



MULTICULTURAL
NSW

Guidelines on the recognition of historical events

Context

About 45 per cent of the NSW population were either born overseas or have at least one parent who was born overseas. They are likely to bring different perspectives to historical events that occurred in their homelands. Some members of the community may have deeply held views on historical events they have personally experienced.

Local and state government authorities will occasionally be required to make decisions on the use of public resources to recognise historical events that are contentious.

Recognition of historical events can take many forms, including:

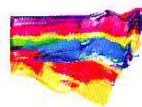
- Speeches and public statements
- Commemorative events
- Establishment of physical memorials such as plaques, statues, buildings, and dedicated park lands.

These guidelines have been established to assist local and state government to make decisions that are within their jurisdiction, such as approval of statues and memorials in public spaces or providing support for commemorative events

The guidelines are not intended to prevent or discourage public debate on contentious historical issues. It is important to recognise that groups and individuals are free to express their opinions, whether by participating in public debate on historical events, conducting their own commemorative events, or establishing private memorials.

Nor do the guidelines prevent or discourage government representatives from acknowledging grievances or expressing sympathy for a person who has an experience of trauma or suffering associated with a historical event.

However, by acknowledging grievances in a manner that does not assign blame to other groups, government authorities are better-placed to lead impartial community consultation and gain support for mutually agreeable solutions.



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In determining whether to support recognition of a historical event, local and state government authorities should:

1. **Respect** the right of all individuals to freely express their opinions within the boundaries of Australian laws.
2. **Acknowledge** the range of views that may exist about historical events.
3. **Acknowledge** and be sensitive to experiences of trauma or suffering associated with historical events.
4. **Recognise** that all individuals in NSW should demonstrate a unified commitment to Australia and the importance of shared values, governed by the rule of law, within a democratic framework.
5. **Consult** as broadly as possible with the community in an impartial manner.
6. **Seek** a mutually agreeable solution where possible.
7. **Consider** the impact of the decision on community harmony locally and more widely.
8. **Ensure** that the decision does not contribute to the victimisation of any individual or cultural, religious, or linguistic group.
9. **Consider** whether the decision is consistent with Australia's foreign policy positions, as determined by the Commonwealth Government.
