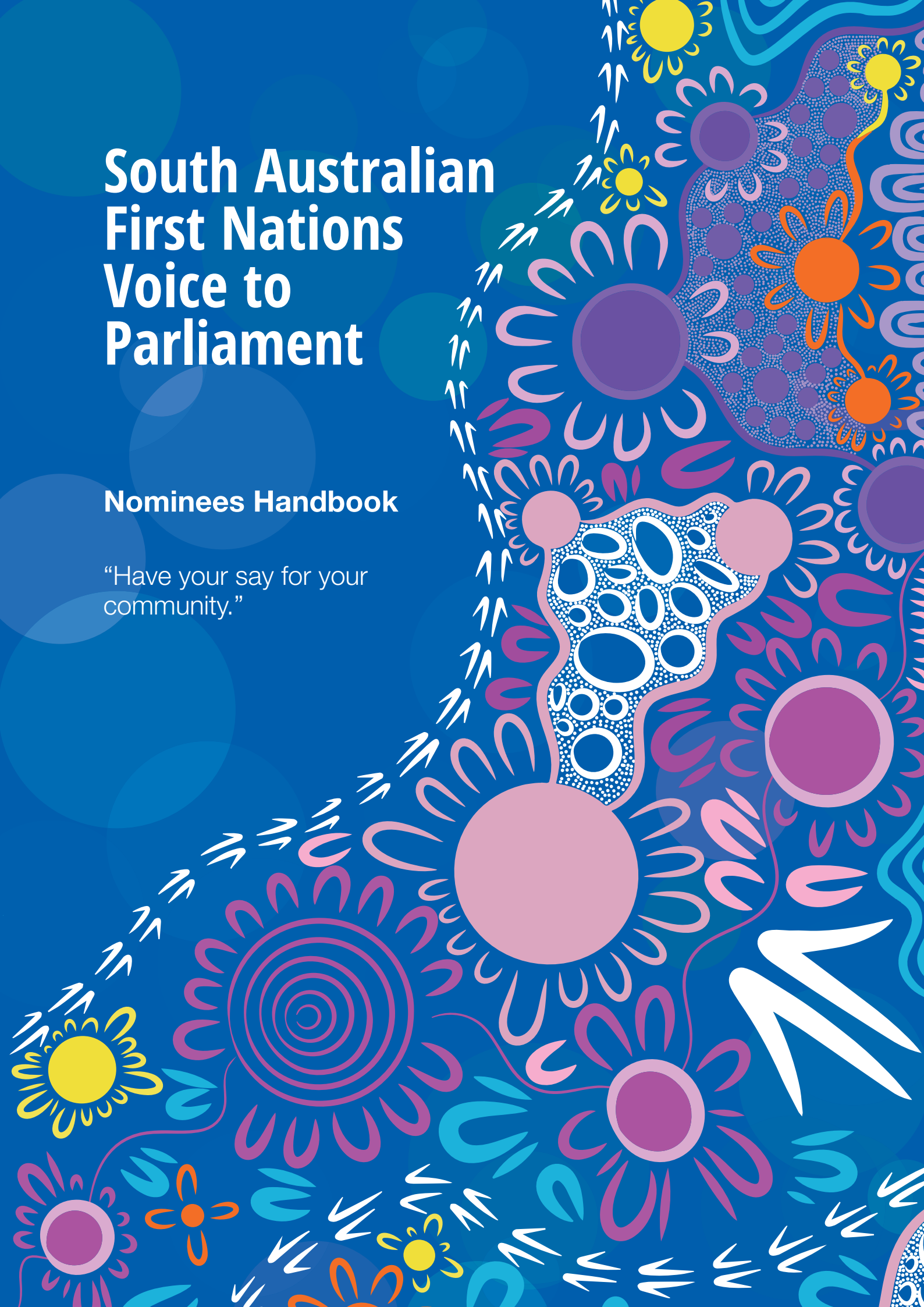


South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament

Nominees Handbook

“Have your say for your
community.”



Are you thinking about being a Member of South Australia's First Nations Voice?

If so, enclosed in this First Nations Voice to Parliament: Nominee Handbook (Handbook), is important information you need to know.

This Handbook explains:

1. Who and how First Nations people can nominate to become a Member;
2. What will be involved in being a Member;
3. Who can vote in the First Nations Local Voice Elections;
4. Overview of the role/responsibilities of the SA First Nations Voice.



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge and pay respect to South Australian First Nations people as the first peoples and sovereign nations of South Australia.

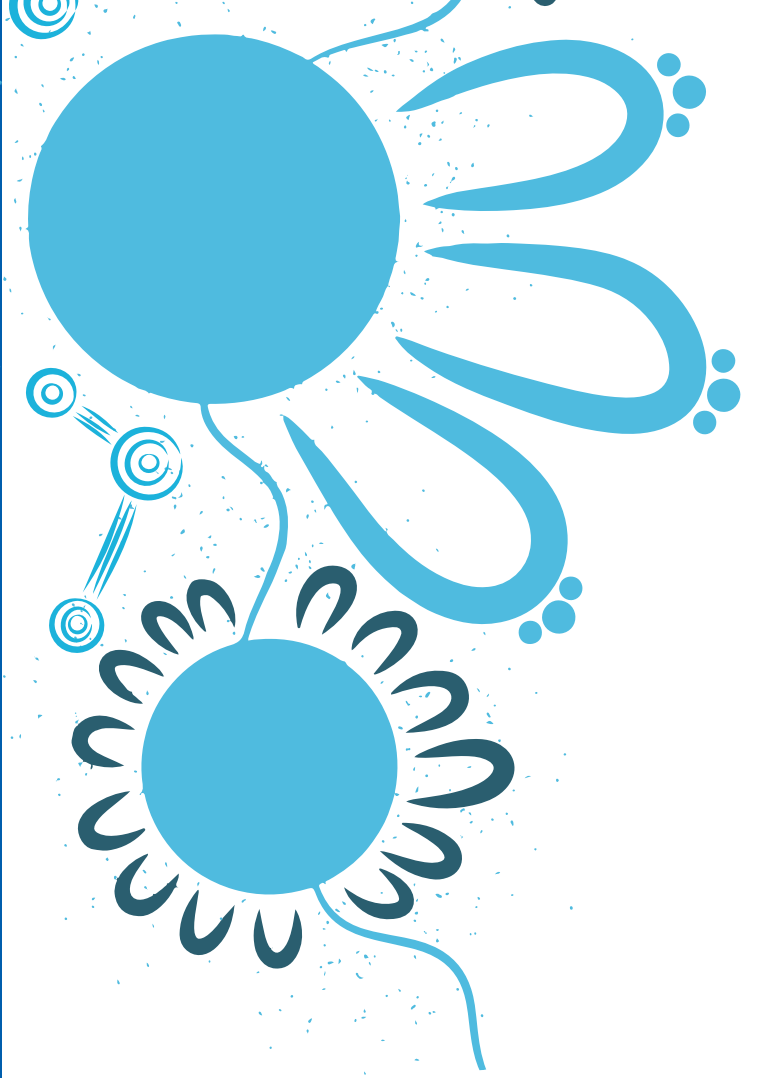
We recognise the cultural, spiritual, and heritage beliefs, languages and laws of First Nations peoples, that continue to be vitally important, as they always have been.

