



28 July 2011

## CONGRESS SURVEY SHOWS HEALTH, EDUCATION, SOVEREIGNTY KEY ISSUES FOR MEMBERS

The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples today released the results of its first survey on policy priorities from its Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander membership.

The ground-breaking survey gives the Congress guidance on priority work over the next 12 months.

Congress Chief Executive Lindon Coombes said the report was the just the start for more Congress surveys in the future.

"These results stand as a record, at this point in time, of the views of a significant sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians," said Mr Coombes.

"We are very proud of our first efforts to gauge the mood and priorities of our members as we confirm our policies and platforms to engage with Government.

"These results are our members speaking loud and clear and speaking for themselves. Our challenge now is to turn these voices from ideas to actions," said Mr Coombes.

### Report Summary:

Health, sovereignty and education were highlighted by the majority of members as the most important areas of policy.

- More than half of the respondents – 55% - chose health, education and sovereignty as their top priority policy areas

#### Within those policy areas

- Health - mental health and emotional wellbeing (42%) and access to health care (21%) were highlighted
- Education - early childhood education (31%) and school and transition to work (31%) were the areas of most concern
- Sovereignty – recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Constitution was seen as a top priority (88%), 77% said constitutional protection of Indigenous rights was also important and 58% highlighted constitutional protection against racial discrimination

Accountability for Governments and the Congress itself, partnerships and research were highlighted as being the most important areas of operation to members.

The full report can be downloaded from the website [www.nationalcongress.com.au](http://www.nationalcongress.com.au)

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