



REFLECT. RESPECT. CELEBRATE.  
**AUSTRALIA DAY**  
**2025 REPORT**

**NADC**

National  
Australia Day  
Council



**Australia Day**

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.





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#### Australian Government

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Cover image: Food vendor at Great Australian Bites, Brisbane  
Supplied by State of Queensland

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Welcome to the Australia Day 2025 Report. It captures activity from around the country and reflects the values that bind us as a nation.

Across Australia, from capital cities to remote communities, people participated in the day, their way, attending gatherings that reflected our unique, rich cultural tapestry.

Traditional ceremonies paying respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' survival, resilience and enduring culture were interspersed with multicultural events that reflected the stories, histories and people whose families travelled here centuries ago, and those more recently arrived.

Remembering also those who lived, worked and fought for the values and freedoms we sometimes take for granted, Australia Day has become a day that encapsulates everything we are today as a nation and what we aspire to be.

Our Australia Day Community Events Grant Program delivered around \$4.85 million in federal government funding across all regions, from major cities to remote areas.

Over 700 federally supported events were hosted by councils and local community groups around the country to reflect, respect and celebrate with their communities – an increase of 15 per cent on last year.

Grant applications that included significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander elements were eligible to apply for additional funding, acknowledging the deep connection to Country that First Nations people have.

Over \$4.3 million was also provided for major events in cities around the country, organised by our Australia Day National Network.

Our shared aim is to increase participation and engagement across all sectors of the community. And while most people are looking for a positive celebration, it is important the day remain inclusive of all perspectives.

On the eve of Australia Day, the 2025 Australians of the Year were announced: Neale Daniher AO; Brother Thomas Oliver Pickett AM; Dr Katrina Wruck; and Vanessa Brettell and Hannah Costello. 2025 is also the 65th anniversary of these Awards that celebrate the achievements and contributions of those making a positive difference to the lives of others.

As Australians there is much of which we can be proud – our democracy, our shared values, the strength, diversity and generosity of our people and our beautiful natural environment. However you spent the day, I hope you were reminded that we are all shaped by our own experiences, and we celebrate living in a nation where everyone's views, beliefs and contributions are valued.



**Mark Fraser AO CVO**  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Australia Day Council



FLIGHT show, Canberra





# ABOUT THE NADC



ABOUT THE NADC

The National Australia Day Council (NADC) works to ensure that celebrations of Australia Day encourage:

- **Participation:** To unite all Australians through celebration and reflection
- **Meaning:** To promote the meaning of Australia Day and being Australian
- **Recognition:** To acknowledge active citizenship and achievement

The NADC promotes our national day to inspire national pride and unity through these core programs:

- The celebration of Australia Day, which encourages all Australians to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate
- The Australian of the Year Awards
- Australian citizenship and civic values programs
- The Australia Day Ambassador program

The NADC Corporate Plan outlines its priorities with the purpose of inspiring ‘national pride and unity through participation and engagement in its central message: Reflect, Respect, Celebrate’.

Priorities include:

- Telling the stories of inspiring Australians
- Empowering Australians to Reflect, Respect and Celebrate

The Australia Day National Network

The Australia Day National Network is an affiliate group of state and territory organisations that helps facilitate the celebration of Australia Day and being Australian, and recognises inspirational Australians through the Australian of the Year Awards.

Through the Network, the NADC helps Australia’s local government authorities, not-for-profits and community organisations deliver Australia Day events that encourage participation, promote meaning and celebrate citizenship.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2025 OVERVIEW

The NADC’s focus for Australia Day 2025 was to encourage Australians to participate in the day, their way.

To support this, the NADC delivered:

- A \$4,855,000 Australia Day Community Events Grant Program supporting 736 community and council events around the nation, including those with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elements
- A \$4,373,000 Capital City Event Funding Program, including the Australia Day Live event in Sydney, broadcast on ABC TV and ABC iview
- The National Citizenship and Flag Raising Ceremony from Canberra, broadcast on ABC TV and ABC iview
- The Australia Day Ambassador program
- The Australian of the Year Awards program
- A national Acknowledgement of Country video package, featuring Australian of the Year alumni, used during the ABC TV Awards broadcast and available publicly thereafter
- Australia to Me Is... social media campaign







**AUSTRALIA  
DAY 2025**



# PRIVATE WELCOME CEREMONY

Australia Day 2025 in Canberra began with a Private Welcome Ceremony on the parklands of Lake Burley Griffin, where our nation's leaders gathered with the Traditional Custodians of the land to share a moment of reflection and respect.

Supported by the NADC and hosted by the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the Ceremony was attended by Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Honourable Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia.

Ngunnawal elders and knowledge holders have hosted this event for several years, symbolically welcoming the nation as a whole.



Ngunnawal Elder Dr Aunty Caroline Hughes AM delivering Welcome



Prime Minister the Honourable Anthony Albanese MP arriving at the Private Welcome Ceremony



## NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP AND FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

Under a cloudy sky on the shore of Lake Burley Griffin, the National Citizenship and Flag Raising Ceremony in Canberra brought together Australians new and old.

Each year, the Governor-General, Prime Minister, diplomatic corps and Australian of the Year Awards recipients and alumni attend the official morning event. It welcomes some of our newest citizens, shares their stories and reminds us of the importance of unity and the stories that shape our collective identity. It also reflects on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continuous connection to country.

The ceremony, which included a bomber fly over, the Band of the Royal Military College and a 21-gun salute, is delivered in collaboration with the Department of Home Affairs, the National Australia Day Council, Australian Defence Force and the ABC.

