Haseldine, Presiding Member*
Ms Cecelia Cox	Mr Warren Clements
Mr Duane Edwards	Mr Barry Johncock *
Mr Barry Johncock	Ms Rebecca Miller *
Ms Rebecca Miller	Mr Patrick Sharpe
Mx Keenan Smith	Ms Evelyn Walker

**Re-elected Member*

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4: 12 December 2025, Ceduna Foreshore Hotel, Ceduna, SA

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1: 6 February 2026, Port Lincoln Aboriginal Community Council, Port Lincoln, SA

Meeting 2: 2 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA

Meeting 3: 20 July 2026, online

Meeting 4: 24 September 2026, Mint Bush Gallery, Ceduna SA

Meeting 5: 3 December 2026, Port Lincoln SA*

[6] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 5 were not declared until 30 March 2026.

Community engagements in 2026

Port Lincoln:	5 February 2026, Port Lincoln Aboriginal Community Council, Port Lincoln, SA
Port Lincoln:	6 February 2026, Wanilla Forrest, Port Lincoln, SA
Ceduna:	6 July 2026, Ceduna NAIDOC Family Day, Far West Aboriginal Sporting Complex, Ceduna SA
Port Lincoln:	8 July 2026, Port Lincoln NAIDOC Cookout and Family Fun Day, Mallee Park Football Club, Port Lincoln SA
Yalata:	21 September 2026, outside Yalata Admin Office, Yalata SA
Ceduna:	22 September 2026, Mint Bush Gallery, Ceduna SA
Ceduna:	24 September 2026, Mint Bush Gallery, Ceduna SA
Ceduna:	25 September 2026, Stepping Stones Drug and Alcohol Day Centre, Ceduna SA

* Scheduled dates

Region 6 – Yorke and Mid North

During 2026, the Yorke and Mid North region welcomed new and returning members following the election. Members continued to build on the work of the inaugural Local Voice, strengthening regional partnerships and working collaboratively with stakeholders to advocate for issues affecting communities across the region.

As part of the region's focus on improving health outcomes across the region, members visited the Gawler Health Service and met with staff to learn more about the health services available to Aboriginal people. The visit provided members with valuable insight into service delivery challenges, workforce pressures and opportunities to strengthen access to culturally appropriate healthcare across the region.

Presiding Member Billie-Jade Braund worked directly with representatives from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport around the issue of driving licences. Difficulties with driver training and getting licences is a recurring topic of community feedback as it greatly impacts access to education, work and healthcare.

In support of the review of the SA Voice Elections, members held a formal community engagement in Port Pirie and utilised their community networks for many informal conversations. Feedback gathered informed a written submission to the Independent Review, which drew attention to cultural safety and concerns of non-voters.

Community engagement undertaken during 2026 strengthened members' understanding of priorities across the region. Through engagement activities, particularly in Peterborough and surrounding communities, members identified key issues including access to health services, mental health supports, regional transport and access to essential services.

Engagements also provided opportunities to connect with local service providers, strengthen collaboration through information sharing, and opportunities to promote greater awareness of available services and support pathways. These discussions informed ongoing advocacy efforts and reinforced the importance of continued engagement across the region's large and diverse geographic area. Strengthening communication with communities, expanding engagement opportunities, and increasing awareness of SA Voice activities and outcomes remain key priorities for our region.

Region 6 covers the following local council areas:

- Yorke Peninsula Council
- Copper Coast Council
- Barunga West Council
- Port Pirie Regional Council
- Wakefield Regional Council
- Adelaide Plains Council
- Town of Gawler
- Light Regional Council
- The Barossa Council
- Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
- Regional Council of Goyder
- District Council of Peterborough
- District Council of Mount Remarkable
- Northern Areas Council
- District Council of Orroroo Carrieton (a portion).