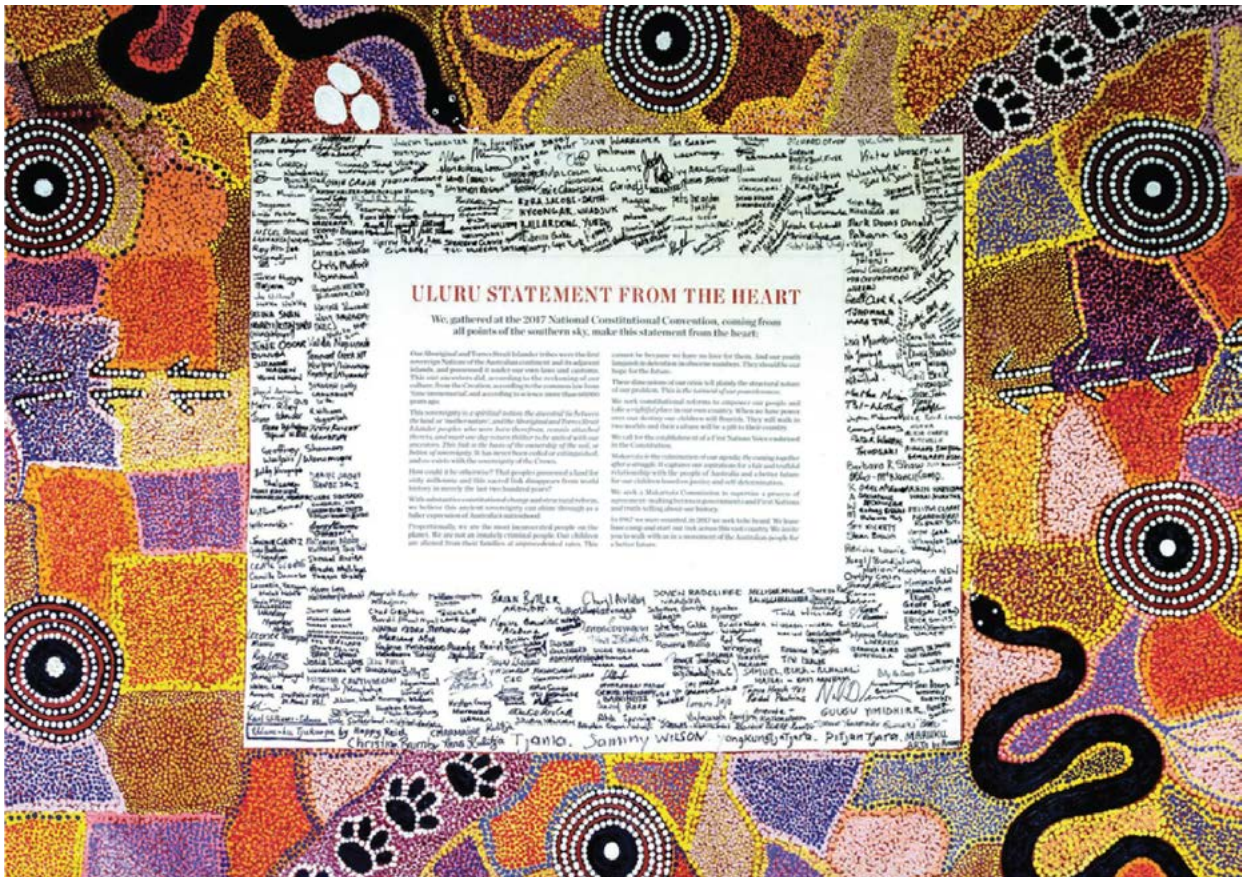
We acknowledge and recognise First Nations leaders, including younger people who will carry the voices of their communities into the future.

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**Section
1: South
Australia's
First Nations
Voice**





1.1 Background

In March 2023, South Australia (SA) became the first Australian state to pass legislation to establish a First Nations Voice to its Parliament, as part of a commitment to implementing the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#).

SA's First Nations Voice to Parliament (the Voice) was designed through extensive engagement with First Nations people living within the State, led by the SA Commissioner for First Nations Voice, Dale Agius.

The Federal Referendum is separate from, and does not affect, the SA Voice and *First Nations Voice to Parliament Act 2023* (SA).

SA Government remains committed to implementing the SA Voice. The *First Nations*

Voice to Parliament Act 2023 will see the SA Voice be established in mid-2024 following the Local First Nations Voice Elections.

The Voice will be a representative elected body for First Nations people.

Through the Voice, First Nations people can have their say at the highest levels of decision-making, including to Parliament and Government, on matters (including policies and laws) that affect their families and communities.

If you are elected a Member of the Voice, you can speak up for your people and community and give advice about how government services and policies are running, and how they can improve.

1.2 How It Will Work?

The Voice will have 2 levels:

1. a Local First Nations Voice (**the Local Voice**); and
2. a State First Nations Voice (**the State Voice**).

They will work together and will have different roles and responsibilities (see section 2 and 5).

The Local Voice:

The Local Voice will be elected. There will be 6 regions across SA, with an elected body for each of the regions. The Central region will have 11 Members and all remaining regions will have 7 Members.

Each Local Voice body will choose 2 people of differing genders (including non-binary) to be their joint Presiding Members. The Presiding Members will chair meetings and represent their region and will also sit on the State Voice.

The State Voice:

The State Voice will have 12 Members. Members will be the 2 joint Presiding Members of each Local Voice. The State Voice will choose 2 Members of differing genders (including non-binary) to be the joint Presiding Members who will engage directly with Parliament on behalf of the State Voice.

How does The First Nations Voice to South Australian Parliament work?