**Total viewers on ABC TV and ABC iView: 185,000**

[Watch here](#)



Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Prime Minister the Honourable Anthony Albanese MP with new Australian citizens





National Citizenship and Flag Raising Ceremony





**BRINGING  
COMMUNITIES  
TOGETHER**



## COMMUNITY EVENTS

From Tasmania's Bruny Island to Bunbury's Koombana Bay in Western Australia, cities, suburbs and towns came together to honour the ever-evolving story of our nation and celebrate the strength and spirit of their communities.

In 2025, the NADC helped councils, not-for profit community organisations and government entities deliver 736 local community events and activities on and around Australia Day through \$4.855 million in grants funding provided by the Federal Government.

### Australia Day Community Events Grant Program

2025 Australia Day Community Event Grant Program recipients received \$10,000 to organise, promote and host inclusive Australia Day events that encouraged their communities to reflect, respect and celebrate.

An additional \$5,000 was available to grant recipients for events with significant Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander elements, providing opportunities for communities and councils to collaborate with local Indigenous groups. Just over 56 per cent of overall approved 2025 grant applicants had an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander component to their Australia Day event.

Local councils play an important role in bringing communities together and comprised most of the successful applications. Almost 22 per cent of government entities who applied for the 2025 grant were either applying for the first time or returning after a break from the program.

A sample of events is showcased on the following pages.



Migrant Information Centre's event in Box Hill, Victoria



# NEW SOUTH WALES

## Sutherland Shire Council

An amazing line-up of entertainment was on offer at the ever-popular Australia Day Cronulla Vibes concert, with crowd-goers enjoying a performance from headliners Furnace and the Fundamentals along with other local musical talent. Locals also engaged with the culture and customs of the region's traditional custodians at a Sunset Cultural Ceremony in Woronora.

Other family-friendly long weekend events throughout the Sutherland Shire drew crowds: an estimated 13,000 attended free pool parties in Sutherland, Engadine and Caringbah – almost triple the number of attendees recorded at last year's events – and almost 5,000 attended the Cinema Under the Stars outdoor movie screenings at Cronulla and Engadine.



Sunset Cultural Ceremony at Woronora



Australia Day Cronulla Vibes concert

## Australian South Sea Islanders

The Different Colours One People event saw 300 participants promoting understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through music, food, cultural performances and yarning circles. A symposium hosted by Wiradjuri youth, streamed live on social media, encouraged dialogue around multiculturalism and First Nations experiences. Many attendees had never previously engaged with First Nations community members.

They also explored the history of Pirrama Park as a former Sugar Wharf. The event fostered community engagement and appreciation for diverse cultures, leaving attendees with a renewed awareness of the ongoing journey towards social justice for all Australians.



Different Colours One People facilitated meaningful interactions between attendees



Wollondilly Shire Council's veterans flag parade



Volunteers sing the National Anthem

## Wollondilly Shire Council

Attracting 7000 people over the day, new citizens were welcomed and community volunteers recognised in Picton Botanic Garden and Hume Oval precincts. Following a veterans flag parade, citizenship ceremony and Australia Day Awards, the mayor's fishing competition saw youngsters up to 12-years-old vying for prizes.

The day's free program also included a giant waterslide, obstacle course, rock climbing wall, reptile display and vintage cars. A two-hour Aboriginal cultural walk with a traditional Dharawal knowledge holder around the Bargo River Gorge Potholes Reserve identified endemic plant species, bush tucker and medical plants, also gifted to participants.



# NORTHERN TERRITORY

## Litchfield City Council

The celebration at the Freds Pass Market Shed brought together an estimated 400 attendees, opening with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony from both the Larrakia and Limilngan-Wulna peoples. This reflected Litchfield's unique position between these two nations.

The Rotary Club of Litchfield/ Palmerston hosted a community breakfast and the Litchfield Lions Club a delicious morning tea to keep the community fuelled for the day's festivities.

The Fun Run organised by Darwin Rural Hash House Harriers supported sepsis awareness, reinforcing the community spirit of giving back. The festivities continued with live music, family entertainment and Aboriginal craft activities.



Fun Run winner



Fun Run participants

## Department of Corrections

A consultation with the youth in Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and Alice Springs Correctional Centre invited them to provide input on their Australia Day. The result was activities that facilitated connection to communities, culture and history.

The youth, predominantly Aboriginal, cooked wattle seed damper, fish and kangaroo stew with vegetables and rice. They also enjoyed a didgeridoo performance and yarning circle, encouraging conversation about cultural connections, Aboriginal language and tribal groups.



Traditional cooking session



Nhulunbuy Corporation CEO Shane Whitten at the citizenship ceremony

## Nhulunbuy Corporation

Yolgnu and napaki (black and white) together as one: a reference to how Australia Day is done in East Arnhem Land. Nhulunbuy Corporation incorporated the world's oldest living culture with the multiculturalism of the community. They celebrated with a bungul – a meeting place of dance, song and ritual, highlighting two worlds that exist but complement each other.

The event at the Nhulunbuy Town Hall included a citizenship ceremony and awards to recognise the hard work done by many in the community.



Traditional dancers entertained guests



# VICTORIA

## Mansfield Shire Council

Delivered with Delatite Drivers Car Club, Horsepower In The High Country at Mansfield Botanic Park brought car enthusiasts and community together over two days. Saturday offered food, live music, face painting and Australian-themed craft activities, while Sunday welcomed new citizens and recognised Citizens of the Year.