Membership during 2026

Membership to 21 March 2026	**Membership from 30 March 2026[7]**
Ms Kaylene O'Loughlin, Presiding Member	Ms Billie-Jade Braund, Presiding Member
Mr Quentin Agius, Presiding Member	Mr Douglas Milera, Presiding Member*
Ms Joy Makepeace	Mr Quentin Agius *
Mr Douglas Milera	Ms Joy Makepeace *
Mr Edward Newchurch	Mr Edward Newchurch *
Ms Denise Wanganeen	Ms Kellie Sansbury
Mr Raymond Wanganeen	Mr Michael Wanganeen (resigned 13 July 2026)
	**Re-elected Member*

Meetings in 2025

Meeting 4: 20 November 2025, Port Pirie Regional Library, Port Pirie, SA

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1: 10 February 2026, Gawler Health Service, Gawler SA

Meeting 2: 2 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA

Meeting 3: 28 July 2026, GP Plus Health Care, Port Pirie SA

Meeting 4: 8 October 2026, Senior Citizens Hall, Peterborough SA

Meeting 5: 9 December 2026, Online *

[7] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, results for Region 6 were not declared until 30 March 2026.

Community engagements in 2025

Port Pirie: 20 November 2025, Port Pirie Regional Library, Port Pirie, SA

Community engagements in 2026

Gawler: 10 February 2026, Gawler Health Service, Gawler SA

Port Pirie: 28 July 2026, GP Plus Health Care, Port Pirie SA

Peterborough: 7 October 2026, Peterborough Football Club, Peterborough SA

* Scheduled dates

Annual meeting

Under the Act, the State Voice must convene an annual meeting of all Local First Nations Voices.

The Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for all members of the SA Voice to come together to discuss the priorities identified by the communities they represent and share key achievements, challenges and lessons to inform future work.

The meeting also provides an opportunity to set statewide priorities for the year ahead and strategically plan the cadence of community engagements and Local Voice and State Voice meetings. This creates a clear pathway for community perspectives and experiences to be raised through Local Voice discussions and brought together at the State level, strengthening the State Voice's capacity to provide timely, relevant and informed advice to government on the issues and priorities of First Nations communities across South Australia.

The 2026 meeting is scheduled for 12 November 2026 in Adelaide, coinciding with the date of the Annual Address to Parliament.

3. State Voice

The State Voice consists of the Presiding Members from each of the six (6) Local Voice regions. This structure ensures strong two-way communication so that local perspectives inform State-level advocacy and feedback from government is shared back to communities.

Following the 2026 SA Voice Elections, the State Voice was reappointed through meetings of each Local Voice. During its first post-election meeting, Danni Smith and Leeroy Bilney were returned as Joint Presiding Members of the State Voice.

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, the State Voice must meet at least four (4) times per calendar year. During 2026, these meetings were held in Port Augusta, Adelaide, online, or a hybrid of in-person and online.

The State Voice selected areas of focus for its activities during 2026 that were informed by the needs of their communities. These focus areas addressed housing, infrastructure, health, wellbeing, justice and policing, and racism, and were the theme for meetings between the State Voice and government across the year. The State Voice held its first meeting for the year in Port Augusta. Members visited and spoke with residents at Port Augusta Prison, including women on remand, and observed the working of the Spinifex Court. These activities continued to inform members and gather community feedback about the focus area of justice and policing, especially where it intersects with health and housing.

To enable matters to be progressed more easily between legislated meetings, the State Voice sought out additional meetings with Ministers and Chief Executives during the year. These meetings were further opportunities to discuss how the SA Voice and government can work together to improve the lives of First Nations people, and all South Australians.

Members attended several meetings during the year focussed on health service issues and initiatives, including Local Health Network strategic planning in Mount Gambier and discussions with government health service staff in Gawler. The State Voice met with the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist (OCP) regarding the Mental Health Bill 2025 and with the SA Law Reform Institute (SALRI) about an Indigenous Jury Participation review. Members were also involved in meetings with government about the algal bloom and bird flu, environmental issues of concern to First Nations communities.

During 2026 Danni Smith and Leeroy Bilney, in their capacities as State Voice Presiding Members, participated in more than 35 government meetings additional to those required by legislation. These meetings related to every area of SA Voice focus and included meetings with the Premier and Deputy Premier, Minister for Emergency and Correctional Services, the Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC), Department for Child Protection (DCP), Parliamentary leaders, and the SA Aboriginal Housing Peak Body.

The State Voice was invited to nominate two members to join the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (NASHH) Partnership Body, which they will now attend on an ongoing basis. Members also attended a meeting of the Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) Review Board.

During the year the State Voice continued working closely with DPC to develop the SA Government First Nations Evaluation and Accountability Guideline. This culminated in a workshop in October, after which the document was further refined and is due to be finalised around the end of 2026.