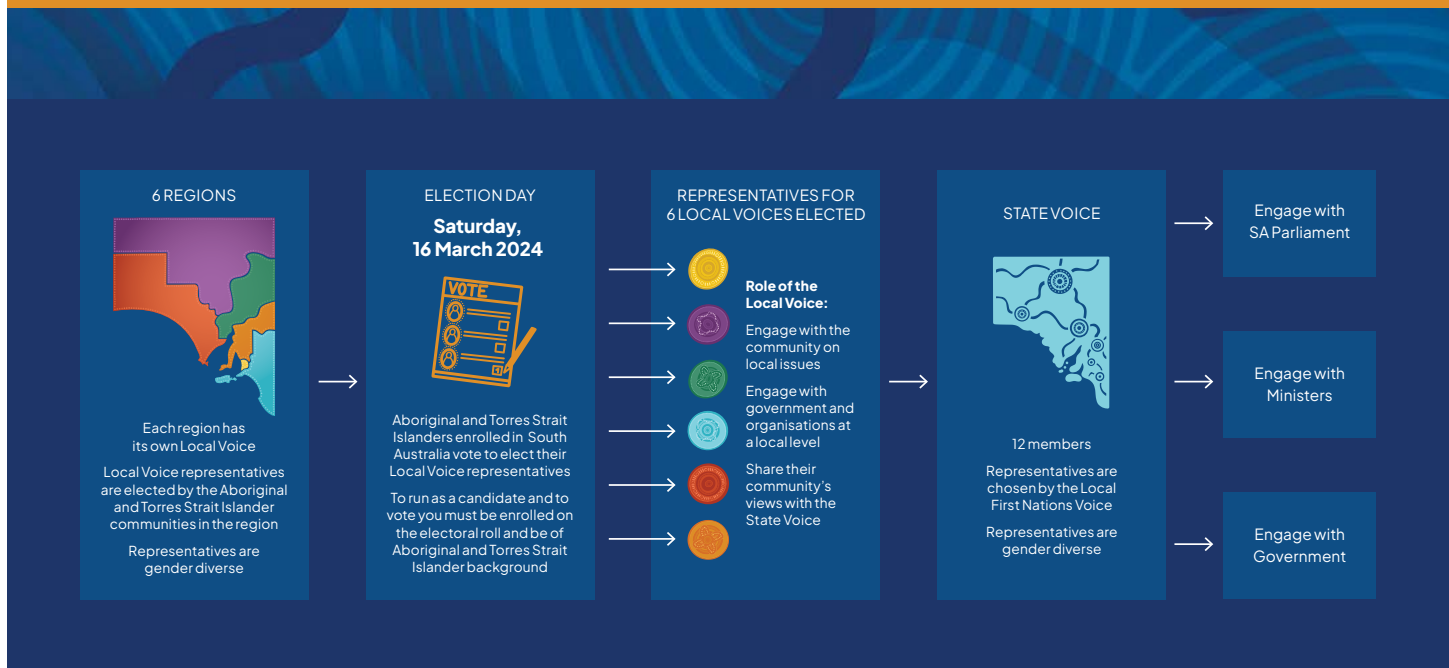
South Australia's First Nations Voice will have 2 levels:

- 1 a Local First Nations Voice
- 2 a State First Nations Voice

They will work together but will have different roles and responsibilities. There are 6 regions across the state each with its own Local Voice.



For more information on the SA First Nations Voice and how it works, scan the QR code or visit www.agd.sa.gov.au/first-nations-voice



Section 2: Local Voice – Getting Involved

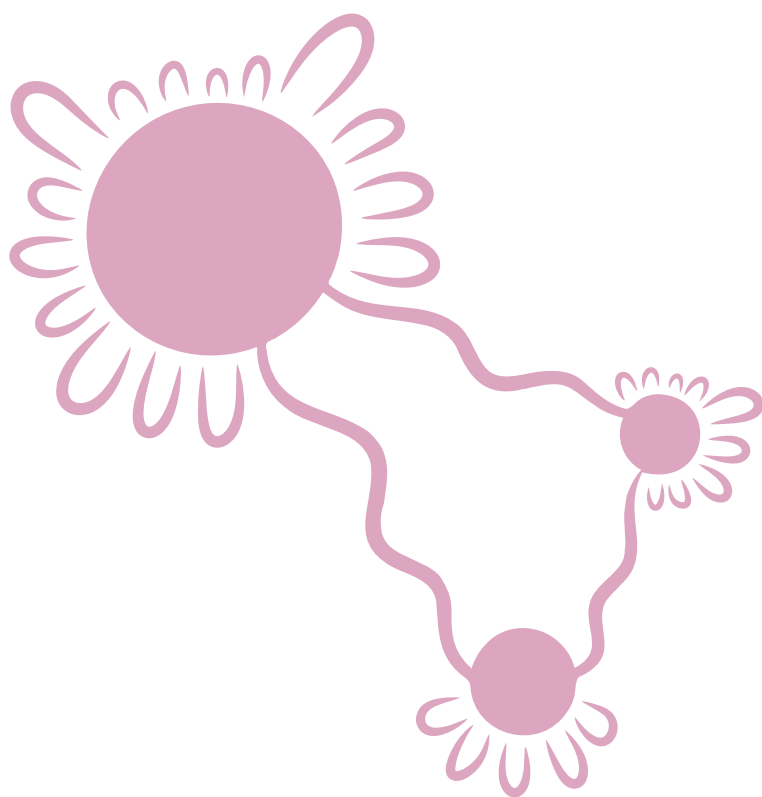
2.1 Who Can be a Member of the Local Voice?

To be a Member of the Voice, you need to be a First Nations person who firstly nominates to be a Member of the Local Voice and are then elected by your community through the Local Voice Election (**'Election'**).

The persons who are then elected to be the Presiding Member(s) of each region's Local Voice, will then make up the membership of the State Voice.

The Local Voice Election is being held on **Saturday, 16 March 2024.**

The Election is being run by the Electoral Commission of SA (ECSA) (see section 3) and more information on nominating can be found at [SA Voice Election – Nominations](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/nominations) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/nominations) webpage.



Nominee & Member Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible to nominate you must be:

1. a First Nations person; and
2. 18 years or over; and
3. enrolled to vote on the SA Electoral Roll (by 5pm on 12 February 2024).

You do not need to have any qualifications or experience to nominate but must meet the above Nominee & Member Eligibility Criteria.