A morning tea at the Ngobi Gardens Club, Horsepower In The High Country was an opportunity to exchange poetry, passages and stories with local Aboriginal elders. Clap stick and emu skirt workshops with the Gadhaba Local Aboriginal Network followed, celebrating Taungurung and Indigenous culture. Gold coin donations from the 600 attendees raised over \$20,000 towards Mansfield Autism Statewide Services.



Horsepower In The High Country at Mansfield Botanic Park



Hobsons Bay schools provided over 12,000 messages in mini-capsules

## Rotary Club of Altona City

Australia Day in Hobsons Bay marked the 25th anniversary of the Millennium Time Capsule. On 26 January 2000, thousands of messages from local students, residents and organisations were placed in plastic capsules and lowered into a 12-tonne concrete vault. In 2025, the vault was opened and messages started their return home to their original authors.

Over at Altona Meadows Central Square Shopping Centre, shoppers enjoyed a showcase of didgeridoo performances by Indigenous artist Paul Kelly, a bush band, an all-women's ukelele group and African drumming.



Capsules descending into the concrete vault on Australia Day 2000

## Filipino Community Council of Victoria Incorporated

Filipino-Australian communities came together for a vibrant showcase of the rich Filipino heritage. The event fostered cultural appreciation and pride through traditional and modern performances, while speeches by local MPs emphasised the importance of multiculturalism and community engagement.

More than just a celebration, the event strengthened community bonds and supported small businesses through local markets. The gathering also served as a platform for various Filipino-Australian organisations to network and connect.



Traditional cultural dancers



# QUEENSLAND

## Mackay Triathlon Club

The Australia Day Aquathlon offered Mackay residents a fun challenge for all ages and abilities. Spanning three weeks, including Australia Day, the series of runs, pool swims and sprints was designed to promote health, fitness and social engagement. It offered a welcoming introduction to multisport racing, particularly for beginners and younger athletes, and strengthened community connections by bringing together families, local clubs and volunteers.

Aquathlon prioritised inclusivity, ensuring the event was accessible to all members of the community. The challenge highlighted Mackay's outdoor lifestyle, reinforcing pride in the region's natural environment and promoting belonging through sport and celebration.



## Lockyer Valley Regional Council

Lockyer Valley Regional Council paid tribute to those who are improving the social fabric of the Valley and welcomed new Australian citizens. There were cultural displays, bush tucker walks, Indigenous art workshops and a performance by the local scout group.

Collaborations between Council and some of the region's small businesses included morning tea sourced from Indigenous business Native Oz Bushfoods, and a unique gift for award winners – a handcrafted pen made from wood sourced locally – made and donated by Lockyer Woodcrafters. The group's focus is woodwork, building friendships and providing retired men with social opportunities to check in with each other.



Presentation of community awards



Aquathlon promoted health, fitness and social engagement



Children participating in a drawing competition

## Tamil Association of Queensland

Fostering a strong sense of belonging and unity, the Tamil Association of Queensland united diverse communities to celebrate shared Australian values. The event showcased Tamil culture while honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Activities such as cricket, badminton, volleyball, traditional music, games, award presentations and shared meals encouraged intercultural understanding and appreciation. The event also engaged younger generations, helping them embrace Australia's multicultural identity and the importance of respecting all cultures.



# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## Chinese Dance Australia Incorporated

Close to 4000 of Perth's Chinese community come together each year on Australia Day to celebrate the contributions of Chinese migrants to Australian society, strengthening their sense of belonging.

At Scarborough Community Centre, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers, musicians and artists enriched the celebration through language, music, storytelling and dance performances. Craft workshops and shared traditions highlighted the Chinese community's rich cultural heritage and offered attendees opportunities for cultural exchange.



Aboriginal and Chinese performers

## Shire of Waroona

It was a showcase of the local culture, creativity and community spirit that makes Waroona so special. Kicking off with a delicious Aussie breakfast by the Waroona Lions, the day included meaningful activities such as cultural craft activities from the Waroona Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

An art display by local artists captured the beauty of Waroona's landscapes, from sea to scarp, through vibrant paintings, photography and other creative works. The celebration also included a parade full of energy and pride with the Shire's Fire and Emergency Services, St John Ambulance Waroona and the Waroona Police. But it was a foam party that stole the show for the kids!



Foam party



St John Ambulance Waroona

## Walpole Community Resource Centre

Ave a G'day in Walpole has become one of the most attended Australia Day events. Live music, Australian food such as the Billy Tea and Damper stall, dress up and thong throwing competitions along with a jumping castle entertained almost 1000 attendees over the day.

Children were actively involved in hands-on experiences including the Yowie Wilderness Walk, sheep dog demonstrations and sheep shearing under expert guidance. These activities introduced young attendees to traditional farming skills and increased their environmental awareness.



Mucky Duck Bush Band's rousing tunes set the tone for the day



A lively bush dance had the crowd on their feet



Families enjoyed sheep dogs and sheep shearing



# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Waikerie Australia Day Incorporated**

Over 2000 people travelled to attend the annual Waikerie Australia Day Extravaganza at Waikerie Football Oval. Uniting family, friends and the wider community with food, drinks, rides, a live band and fireworks, the carnival-style event attracts new people to the rural town in the Riverland region and benefits both tourism and the local economy.

Rides brought joy to kids of all ages, while food stalls offered a variety of options to cater to different tastes. A smoking ceremony offered a moment for attendees to acknowledge the rich cultural heritage of Australia.



Carnival games at Waikerie Australia Day Extravaganza



Jack's Delights selling dried and chocolate covered fruits

**Lutheran Disability Services**

Australia Day provided an opportunity to bring the community together and promote Aboriginal businesses, businesses run by people living with a disability and small family businesses.