During 2026 the SA Voice continued conversations with the South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network (SAACCON), the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM), and regional ACCOs to form working relationships and help strengthen co-design and delivery in housing, justice, and wellbeing.

The State Voice continued work to establish the four Advisory Committees required under the Act to help support its work. Promotion of the committees and committee membership commenced mid-year and is scheduled to conclude late 2026. It is anticipated that committee members will be selected and appointed early in 2027.

While the Act outlines the formal meetings in which the State Voice must participate, this represents only a fraction of the total time commitment for each member. During the year, State Voice Members contributed countless hours travelling to Adelaide for their State Voice work, in online and face-to-face meetings preparing for government meetings, and continuing to guide the strategic direction for the Voice.

This is all in addition to their roles as Presiding Members of their Local Voices, for which they prepare for and convene a further four (4) meetings, and travel across their regions to engage with their communities.

Membership during 2026

The members of the State Voice were determined by a vote at the first meeting of each Local Voice following this year's elections.

Membership to 21 March 2026	Membership from 3 June 2026[8]
Mr Leeroy Bilney (Presiding Member)	Mr Leeroy Bilney (Presiding Member)
Ms Danielle Smith (Presiding Member)	Ms Danielle Smith (Presiding Member)
Mr Quentin Agius, Member	Ms Billie-Jade Braund, Member
Mr Mark Campbell, Member	Ms Lorraine Haseldine, Member
Ms Candace Champion, Member	Ms Charmaine Hull, Member
Mr Douglas Clinch, Member	Mr Matthew Karpany-Carter, Member
Ms Susan Dixon, Member	Mr Johnathon Lyons, Member
Ms Lorraine Haseldine, Member	Mr Douglas Milera, Member
Ms Kaylene O'Loughlin, Member	Ms Deb Moyle, Member
Mr Robert Singleton, Member	Mr Robert Singleton, Member
Ms Melissa Thompson, Member	Ms Melissa Thompson, Member
Mr Robin Wright, Member	Mr Robin Wright, Member

Meetings in 2026

Meeting 1: 15 January 2026, Port Augusta, SA

Meeting 2: 12 March 2026, The Terrace Hotel, Adelaide SA

Meeting 3: 3 June 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide SA

Meeting 4: 1 and 2 July 2026, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide, SA

Meeting 5: (Part 1) 7 September 2026, Holiday Inn Express, Adelaide SA

Meeting 5: (Part 2) 2 October 2026, GPO Exchange Building, Adelaide SA

Meeting 6: 10 December 2026, Adelaide SA *

* Scheduled dates

[8] While elections were held on 21 March 2026, the State Voice was not appointed until the first meetings of each Local Voice, held during the member induction on 2 and 3 June 2026.

Focus Areas in 2026

Following the SA Voice elections in March 2026, the State Voice reviewed the Focus Areas it had set for the previous year. These Focus Areas remain among the greatest priorities for each region of the SA Voice and have resulted in many policy and program initiatives currently underway. Collectively, the members agreed to continue work on these Focus Areas during 2026 to provide ongoing feedback to government and monitor progress is those initiatives.

The three primary areas of focus to guide the work of the Voice throughout 2026 were:

1. **Housing and Infrastructure**: Addressing the urgent need for safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing and infrastructure that meets the diverse needs of First Nations communities.

2. **Health and Wellbeing**: Promoting equitable access to healthcare through culturally safe services and resources, including attention to child protection and family wellbeing matters and within the justice system

3. **Justice and Policing:** Reforming policing and justice systems to address overrepresentation of First Nations peoples and ensuring their human rights are respected within the legal system. Appropriate support throughout the criminal justice process, including post-release, with more rehabilitation facilities and opportunities for healing on country. The issues of drug and alcohol harm and the need for more rehabilitation facilities and reducing domestic and family violence and its intersection with the justice system.

   In 2026 a particular focus was on reforms of bail and remand for First Nations people.

These Focus Areas are designed to strengthen collaboration between First Nations communities and government, ensuring that policies and actions are informed by grassroots perspectives and directed towards achieving lasting, holistic improvements in the lives of First Nations peoples.

The Focus Areas are also interconnected and never considered in isolation. Members recognised that justice outcomes are closely linked to housing, health, education and employment. Progress in one area can support improvement across others, reinforcing the need for a coordinated and holistic approach.