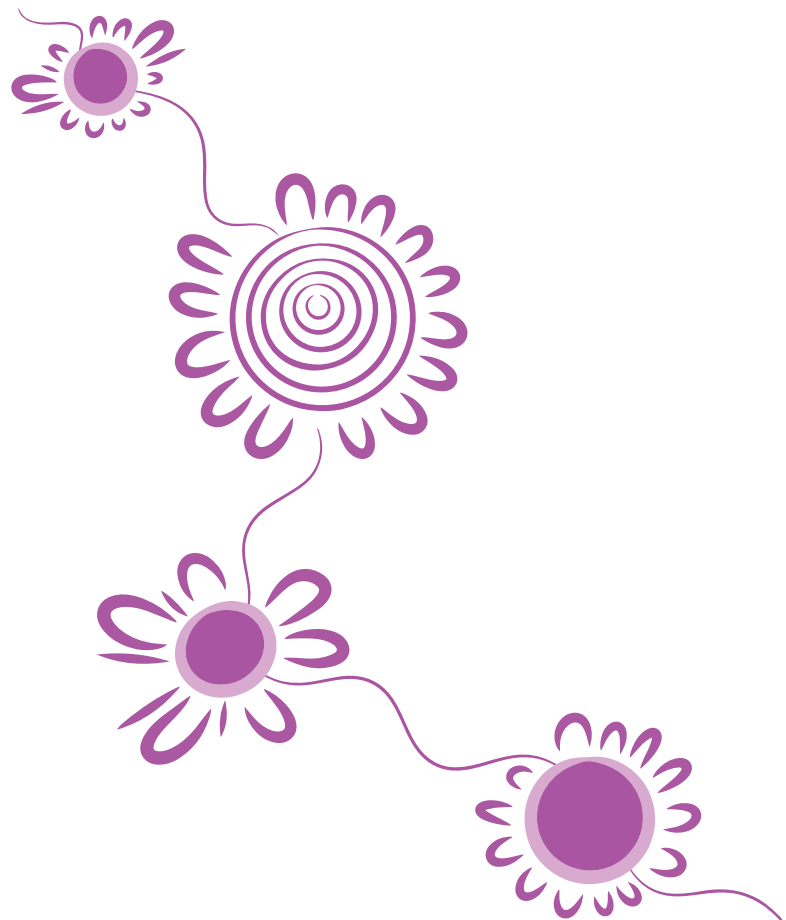
You can enrol or check your enrolment details via the [SA Voice Election – Enrolment](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/enrolment) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/enrolment) webpage.

A 'First Nations' person is defined under section 4 of the *First Nations Voice Act 2023* according to the commonly used three-part test, which is that the person:

- ▶ is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent (see section 4(2) of the Act); and
- ▶ regards themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- ▶ is accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person by the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

You Will Not Be Eligible to Nominate if you:

- ▶ are currently in jail.
- ▶ have been found guilty of a serious criminal offence within the last 2 years.
- ▶ can't travel within SA because of bail, parole, or other agreement.
- ▶ have been disqualified from acting as the director of a company under the *Corporations Act 2001*.



2.2 What's Involved in Being a Member of the Local Voice?

What is my role on the Local Voice?

As an elected Local Voice Member, you will ultimately be accountable to your local community and allocated region, who have elected you to represent them. It is your community who will decide if they want to vote for you to be a Member, or be re-elected in the future.

Local Voice Member Responsibilities:

As a Member of the Voice, you will be responsible for attending Local Voice meetings, or such other meetings and events, in order to undertake the following functions of the Local Voice:

1. to consider and discuss matters of interest to First Nations people in its region;
2. to promote, encourage and assist First Nations people in its region to communicate their views on matters of interest;
3. to receive the views of First Nations people in its region and pass those views on to the State Voice;
4. to liaise and collaborate with the State Voice on matters of interest to First Nations people in its region;
5. at the discretion of the Local Voice, to collaborate with and assist Public Sector agencies and other organisations, in the development of policies and procedures that affect First Nations people in its region;

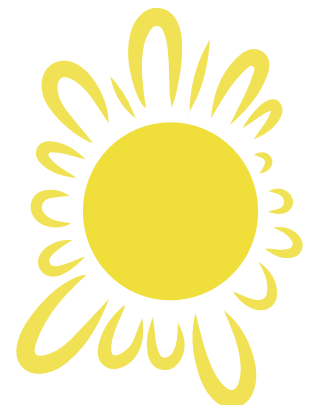
6. at the discretion of the Local Voice, to engage with local government and with other organisations on matters of interest to First Nations people in its region; and
7. such other functions as may be assigned to the Local Voice by or under the Act or by the Minister.

More information on the roles and responsibilities of an elected Local Voice will be provided to the successful nominees once elected.

Attending Local Voice Meetings

A key role as a Local Voice Member is to take part in meetings for your region, to undertake the functions of the Local Voice, including to form positions and determine how you wish to progress local priorities.

- ▶ At meetings, you will vote on motions and decisions.
- ▶ Meetings will be held between 4 – 6 times a year.
- ▶ Sitting Fees will be paid for each meeting (in addition to Annual Fees), and any reasonable travel and accommodation costs may be covered.



First Meeting

This first meeting of the Local Voice will need to occur within 2 months of the Election.

This first meeting will be important, as it is where conversations will commence about which of the Members, of differing genders (including non/binary), will be the joint Presiding Members of your region's Local Voice.

The 2 Presiding Members of your region's Local Voice will be your region's representatives on the State Voice. The State Voice will not be able to form until each Local Voice appoints their Presiding Members.

Local Voice Proceedings & Additional Meetings

- ▶ Future meetings will be convened by the joint Presiding Members, and there will be a certain number of Members (quorum) required to attend for a meeting to go ahead.
- ▶ The Local Voice can choose to have the meetings either in-person, or virtually.
- ▶ In addition to the above meetings, each year, the State Voice will call a meeting for all Members of the 6 Local Voices to attend.

As this is the first time SA has had a 'Voice' to Parliament, there will be further decisions the Local and State Voices may need to make, including what areas or issues they want to focus on and how they want to work together (local regions and as a State Voice).

2.3 Nominating to be on the Local Voice

(When, Where, & How do I Nominate for the Local Voice Elections to Become a Member)?

When to Nominate:

Nominations open on **22 January 2024** and close on **12 February 2024**.

Where to Nominate:

Nominations are made through the ECSA website via: [SA Voice Election - Nominations](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/nominations) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/nominations).

Nomination forms and information on the nomination process will be available on the website.

How to Nominate

Any First Nations person(s) who meet the Eligibility Criteria (see section 2.1.1) can nominate to be a Member of the Voice and participate in the Election.