Attendees enjoyed a cultural culinary experience, sampling native foods like crocodile sausage and kumquat jam with lemon myrtle scones for the first time. They were invited to write a description on cards of what being Australian meant to them, displayed with their photos taken in a photobooth. Entertainment was also provided by people living with a disability.

**City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters**

More than 200 attendees gathered against the picturesque backdrop of St Peters Hall to welcome 41 new Australian citizens from 13 countries and recognise deserving members of the community.

Kurna elder Uncle Karl Tamaru commenced the formalities, welcoming the crowd and sharing his culture, history and belief that two cultures can walk side by side.

The new citizens and community award recipients shared their own experiences, celebrating alongside friends and family over a BBQ lunch and enjoying iconic ballads by the Australian Girls Choir.



City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters event



# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

## Celebration of African Australians Incorporated

It was a spectacular testament to the beauty of cultural diversity in Australia. The Afro-Aboriginal Cultural Fusion Event brought together community elders, cultural leaders, musicians, dancers, volunteers and local families for a truly intergenerational and inclusive gathering.

Elders from both Aboriginal and African backgrounds led powerful storytelling sessions, encouraging dialogue and giving many a renewed sense of belonging and pride in their heritage. Audience members participated in the dynamic and rhythmic movements of African tribal dance, along with the graceful storytelling of Aboriginal dance.

The spectacular celebration has set the foundation for more collaborative community initiatives that bridge cultures.



Afro-Aboriginal Cultural Fusion Event



African dance performance

## Canberra Seniors Centre Incorporated

The Canberra Seniors Centre has long been reducing social isolation in the ACT community. The Australia Day event brought people across all ages and backgrounds together for an evening of cultural recognition, music and dancing.

A Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, led by respected Ngunnawal Elder Bradley Bell, helped deepen understanding of First Nations culture, before a buffet lunch encouraged conversation and connection over a shared meal.

A line-dancing group took the floor, teaching attendees simple but energetic dances, but it was a group singalong of *We Are Australian* that left a memorable mark.



Canberra Seniors Centre lunch

## Nepalese Association of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment in Australia Incorporated

It was a unique Australia Day blending education, community engagement and environmental stewardship. Environmental experts shared knowledge around Tidbinbilla's conservation, biodiversity and sustainability, while Indigenous community leaders shared the area's deep connection to culture and history.

A guided walk highlighted the issue of cultural burning in Australia. The ancient practice of controlled, low-intensity fires reduces the risk of catastrophic fires and helps to maintain ecological balance.



Guided walk sharing the importance of cultural burning



# TASMANIA

## Meander Valley Council

The Meander Valley Community Celebration showcased the strength, kindness and generosity that make the Valley so vibrant. The lively event on the Westbury Village Green honoured the dedication of the Valley's local community members through their annual Volunteer Awards.

Aboriginal elder Uncle Hank Horton's smoking ceremony used local tree species to acknowledge diversity within communities. Westbury RSL volunteers ensured everyone was well-fed with catering showcasing local produce. Music performed by local artists had people moving to the sounds of jazz, while the Deloraine Dramatic Society brought some theatre to the day.



Wizard of Oz performance

## Derwent Valley Council

On the banks of the beautiful Derwent River, Derwent Valley Council hosted its annual Community Citizen of the Year Awards ceremony at The Esplanade. The mayor and 2023 TAS Senior Australian of the Year Dr Frances Donaldson (an Australia Day Ambassador) were there to recognise outstanding contributions to the local community.

Following the ceremony, free entry into the New Norfolk Swimming Pool for the community added to the day's celebrations. The festivities continued with a free family fun day organised by the Lions Club of New Norfolk, offering a BBQ, ice cream, youth activities and live entertainment.



Lions Club of New Norfolk manning the BBQ

## Northern Midlands Council

The themes of unity, reflection and recognition brought families together through food, music and fun in the Northern Midlands. A special address from Australia Day Ambassador and 2023 TAS Australian of the Year John Kamara highlighted the strength of the Midlands' diversity.

Following a citizenship ceremony, several volunteer recognition awards were presented to honour those giving their time to improve the community. The day encouraged civic pride and reinforced the importance of 'giving back' to inspire others to participate in more fully in their local communities at a grassroots level.



2023 TAS Australian of the Year John Kamara



## CELEBRATING COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

On Australia Day, award ceremonies across the country shine a light on people whose generosity, tenacity and leadership make a real difference.

From local individual efforts to group achievements, these accolades recognise everyday Australians whose actions strengthen the social and cultural fabric of our communities.





## AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Every year, over 300 proud Australia Day Ambassadors visit towns and cities to inspire and unite communities.

The opportunity to connect with inspiring individuals from all walks of life, while celebrating the diversity and achievements of communities, has been well received by both ambassadors and councils.

Ambassadors were provided with key communication materials, empowering them in their roles. Assets for local councils also helped to promote and welcome Ambassadors.

*"The experience was incredible, being able to share my journey and inspire people was such a blessing and I'll never forget it!"*

**Jordy Humphrey**

Litchfield Council Australia Day Ambassador  
Northern Territory

*"Being part of the Australia Day Ambassador Program has been an enriching and humbling experience for our council... The program not only fosters a deep sense of national pride, but it also encourages a spirit of unity and collaboration, allowing our community to come together in meaningful ways. We are grateful for the chance to be part of such an impactful initiative that continues to shape and inspire future generations of Australians."*

**Charters Towers Regional Council**  
Queensland



Litchfield Council Australia Day Ambassador Jordy Humphrey



A photograph of three people from behind, standing on a wooden balcony or deck. They are looking out at a night scene filled with out-of-focus, glowing bokeh lights. The person on the left wears a light-colored shirt with a dark grid pattern. The person in the middle wears a dark shirt with a light-colored duck pattern. The person on the right wears a dark shirt with a light-colored duck pattern. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple and pink gradient. A dark purple rectangular box is positioned on the right side, containing the text 'AROUND THE COUNTRY' in white.