Advisory Committees

In its 2025 annual report, the SA Voice reported significant progress towards establishing the four Advisory Committees provided for under the Act, including the development of governance frameworks, Terms of Reference, and eligibility criteria.

The four Advisory Committees are:

- Elders Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Stolen Generations Advisory Committee
- Native Title Advisory Committee

As the Electoral Commission of SA was seeking nominations for candidates in the SA Voice elections from late 2025 through to February 2026, the SA Voice decided to defer its call for Advisory Committee nominations until the elections had concluded. This was intended to avoid any confusion about the different nomination processes occurring.

Promotion of the Advisory Committees and calls for nominations commenced in mid-2026, following the re-establishment of the State Voice, with nominations remaining open. The extended nomination period allows time to reach communities and organisations across the state, and for Native Title Bodies to appoint their representatives through their Annual General Meetings, usually held in November and December each year.

Once established, the committees will provide specialised advice to the State Voice, supporting the perspectives and experiences of Elders, young people, members of the Stolen Generations, and Native Title holders to inform its advice to the South Australian Government.

4. Addresses to Parliament

Notification of Bills introduced

The Act requires the Clerks of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly to notify the State First Nations Voice of the introduction of Bills.

Throughout 2026, around 70 Bills were introduced to the Legislative Council and House of Assembly.

Addresses in relation to Bills

Under the Act, the State Voice is entitled to address either House of Parliament in relation to any Bill that has been introduced. Such an address is made through one (1) of the joint Presiding Members of the State First Nations Voice.

During 2026, the State Voice chose not to exercise the entitlement to address a Bill in the Parliament. Instead it continued to work proactively and collaboratively with the South Australian Government throughout the year, making use of the legislated and many additional government meetings to influence government policy direction and Bill preparation.

The SA Voice also consulted formally or provided submissions relating to the following Bills during the year.

- Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Bill 2025
- Energy Resources (Regulated Activities) Amendment Bill 2026
- First Nations Voice Repeal Bill 2026
- Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) (Amendment of Indenture) Amendment Bill 2026

Members were formally consulted regarding the Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Bill 2025. The State Voice provided feedback regarding in-prison mental health assessments, community support systems, improved mental health triaging, suicide prevention and support for families following suicide.

Members of the Flinders and Upper North Local Voice made a submission to the Select Committee opposing the Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) (Amendment of Indenture) Amendment Bill 2026. This Bill related to the expansion of mining operations and processing capacity, and the submission called for comprehensive, genuine consultation with traditional owners before decisions were made.

Members opposed the Energy Resources (Regulated Activities) Amendment Bill 2026, which proposed to lift a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in the south-east of the state. Members of the Murraylands, Riverland and South-East Local Voice worked with local governments, state government MPs, local advocacy groups and

traditional owners to advocate against the Bill. Member Lisa Rigney, a traditional owner of the lands that would be directly impacted by the lifting of the moratorium, spoke on the steps of Parliament about the environmental, cultural and spiritual impacts of fracking and called for a permanent ban.

Members were twice consulted by the Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) Review Board the legislation it administers and how best to engage with First Nations people, noting the distinct regional and cultural differences that would need to be considered.

During the year, members also faced the First Nations Voice Repeal Bill 2026, introduced to Parliament soon after the March state election. To protest this Bill, SA Voice members from across the regions prepared a joint public statement affirming the purpose and value of the SA Voice for First Nations people and all South Australians.

Reports presented to the Parliament

The Act enables the State First Nations Voice to provide a report to the Parliament on any matter that is, in its opinion, of interest to First Nations people.

During 2026, the State Voice did not provide a report to the Parliament in this manner as it did not need to do so. State Voice Members were able to engage directly with Members of Parliament through Engagement Hearings, Meetings with Cabinet, as well as face-to-face and online meetings. These interactions enabled members to advocate for their communities about the matters important to them directly with the responsible Ministers.

While it did not provide a report to the Parliament, the Flinders and Upper North Local Voice provided a written submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) (Amendment of Indenture) Amendment Bill 2026.

Requests for reports to the Parliament

Under the Act, the President of the Legislative Council or the Speaker of the House of Assembly may also request the State Voice to provide them with a report in relation to Bills.

In 2026, no requests were received from the President or the Speaker.