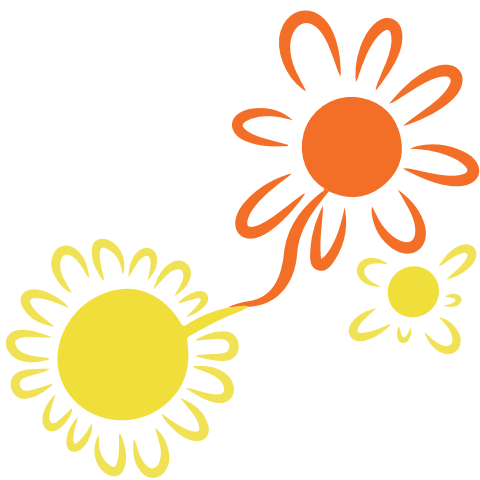
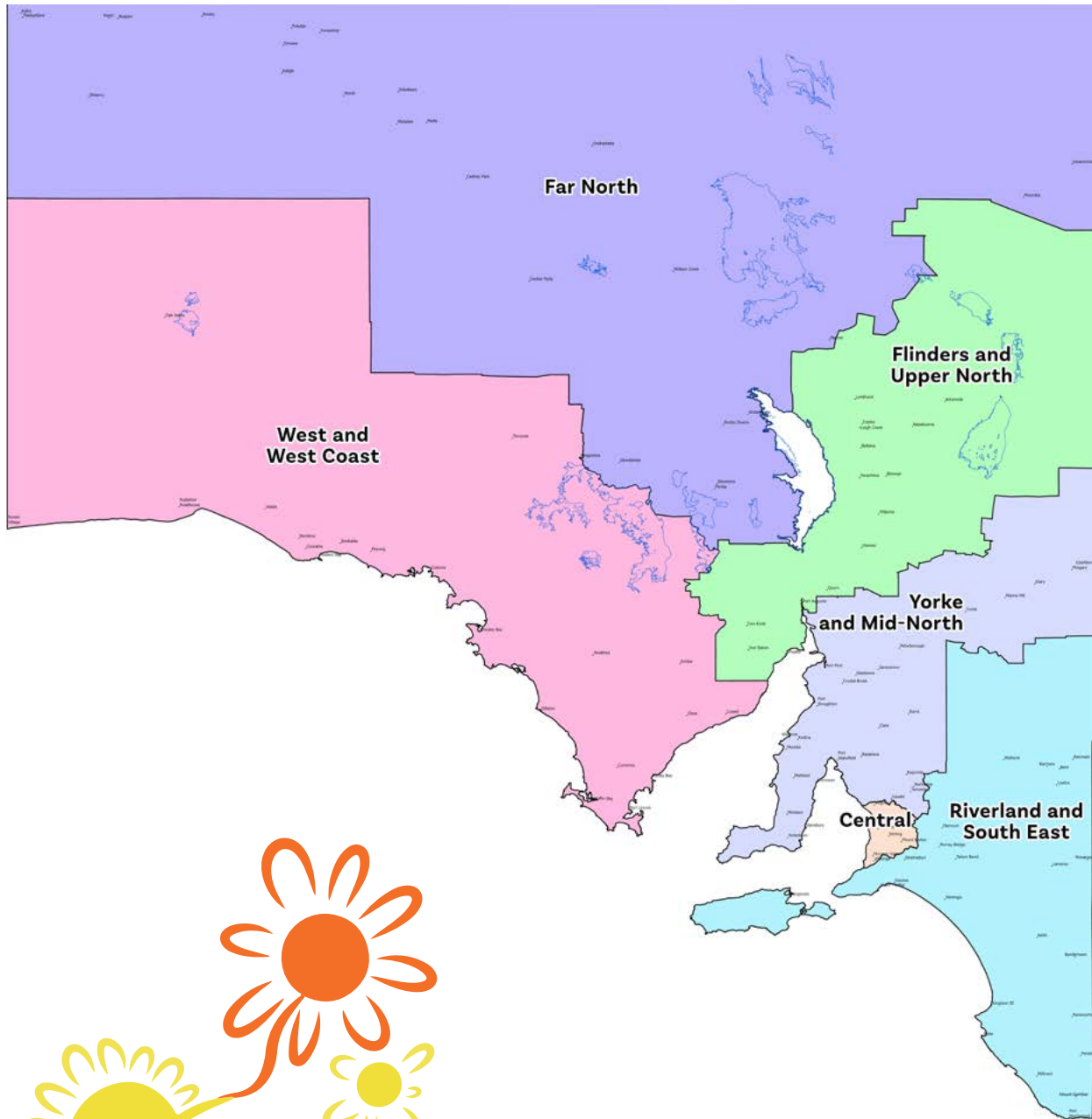
When you nominate, you will be putting yourself forward as someone who wants to represent 1 of 6 Local Voice regions in SA.

You will need to say which region you want to be a candidate for. You can only nominate as a candidate in 1 region (per Election). This can be either:

- a. the region you live in (according to where you are enrolled to vote on the State electoral roll); or
- b. the region where you have a cultural connection, or are a cultural custodian, as a First Nations person, who, in accordance with section 5 of the *First Nations Voice Act 2023*, has a social, economic, or spiritual affiliation with the place [region] ('traditional owner').



The 6 regions are as follows, and a detailed map of each region can be found at **Appendix 2**, or downloaded from [SA Voice Election Boundaries and Regions](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/about/boundaries-and-regions) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/about/boundaries-and-regions):



2.4 I've Nominated for the Voice Election - What now?

Nomination Outcomes

After nominations close on 12 February 2024, the ECSA will process all nominations received, and **successful nominees will be declared on 26 February 2024.**

The ECSA will contact all nominees directly, whether successful or not, via their designated email address and/or phone number to advise them of the outcome of their nomination.

The **successful nominees** from each region, and who will then be standing for the Voice Election, will be available on the [ECSA SA Voice Election](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au) website.

Composition & Available Membership Positions

Composition:

To ensure gender balance in the Voice, there are a set number of Member positions available for differing genders in each region, and an open position which any First Nations person can fill, including people who identify as non-binary.

Available Membership Positions/Gender Categories:

For 5 regions, there will be places for 3 females and 3 males, and 1 open position (7 total).

For the Central Region (metropolitan area) there will be places for 5 females and 5 males, and 1 open position (11 total).

The 'open position' will be filled by the person who holds the next highest number of votes. That person may be of any gender.

Membership Term:

Those who are elected in 2024 will be voted in for an initial 2 years, with a 4-year term for Members elected from 2026 onwards.

Nominees vs Available Membership Positions

If there are more nominees than the number of available Member positions, you will need to campaign (see section 2.5) to seek support and votes from First Nations persons for you at the Election.