# AROUND THE COUNTRY



## CAPITAL CITY EVENTS

Australia Day gives us time to connect with family, friends and community.

Around the country, Australia's capital cities hold spectacular large-scale, free events that collectively draw thousands of attendees – with many also travelling from interstate to participate and enjoy.

Organisers of these major landmark events in the state and territory capitals receive annual federal funding through the NADC's Capital City Event Funding Program.

Overall, \$4,373,000 was provided for capital cities to hold their flagship Australia Day events that celebrate the rich and evolving identity of Australia — a nation deeply rooted in its heritage and united by its diversity.

Respecting Country Parade, Adelaide



MELBOURNE

The Official Flag Raising Ceremony, hosted by the Governor of Victoria and attended by the Premier of Victoria, dignitaries and representatives of Victoria's multi-faith and multicultural communities, marked the beginning of Melbourne's Australia Day.

The Government House Open Day has become a mainstay of the program and provides a focal point of Australia Day celebrations in Victoria. Over 10,000 visitors explored the grounds and State Apartments while enjoying picnics on the Western Lawn with food from culturally diverse food stalls, watched a 21-gun salute and RAAF heritage aircraft flyover and interacted with community organisations such as Country Fire Authority, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Country Women's Association of Victoria, Life Saving Victoria and others.

Mainstage performances reflected the rich talent of Victorians, from the Royal Australian Navy Band to a Bollywood Dance Troupe, drummers and yidaki performances.



Roaming performers



Government House Open Day



Flag-raising ceremony

Photos supplied by Department of Premier and Cabinet, State Government of Victoria



CANBERRA

Over three nights, the visually spectacular FLIGHT attracted 93,500 spectators to celebrate the spirit, stories and resilience of Australia through an immersive drone show over Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin.

With accompanying narrative and music, it showcased Australia's identity and spirit through creative storytelling in the sky using drone technology to bring symbolic imagery to life.

Representing values that resonate with all Australians, each show presented a distinct narrative, blending reverence for Indigenous culture and First Nations peoples' enduring connection to this land, with pride in Australia's iconic contributions to sport, arts and world-changing inventions.

The first show, titled Identity – Through the Lens, explored the evolving story of what it means to be Australian, while the second show, Inventions – Into the Mind, highlighted Australia's legacy of creativity, innovation and humour.



FLIGHT drone scene highlighting the full potential of women and girls in sport to create positive social and economic change



Attendees with roving entertainers



Crowds gathering for the evening show

Photos supplied by National Capital Authority



## ADELAIDE

Three thousand people attended Adelaide's Mourning in the Morning on the banks of the River Torrens/ Karrawirra Parri, a poignant start to the Australia Day Council of South Australia program. Yankunytjatjara woman and language expert Karina Lester delivered a powerful keynote on the importance of reviving and protecting First Nations languages.

Adelaide's Aus Lights on the River then began with the vibrant Respecting Country Parade. Drumming groups created a powerful rhythm that united drummers and the crowd, setting the tone for a spectacular evening.

Musical performances like iconic bush ballad *Waltzing Matilda* accompanied by the Adelaide Youth Orchestras followed, while community speakers shared their personal experiences, highlighting the diverse stories of Australia.

The Rotunda was transformed into a stunning welcome lantern, showcasing the moving AUSSIE poster art series by Peter Drew, while Aus Lights for Kids included captivating storytelling of our country's flora and fauna, an inflatable theatre, face painting, roving performers and interactive arts and crafts workshops.

A breathtaking fireworks display was the finale to a day focused on the power of storytelling, culture and reflection, drawing over 20,000 people and including 2000 volunteers.

[Watch highlights from Adelaide's 2025 Aus Lights on the River](#)

