

Message from the Chair of Koorie Caucus



Aboriginal Victorians are coming together in communities across the state to keep ourselves, our families and mob safe. Aboriginal peak organisations and leadership is working closely with state, local and commonwealth governments to coordinate response plans and ensure we have the necessary resources, equipment, supplies and support for our community.

Emergencies mean different things to different people. They are often defined as ‘an event requiring a significant, coordinated response’. These events can range from a cyclone or flood, to a vehicle crash or family dispute. Our communities have always supported each other in the mentioned events.

Emergencies are caused by hazards from four main groups:

- Natural hazards
- Hazards caused by humans
- Socioeconomic hazards
- Public health hazards – COVID-19 fits here and is very different from everything else.

Facing challenges such as COVID-19- is not new to Aboriginal communities, as we have responded to many different emergencies for many years. However, this will take all of us working together to keep us strong, safe and well.

- We are a generous people, and together we will get through this.
- Help the people in your family and those in our community who have existing health conditions or need a hand.
- Take care of your elders and keep them home, if possible.

There are a lot of unknowns with this, but we must remain strong and support our community sector and their partners to keep everyone safe.

- Everything we are doing now will help communities to avoid and reduce the sickness that will come from COVID-19
- We will know what to do before it happens and after it happens.

- Keeping our mob safe through a national emergency is what all of us have been doing for a very long time, but on this occasion, we have not experienced a threat to our elders, culture, family connections and lore like this for a very, very, very long time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raylene Harradine', written over the printed name.

Respectfully,

Raylene Harradine

Chairperson, Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum's Koorie Caucus