You will be campaigning against people of your same gender category, unless you are non-binary (or do not identify as male or female), then you will be campaigning to get enough votes to fill the open position.

If there are no other competing nominees for your region and gender category (i.e., there are an equal number of candidates to positions available) you will be elected as a Member without the need to campaign.



2.5 Campaigning – Overview & Guiding Principles

Campaigning is encouraging First Nations people, from your community and region, to vote for you at the Election. You can use the following information to help plan and support your campaign. You will be solely responsible for costs associated with your campaign (if any).

For your campaign, your community and region will need to know:

1. who you are;
2. qualities that make you a strong nominee/ Member;
3. what issues and/or policies you stand for; and
4. how you intend to best support and represent your community and region.

Furthermore, you may wish to consider:

- ▶ what resources you may need to support your campaign; and
- ▶ how you will reach people you want to vote for you. This could be through:
 - ▶ social media;
 - ▶ in person meetings or community events; or
 - ▶ via emails or letters to potential voters.

Section 3: About the SA First Nations Voice Elections

3.1 Who Will Hold the Elections & When?

Who Holds the Elections?

The ECSA will run the Elections and will set up and run polling booths across the State, as well as setting up processes for pre-poll voting, postal voting, and remote mobile polling to the regions.

When are the Elections?

The inaugural Local Voice Election will be held on **Saturday, 16 March 2024**.

Every Election after that will be at the same time as the SA State elections (from March 2026 onwards).

3.2 Who Can Vote & How?

Who Can Vote?

A voter must be a First Nations person who is enrolled on the State Electoral Roll by **5pm on 12 February 2024**.

Only First Nations persons can vote for nominees in the region in which they live.

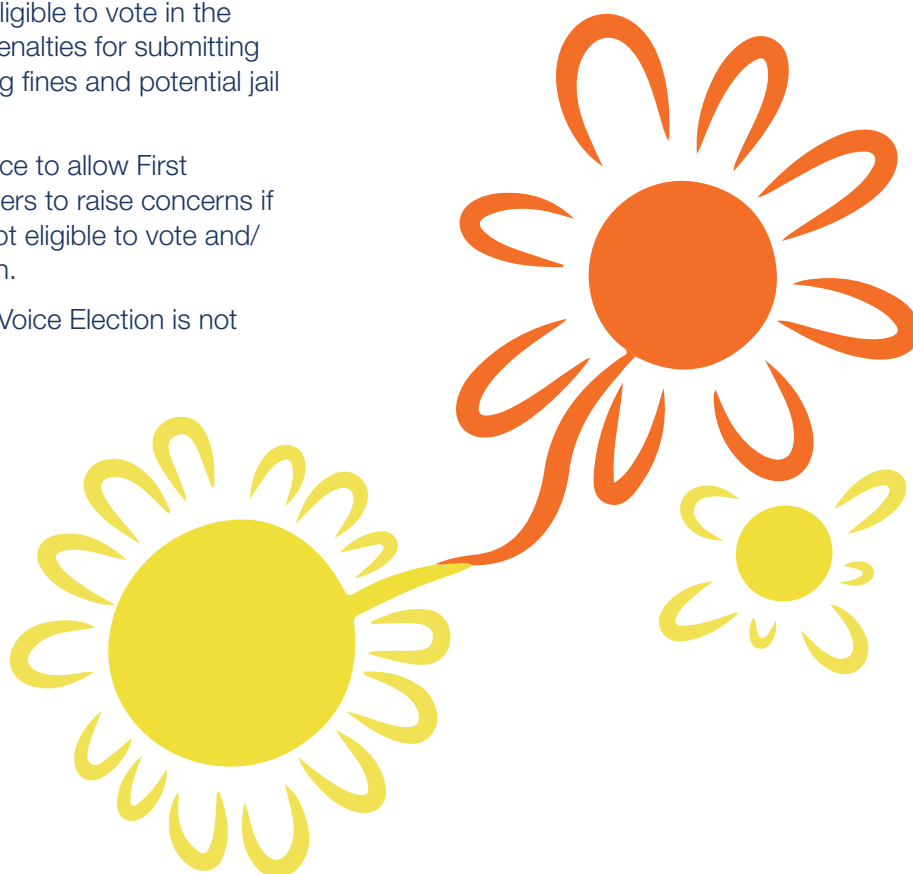
You can enrol or check your enrolment details via [SA Voice Election – Enrolment](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/enrolment) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au/enrolment) webpage.

How to Vote:

To vote in the Elections, voters will be required to sign a declaration stating they are a First Nations person and that they are eligible to vote in the Election. There are strict penalties for submitting a false declaration including fines and potential jail time.

There are processes in place to allow First Nations community members to raise concerns if they believe someone is not eligible to vote and/or has voted in the Election.

Voting in the First Nations Voice Election is not compulsory.



Section 4: After the election

4.1 Votes & Counting

The ECSA will receive all votes and counting will begin on **Monday, 25 March 2024** to allow time for postal votes to be received.

Using the proportional representation vote counting system, as prescribed by legislation, the ECSA will determine who is elected to fill the male and female member positions, and the open positions, per each region.

4.2 Election/ Vote Results

The results of the Elections are expected to be announced from **Monday, 25 March 2024**.

The nominees determined to be successful through the Election, and have been Elected as a Member, will become the Members of each of their regions' Local First Nations Voice

Once the results of the Election are known, the ECSA will publish the results on the website [SA Voice Election](http://www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au) (www.savoicerelection.sa.gov.au) and will notify nominees (via the contact details provided).

The details of the elected Members will then be released to the First Nations Voice Secretariat (see section 6.3).