The Adelaide program commenced with Mourning in the Morning



The always-colourful Respecting Country Parade



Singer Farhan Shah and the Adelaide Youth Orchestras



Crowds enjoying the fireworks and Rotunda art series

Photos by ASB Creative



## PERTH

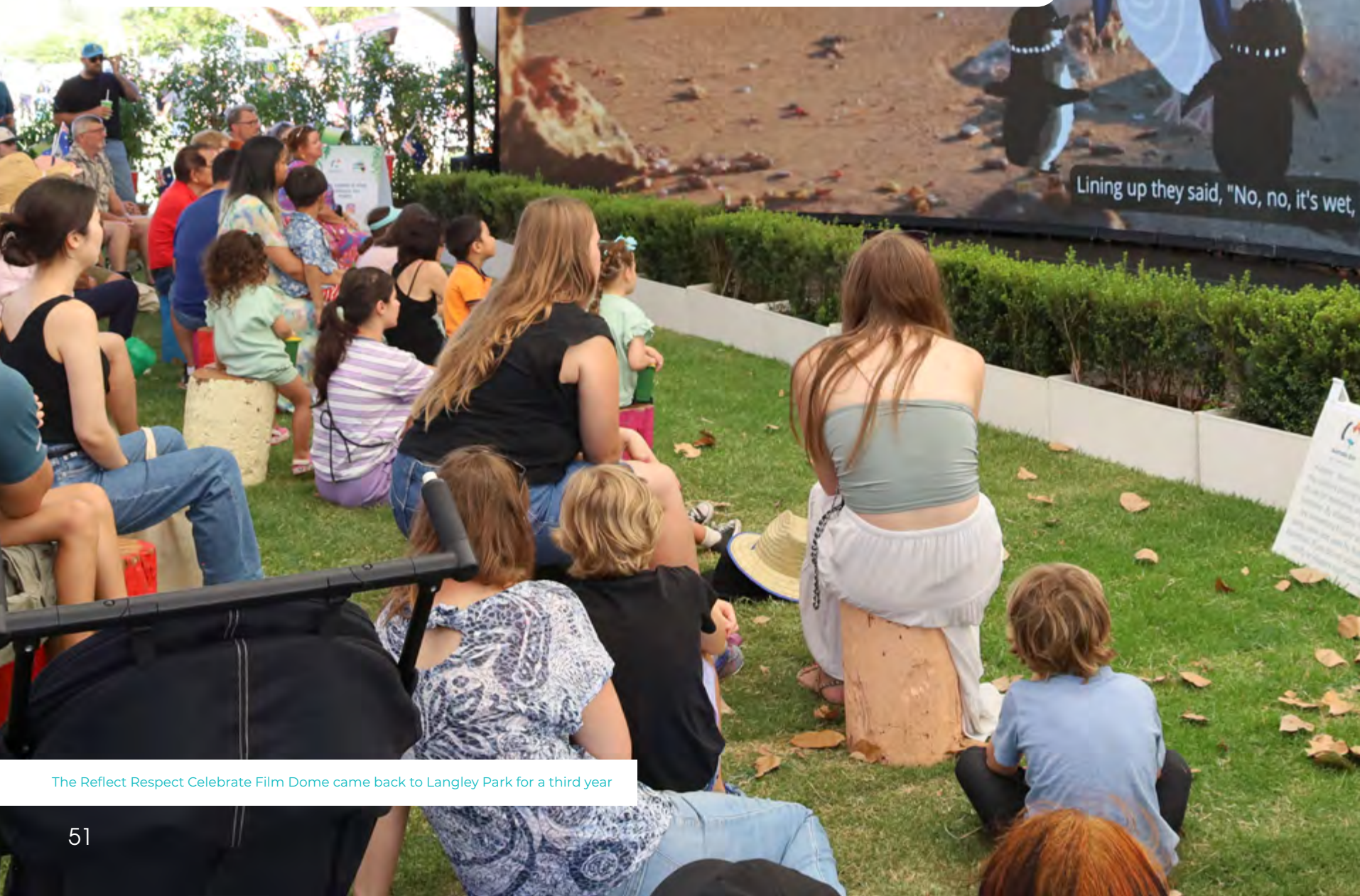
Auspire – Australia Day Council WA collaborated with the City of Perth for all to reflect, respect and celebrate on Australia Day. Starting in the morning, several hundred attendees were welcomed to country in Victoria Gardens with a smoking ceremony and traditional dance by Corroboree for Life. The Rotary Club of Heirison supplied a tasty BBQ breakfast.

By mid-afternoon, Langley Park came alive with 70,000 people enjoying family entertainment, rides, games and exhibitions, and in the beautiful Supreme Court Gardens, the Birak Concert celebrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities with local and interstate music artists.

In the heart of it all, the Reflect Respect Celebrate Film Dome featured *Six Noongar Seasons* and *Koora Koora: A Long Long Time Ago*, captivating audiences. Australian-themed giveaways and a roaming photo booth gave visitors a memento of the occasion.

The Reflect Respect Celebrate Eat Zone, which represented our many cultures through a diverse array of cuisine, was a great place to refuel and relax before the day culminated with a dazzling drone and fireworks show over the Swan River.

[Watch highlights from Australia Day 2025 in Perth](#)



The Reflect Respect Celebrate Film Dome came back to Langley Park for a third year



Attendees enjoyed merchandise bags filled with goodies



Smoking ceremony with Noongar Elder Barry Winmar and Corroboree for Life dancers

Photos supplied by Auspire – Australia Day Council (WA)



## DARWIN

The Australia Day Council Northern Territory delivered a truly inclusive celebration of the Territory's incredible diversity and honoured its First Nations peoples.

Held in the morning of Australia Day, OZ RUN is the Territory's largest free running event. Locals dressed up and embraced the spirit of Australia, running towards Darwin Waterfront Lawns for a traditional smoking ceremony performed by Larrakia families.

Building on the Reflect. Respect. Celebrate theme, the afternoon's 2025 Festival of Us held at the Territory Netball Stadium in Marrara attracted 3,500 people for its incredibly diverse program.

Depicting the Northern Territory's vibrant multicultural community, the indoor festival featured multicultural and Indigenous Australian music and dance performances, visual arts, entertainment, kids activities, craft workshops, storytelling and a free community dinner supported by The Multicultural Council of the NT.

Keynote speaker Rana Hussain, renowned in the Territory for her transformative work in elite sport and media, drove a conversation to inspire action. Her message of social inclusion was clear: inclusion is not just an ideal but a vital practice for building stronger, more compassionate societies.

