

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Racing



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FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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TALKS UNDERWAY WITH EASTERN MAAR TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to work with the Eastern Maar Traditional Owner group towards an agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* – the only state legislation of its kind in Australia.

Attorney-General Martin Pakula today visited the Framlingham Aboriginal settlement near Warrnambool to mark negotiations to formally recognise Eastern Maar Traditional Owner rights over Crown land in southwest Victoria.

The area under negotiation stretches from near Port Fairy along the Great Ocean Road, up to Ararat in the north, and to Colac in the East.

As well as measures to recognise, protect and enhance the Eastern Maar people’s rights over Crown land in this area, talks will focus on compensation to resolve native title claims and resources to promote economic development.

The Act allows for out-of-court settlements recognising the rights of Victorian Traditional Owners, and was introduced as an alternative to litigation under the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993*. The Act is one way in which the Government supports Victoria’s Traditional Owners to achieve self-determination.

The Government has previously reached Traditional Owner settlements with the Dja Dja Wurrung and Gunaikurnai peoples.

The Eastern Maar is one of four groups currently in negotiations under the Act.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

“We’re working towards reaching an agreement with the Eastern Maar that recognises, protects and enhances their rights.”

“This is about self-determination for Victoria’s first peoples, and these negotiations are an important step towards this goal for the Eastern Maar.”

Quote attributable to Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation CEO Jamie Lowe

“The commencement of these negotiations has been decades in the making. We must always acknowledge the Eastern Maar Elders and citizens who worked tirelessly for generations for recognition of Eastern Maar and our clans.”