4.3 I've Been Elected. What now?

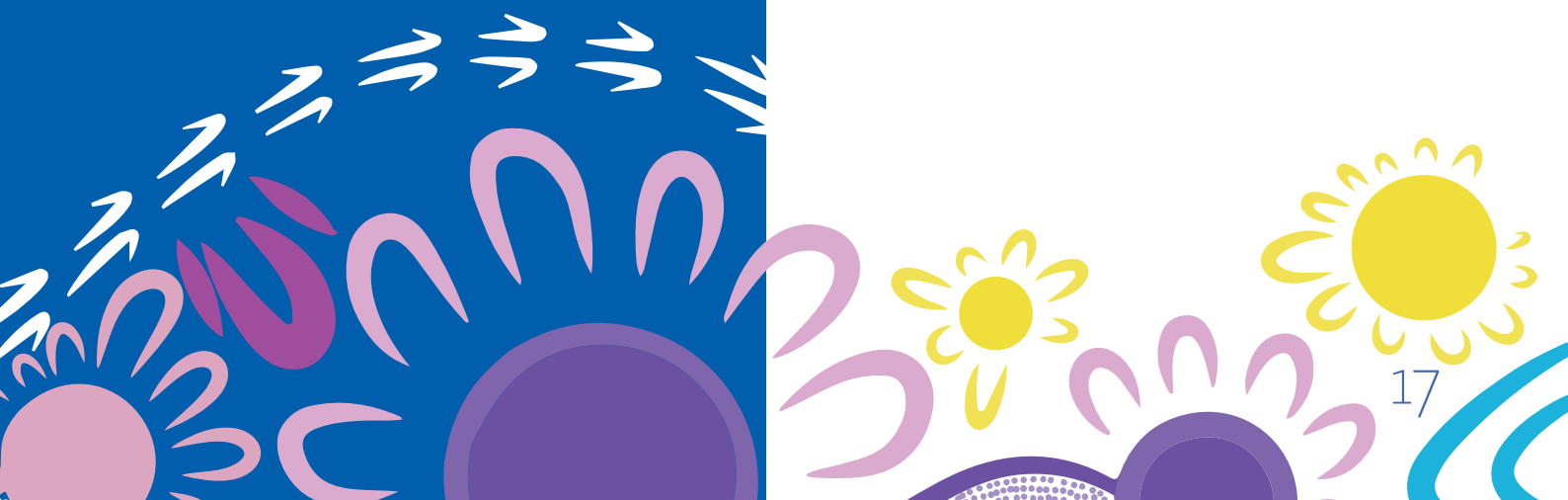
If you have been successfully elected as a Member of the Local Voice for your region, you will then be contacted by the Voice Secretariat staff (see section 6.3), who will support each Local Voice to hold their first meeting.

Section 5: The State Voice

5.1 What's Involved in Being a Member of the State Voice?

What is the role on the State Voice?

If you have been elected to a Local Voice, and then chosen as the Presiding Member(s) to be that region's representative on the State Voice, your role is to undertake the functions of the State Voice (see section 5.2), including, but not limited to; taking local views and issues from your Local Voice to the State Voice, and talking to representatives from the other regions who sit on the State Voice, to form state-wide positions on matters relevant to First Nations people.



State Voice Functions

As a State Voice member, you can present First Nations' views to the SA Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, Government, and Public Sector Chief Executives.

The State Voice must, in carrying out its functions, represent the views of First Nations persons in the State. The *First Nations Act 2023* outlines the State Voice functions, per the following:

1. to represent the diversity of First Nations people in SA;
2. to liaise with the Local Voices to ascertain their views in relation to matters of interest and to present those views to the SA Parliament and the SA Government and other bodies;
3. to engage with and provide advice to the SA Parliament and the SA Government on matters of interest to First Nations people;
4. at the discretion of the State Voice, to engage with and provide advice to other levels of government and other organisations (including, to avoid doubt, the Commonwealth and other States and Territories) on policy and procedures that relate to matters of interest to First Nations people;
5. to assign names to regions constituted for the purposes of this Act;
6. such other functions as may be assigned to the State Voice by or under this Act or by the Minister.

State Voice – Advisory Committees

To ensure the diversity within the First Nations community is represented, the State Voice will establish and hear from the following 4 'Advisory Committees':

- ▶ **Native Title Bodies** Advisory Committee.
- ▶ **Stolen Generations** Advisory Committee.
- ▶ **First Nations Youth** Advisory Committee; and
- ▶ **First Nations Elders** Advisory Committee.

Members of these committees will not be elected - the State and Local Voices will choose the Members (who cannot be Members of the State or Local Voices). The Advisory Committees will provide advice directly to the State Voice about important matters for their committee's focus.



Attending State Voice Meetings

If your Local Voice chooses you to be 1 of the 2 Presiding Members, you are a State Voice member, and you will need to attend both State and Local Voice meetings.

- ▶ At State Voice meetings, you will vote on motions and decisions (regarding State Voice matters).
- ▶ Meetings will be held between 4 – 6 times a year; and
- ▶ 5 extra meetings per year with Government or Cabinet. This will be made up of:
 - ▶ 2 meetings with Cabinet;
 - ▶ 2 with Chief Executives; and
 - ▶ 1 annual engagement hearing.
- ▶ Each year, the State Voice will also call a meeting for all Members of the 6 Local Voices to attend.

For the State Voice members, this adds up to about 14 – 18 meetings a year (across Local and State Voice meetings).

- ▶ In addition, 1 of the 2 joint Presiding Members may also speak to Parliament when a Bill of interest has been introduced to Parliament.
- ▶ Sitting fees will be paid for each meeting, and any reasonable travel and accommodation costs will be covered.

What if I can't attend State First Nations Voice meetings?

- ▶ You can appoint a Member of your Local Voice to act as a proxy if you can't attend a State Voice meeting.

Proceedings

- ▶ State Voice meetings will be convened by the chosen joint Presiding Members, and there will be a certain number of Members (quorum) required to attend for the meeting to go ahead.



Section 6: Miscellaneous / Other

6.1 Will I be Paid? (Remuneration, Sitting Fees, and Travel Costs)

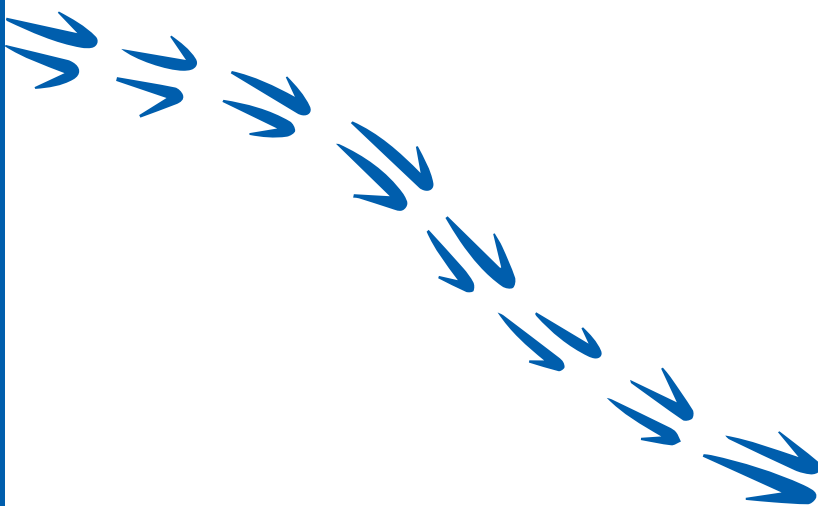
As an elected Member of the Local Voice, you will receive:

- ▶ an annual base payment for service ('Annual Fee');
- ▶ meeting attendance fees ('Sitting Fees'); and
- ▶ reasonable travel and accommodation costs may also be covered for Members to attend meetings.