[Watch highlights from Australia Day 2025 in Darwin.](#)

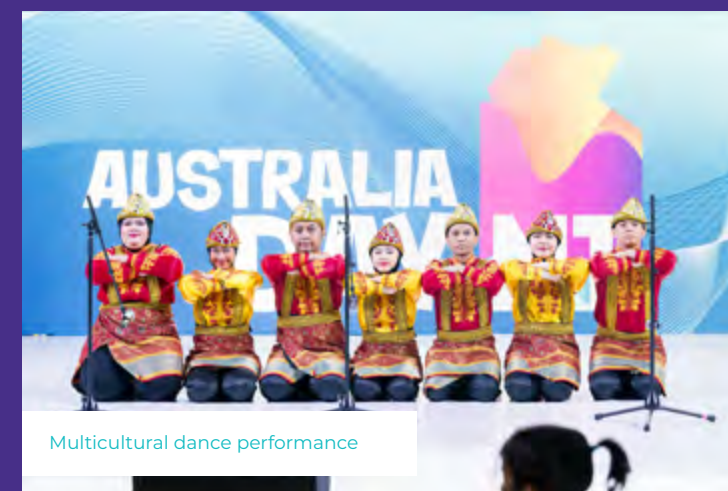
Festival of Us community dinner



OZ RUN participant warm up



Arrkula Yinbayarra, performers from Borroloola in the Gulf of Carpentaria



Multicultural dance performance



Festival of Us keynote speaker Rana Hussain



## BRISBANE

South Bank Parklands put on a deliciously unforgettable experience as Great Australian Bites transformed the Riverside Green into a lively hub of family-fun, food and entertainment.

Hosted by Brooke Hanson OLY OAM, the jam-packed live stage program showcased local home-grown talent, captivating cooking demonstrations and exciting musical performances.

Queenslanders celebrated the flavours of the sunny state with a vibrant selection of pop-up stalls from local producers and food trucks. Celebrity chef Miguel Maestre took to the Chef's Kitchen stage to wow the crowd with a demonstration of his famous paella. Some of Queensland's most talented culinary experts also made an appearance, including internationally renowned chef, restaurateur, television presenter and author Peter Kuruvita.

The Jake Newell and Alisha Todd Duo, Kirsten Swann Duo, Stephen Ward Band and Tribal Experiences lit up the main stage with an exciting musical program, ensuring a toe-tapping good time for the whole family. Attendee numbers reached 5,000 across the day.

For the little ones, there was plenty of free family-friendly activities including face painting, craft workshops, lawn games and a sensory zone.



Roving entertainers delighted the crowd



Great Australian Bites by nightfall



Celebrity chef Miguel Maestre

Photos supplied by State of Queensland



SYDNEY

Australia Day in Sydney is one of the city's largest annual major events, hosting more than 100,000 people each year.

The free-to-attend, day-long program invites everyone to mark the day their way and takes place across a precinct encompassing Barangaroo, Sydney Harbour, Circular Quay, Sydney Opera House, The Rocks and Darling Harbour.

NADC funding supported the delivery of Dawn Reflection and the WugulOra Morning Ceremony, along with the spectacular Australia Day Live concert.

Aboriginal advisors, creative directors and cultural artists and performers were involved in guiding the Australia Day in Sydney program, which honoured the world's oldest living culture through traditional ceremonies and performances.



Dawn Reflection

Representing First Nations at first light, a beautiful piece of Aboriginal art – titled *River Life* – illuminated the sails of the Sydney Opera House at sunrise.

Reflecting in the waters of our timeless harbour, it was a quiet time to recall our country's unfolding story, told in many voices across countless generations. 2025 is the fifth year that Indigenous art has illuminated the morning sails.

*"For our peoples, water is not just a commodity, but a language, a community and a source of knowledge and law."*

**James P Simon (of the Wiradjuri-Biripi people)**

Indigenous artwork *River Life* by James P Simon

WugulOra Morning Ceremony

For the past two decades, Australians have gathered for WugulOra (meaning 'One Mob'), in Barangaroo Reserve on the morning of 26 January to acknowledge and celebrate First Nations culture through music, dance, language and storytelling.

The ceremony included a Welcome to Country by Yvonne Weldon AM – a proud Wiradjuri woman, speeches from the NSW Governor and NSW Premier, song and dance performances, and the national anthem sung in English and Eora. Broadcast live on NITV, it cleansed the way for new beginnings.

Hear from those who created the first event back in 2003



2025 marks 20 years of WugulOra



Burrundi Dance Theatre

Photos supplied by Destination NSW



*Australia Day Live*

As the sun set, Australia Day Live was the finale to our national day.

Broadcast on ABC TV and ABC iview, the Sydney Opera House Forecourt came alive with tens of thousands of spectators. The free concert staged on land and water featured live renditions of iconic Australian hits by Australian band Dragon, James Morrison AM, Paulini and Sheppard, including a powerful tribute to Yothu Yindi with esteemed composer, instrumentalist and vocalist William Barton on the didgeridoo.

Video stories reflecting the diversity of our cultures, lifestyles and values that makes our country special were shared on screens, before the day ended with stunning pyrotechnics over the harbour.

*"We're bringing ceremony from the mother country to this stage, this platform, for the nation to tune in on Australia Day. It's part of something very important, the next chapter in Australia's history. Culturally, socially, connecting people."*

**William Barton**

Co-Creative Director, Australia Day Live  
2023 QLD Australian of the Year

**Total viewers on ABC TV and ABC iview: 512,000 (448,000 in 2024)**

**[Watch highlights from Australia Day 2025 in Sydney](#)**



A group of seven people are posed for a photograph at an awards ceremony. In the center, a man in a dark suit and glasses stands. To his left, a woman in a long, flowing dark dress stands with her hands clasped. To his right, another man in a dark suit and glasses stands. In the foreground, a man in a dark suit and glasses is seated in a wheelchair. Behind him, a woman in a patterned sari stands. To the far left, a woman in a green and red dress stands. To the far right, a woman in a patterned dress stands. The background is a large, abstract, geometric pattern in shades of orange and red. The text "AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS" is overlaid on the right side of the image in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS



AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Since its inception in 1960, the Australian of the Year Awards have provided a focal point for Australia Day celebrations and a forum for the recognition of outstanding achievement.