5. Interaction with South Australian Government

The Act provides the State Voice and its Presiding Members with formal opportunities to meet with the Premier, Ministers and Chief Executives each year. The meetings in 2026 included:

- One (1) Engagement Hearing
- One (1) Cabinet Meeting[9]
- Two (2) Chief Executive Briefings

The topics discussed during each of these meetings aligned with the State Voice Focus Areas and other priorities, and allowed for continued dialogue across the year that led to the SA Voice providing specific recommendations to government and it committing to action.

Importantly, the relationships formed between SA Voice Members, Ministers and Chief Executives during the year provided further opportunities to meet, undertake site visits and tours to key government services and facilities, and joint activities in regional locations.

The State Voice thanks the Premier, the Hon. Peter Malinauskas, his Ministers, and Departmental Chief Executives for once again working collaboratively with its members this year.

Meetings with Cabinet

Meetings between the members of the State Voice and Cabinet are normally held twice yearly and provide the SA Voice an opportunity to share the views of their communities and hear from Ministers about their priorities. Being an election year, in 2026 the SA Voice and Government decided to hold one State Voice and Cabinet Meeting.

Agendas are set in consultation with the State Voice Presiding Members and meetings centre on the State Voice Focus Areas. This year's meeting was held at the Adelaide Convention Centre, with Chief Executives also in attendance.

8 September 2026: Justice and Policing

On 8 September 2026, the State Voice met with the Premier and Cabinet to discuss justice and policing, with the strategic discussion structured around the three priority areas identified by the State Voice:

- Aboriginal health and wellbeing (before, during and following custody)
- Housing as a justice intervention (including region-specific barriers, examples and community-led solutions)

[9] The Presiding Members of the State Voice determined it was not reasonably practicable for a second meeting to take place in 2026.

- Reducing the number of Aboriginal adults and young people being held on remand.

The SA Government and State Voice agreed actions that include increased consultation with the State Voice regarding unmet psychosocial needs and health and wellbeing in custody settings, investigation of legislative issues and opportunities around social housing and homelessness. Government also committed to cross-agency policy work on remand and bail issues, which were later discussed through a workshop with key government leaders and the State Voice. (see *Chief Executive Briefing, 1 October 2026: Bail and Remand*).

Chief Executive Briefings

A Chief Executive Briefing provides the State Voice the opportunity to hear from, and ask questions of, the Chief Executives of administrative units of the Public Service in relation to matters of interest identified by the State Voice.

During 2026 there were two briefings with Chief Executives, held in workshop formats. The meetings were held at the offices of the Attorney-General's Department, Adelaide.

2 July 2026: Building on Progress and Working Together in Practice

The focus of this briefing was expanding discussions from 2025, building on the skills and experiences of new State Voice members, and establishing relationships with government representatives. Participants discussed four topic areas: justice and policing; health and wellbeing; housing and infrastructure; and economic participation.

Discussions about the topic areas centred on prevention, early interventions and place-based responses, and pathways through education, training, employment and community-led economic development. The briefing identified bail and remand as key priority areas for further government meetings during the second half of the year.

The briefing also focussed on maturing the engagement model between the SA Voice and government, with the aim of strengthening collaboration, accountability and decision-making. This included exploring how successful government initiatives can be better communicated, recognised and built upon to support ongoing improvements.

1 October 2026: Bail and Remand

The purpose of this briefing was to progress a key action arising from the Strategic Cabinet meeting held on 8 September, relating to cross-agency policy work on remand and bail issues affecting Aboriginal people.

The briefing included the sharing of data on remand rates and the number of First Nations people held on remand, alongside discussion about how bail operates in practice and the impacts of recent changes to the *Bail Act*. Discussions focussed on

opportunities to reduce remand rates and improve access to suitable bail options. This included ensuring that people being held on remand are notified when charges are downgraded, a circumstance which may make them eligible for bail, and improving the availability and accessibility of bail accommodation. A key recommendation of the State Voice was to increase the number of Aboriginal staff working with those in custody to help them navigate the system and reintegrate into their community.

Engagement Hearings

Engagement Hearings are an opportunity for the Presiding Members of the State Voice to ask questions of Ministers and South Australian Government Chief Executives about the operations, expenditure, budget and priorities of administrative units they are responsible for.