Announced on the eve of Australia Day by the Prime Minister and broadcast live on ABC TV and ABC iview, the Australian of the Year Awards have long celebrated those who demonstrate inspiration, service and excellence and who are examples of the Australians we can aspire to be.

2025 marks 65 years of the Australian of the Year Awards. Past Australians of the Year were invited to the Canberra program of events.

Alumni in attendance were: Grace Tame (2021), Simon McKeon AO (2011), Keith Potger AO and Athol Guy AO (1967), Taryn Brumfitt (2023), Mark Taylor AO (1999), Dick Smith AC (1986), Dr James Muecke AM (2020), Prof Patrick McGorry AO (2010) Rosie Batty AO (2015), Prof Fiona Wood AO (2005), Dr Richard Harris SC OAM and Dr Craig Challen SC OAM (2019) Robert de Castella AO MBE (1983) and Prof Michael Dodson AM (2009).

The 2025 recipients are:

- **Australian of the Year:** Neale Daniher AO, co-founder, FightMND and former Australian Rules footballer from VIC
- **Senior Australian of the Year:** Brother Thomas Oliver Pickett AM, co-founder of Wheelchairs For Kids from WA
- **Young Australian of the Year:** Dr Katrina Wruck, scientist from QLD
- **Australia's Local Hero:** Vanessa Brettell and Hannah Costello, co-founders of Cafe Stepping Stone from the ACT

*Total audience numbers on ABC including repeats, ABC iview and ABC News coverage was 523,000 and a national reach of 1.2 million*



2025 Australians of the Year



Awards alumni at Government House with Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

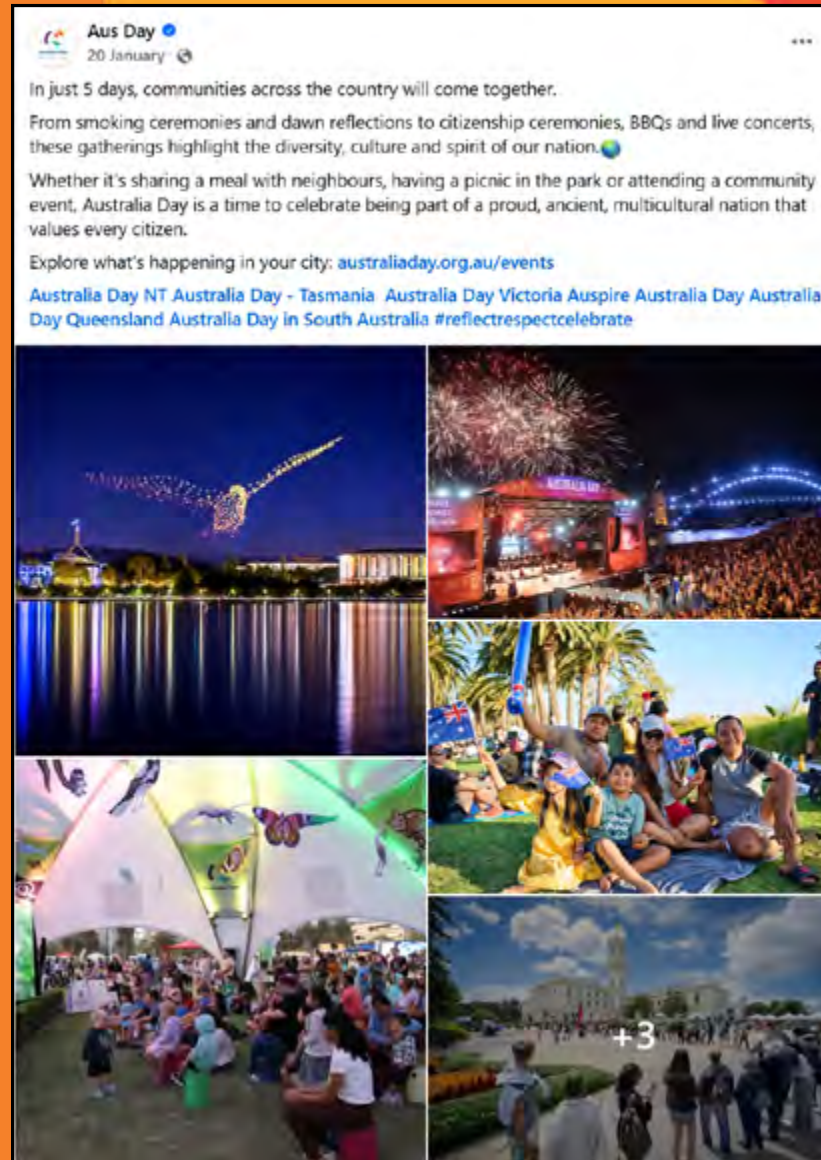


## AUSTRALIA TO ME IS...

Once again, a video campaign for social media was delivered in the lead up to Australia Day featuring 2025 Australian of the Year Awards state and territory recipients. The videos aimed to encourage reflection and highlight the diversity of thought for our nation.

The NADC also featured content on socials that showcased the activity that happens in communities and cities on Australia Day to help promote the hundreds of free events available.

The Australia Day Live Sydney broadcast was promoted with the words of William Barton, 2023 QLD Australian of the Year and the concert's co-creative director.







**NADC**

National  
Australia Day  
Council