Engagement Hearings are co-chaired by the Premier of South Australia, and Joint Presiding Members of the State First Nations Voice Ms Danni Smith and Mr Leeroy Bilney.

4 November 2026: Government's approach to addressing racism and its impacts on First Nations people.

The 2026 Engagement Hearing focussed on the government's approach to addressing racism and its impacts on First Nations people, particularly institutional and structural racism, accountability for racist conduct and public statements, and online and social media racism and its impacts on safety, wellbeing and participation.

Among the topics discussed, the Presiding Members raised the need for stronger anti-racism and anti-vilification laws, the need for better measurement of First Nations people's experiences of racism, and concerns about service experiences in regional SA Housing Trust offices. The Presiding Members also sought clarity on how government defines 'cultural safety' for First Nations people who access government services and those employed by the government.

Transcripts of Engagement Hearings are published on the SA Voice website (www.firstnationsvoice.sa.gov.au).

6. Administration and resourcing

Secretariat

In accordance with section 47 of the Act, a dedicated Secretariat comprising public sector employees supports the work of the State Voice and the six Local Voices.

The Secretariat provides a broad range of operational, administrative and strategic support, including coordinating meetings, undertaking research, supporting policy development, preparing reports and other documentation, and facilitating communication between SA Voice members, government agencies and communities.

This work enables members to focus on representing their communities, identifying key priorities and developing informed, independent advice to government, while supporting the SA Voice to meet its statutory obligations.

In 2026, the Secretariat also took on the task of coordinating and running local and regional inductions for new Voice members and a two-day induction event for all members in Adelaide. It also provided critical support towards key projects undertaken by the SA Voice, including its role in consultation with First Nations voters about the review of the elections, and its submissions to the Remuneration Tribunal regarding its review of member pay and entitlements.

The Secretariat's ongoing support remains central to the SA Voice's effectiveness equipping members to perform their functions to represent their communities and provide informed, independent advice to government.

Resources

The SA Voice has continued to build on the foundations established during its inaugural term, while navigating a year of transition and change. The election of new members in 2026, and changes to the State Voice membership, brought fresh perspectives and experiences to the model, alongside the important work of continuing to develop an understanding of member's statutory responsibilities, building relationships, and new ways of working together. This transition has required time and support, as members continue to find ways to balance their responsibilities to their communities, families, and employment.

Progress across some areas of work has also been influenced by the timing of the 2026 election period, which created a natural pause in some activities and opportunities to advance existing priorities. Establishing relationships, developing shared priorities and progressing complex matters requires sustained engagement, particularly within a model that seeks to reflect the diverse views and experiences of First Nations people across South Australia.

Resourcing continues to be an important consideration. The demands placed on members remain significant, with responsibilities extending beyond formal meetings to community engagement, preparation, correspondence, travel and consideration of matters requiring advice to government. The review of member pay and entitlements underway by the Remuneration Tribunal provides an opportunity to consider the responsibilities and workload associated with membership of the SA Voice and the support required to sustain meaningful participation. Appropriate remuneration and resourcing are important considerations in supporting members to undertake their roles alongside their existing professional, family, cultural and community commitments.

The Secretariat also continues to support the work of the State Voice and Local Voices within existing resource constraints. As the SA Voice matures, its workload increases, and there is an ongoing need to consider how its operational support, regional reach and capacity to respond to community priorities can be strengthened.

The anticipated review of the *First Nations Voice Act 2023* remains an important opportunity to reflect on the operation of the model and identify areas for improvement. While the commencement of the review has been delayed, it is important that the experiences of members, particularly those who have served during the inaugural and subsequent terms, are considered. Their insights, alongside the views of First Nations communities, will be valuable in identifying practical changes that support the SA Voice to fulfil its intended purpose.

The experiences of 2026 reinforce that establishing a representative body is only the beginning. Sustaining its effectiveness requires time, appropriate support and a shared commitment to continuous improvement. As the SA Voice looks ahead, the focus remains on strengthening its foundations, improving the way it works and supporting members to provide informed, independent advice that reflects the priorities and aspirations of First Nations people across South Australia.

Audited Financial Statements 2025-26

The 2025-26 financial statements for the State and each Local Voice are currently being audited by the Audit Office of SA.

Once the audit is complete, and the financial statements have been signed, the Auditor-General will publish them on the Audit Office of SA website.