The Annual Fee is in recognition of work that will likely occur outside of official Local Voice scheduled meetings.

As a Member of the State Voice you will receive additional Annual and Sitting Fees.

Further information regarding the Annual Fees for Local and State Voice Members is available at **Appendix 1** of this Handbook – *SA First Nations Voice Annual Payments Summary*.



6.2 Code of Conduct

You will have a duty to act honestly when performing your duties and functions as a Member of the Voice (State and Local), and to abide by a Code of Conduct that the Government will develop, in consultation with the State Voice.

You will need to manage any 'conflicts of interest' you may have (including perceived or actual) - for example, by stepping out of meetings or not voting on some issues.

Under certain circumstances, the Governor of SA can remove a Member of the Local Voice or State Voice, for example, for; misconduct, or conduct that could bring the Local or State Voice into disrepute. For this to happen the State Voice would need to make a recommendation to the Governor.

6.3 What other support will I be given?: The Voice Secretariat

The Voice will be provided with:

- ▶ Voice Secretariat staff, who will support the Local and State Voice operations, consisting of Public Sector Employees; and
- ▶ Resources that the Voice would reasonably need to carry out its functions, such as access to meeting spaces and computers.

The Voice Secretariat will support the Local and State Voice and provide you with the paperwork, training, or anything else you might need to start in your role as a Member of the Voice.

The Voice Secretariat will provide you with further information around your roles and responsibilities, including the code of conduct, as a Member of the Local and/or State Voice.

Specific details around resourcing will be decided by the Minister with the responsibility for funding decisions related to the Voice, in consultation with respective Local and State Voices.

Resources

- ▶ First Nations Voice Act 2023 (SA)
 - ▶ (https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_/legislation/lz/c/a/first%20nations%20voice%20act%202023/current/2023.9.auth.pdf)
- ▶ First Nations Voice Regulations 2023 (SA)
 - ▶ (https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz?path=/v/r/2023/first%20nations%20voice%20regulations%202023_29)
- ▶ Uluru Statement from the Heart
 - ▶ <https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement/view-the-statement/>
- ▶ SA Voice Election – Enrolment
 - ▶ <https://savoiceelection.sa.gov.au/enrolment>
- ▶ SA Voice Election – Nominations
 - ▶ <https://savoiceelection.sa.gov.au/nominations>
- ▶ SA Voice Election Boundaries and Regions
 - ▶ <https://savoiceelection.sa.gov.au/about/boundaries-and-regions>

Contacts / More Information

For more information on the First Nations Voice to South Australian Parliament election process, contact the Electoral Commission of South Australia.

Electoral Commission of South Australia

Phone: 1300 655 232 within South Australia only

Phone: +61 8 7424 7400 from interstate or overseas

Email: SAVoice.ECSA@sa.gov.au

Address: Level 6, 60 Light Square, Adelaide SA 5000

Website: <https://savoiceelection.sa.gov.au/>

For more information on the First Nations Voice to South Australian Parliament model, contact the Commissioner for First Nations Voice, South Australia.

Commissioner for First Nations Voice, South Australia

Phone: (08) 8207 1555

Email: voicetosaparliament@sa.gov.au

Address: GPO Exchange, 10 Franklin Street, Adelaide 5000

Website: <https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/first-nations-voice>





Definitions

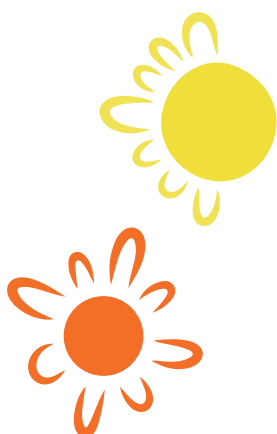
'The Act'	<i>First Nations Voice Act 2023</i>
'The Regulations'	<i>First Nations Voice Regulations 2023</i>
'First Nations person'	<p>Defined under section 4 of the <i>First Nations Voice Act 2023</i></p> <p>4— Meaning of First Nations person</p> <p>(1) For the purposes of this Act, a person will be taken to be a <i>First Nations person</i> if the person—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; and</i> b. <i>regards themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (as the case requires); and</i> c. <i>is accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person by the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.</i> <p>(2) <i>For the purposes of this Act, a person will be taken to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent if the person is biologically descended from the persons who inhabited Australia or the Torres Strait Islands (as the case requires) before European settlement.</i></p>
'traditional owner'	<p>Defined under section 4 of the <i>First Nations Voice Act 2023</i></p> <p>5— Meaning of traditional owner</p> <p><i>“For the purposes of this Act, a reference to a traditional owner in relation to a particular place will be taken to be a reference to a First Nations person who, in accordance with First Nations tradition, has social, economic, or spiritual affiliations with the place.”</i></p>
'The Voice Secretariat'	<p>Defined under section 47 of the <i>First Nations Voice Act 2023</i></p> <p>47 - Secretariat</p> <p>There will be a secretariat for the Local First Nations Voices and the State First Nations Voice, consisting of such Public Service employees as may be assigned to the secretariat.</p> <p>The Voice Secretariat will support the Local and State Voice, in the members of each in undertaking their role and responsibilities role as a Member of the Voice.</p>
'Minister'	Means the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



Appendix 1 – South Australian First Nations Voice Annual Payment Rates summary

First Nations Voice role	Description	Local Voice Base Rate	State Voice Rate	State Voice Joint Presiding Member	Total
Local Voice Member	All members elected to a Local Voice body will receive an annual base payment.	\$3,000	N/A		\$3,000
State Voice Member (2 from each Local Voice body)	The 12 State Voice members (the 2 joint presiding members from each Local Voice) will receive an additional payment, on top of the base payment.	\$3,000	\$7,500	N/A	\$10,500
State Voice Joint Presiding Members (2 members of the State Voice)	The two Joint Presiding Members for the State Voice will receive an additional payment, on top of the base payment and State Voice payment.	\$3,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$18,000

Please note: The SA First Nations Voice Annual Payments Summary does not include Sitting Fees, which will be paid at a standard rate per meeting. Reasonable travel and accommodation costs (Travel Costs) will be paid on a case-by-case basis, and further information on Sitting Fees and Travel Costs will be provided to the Members of the Voice once elected.

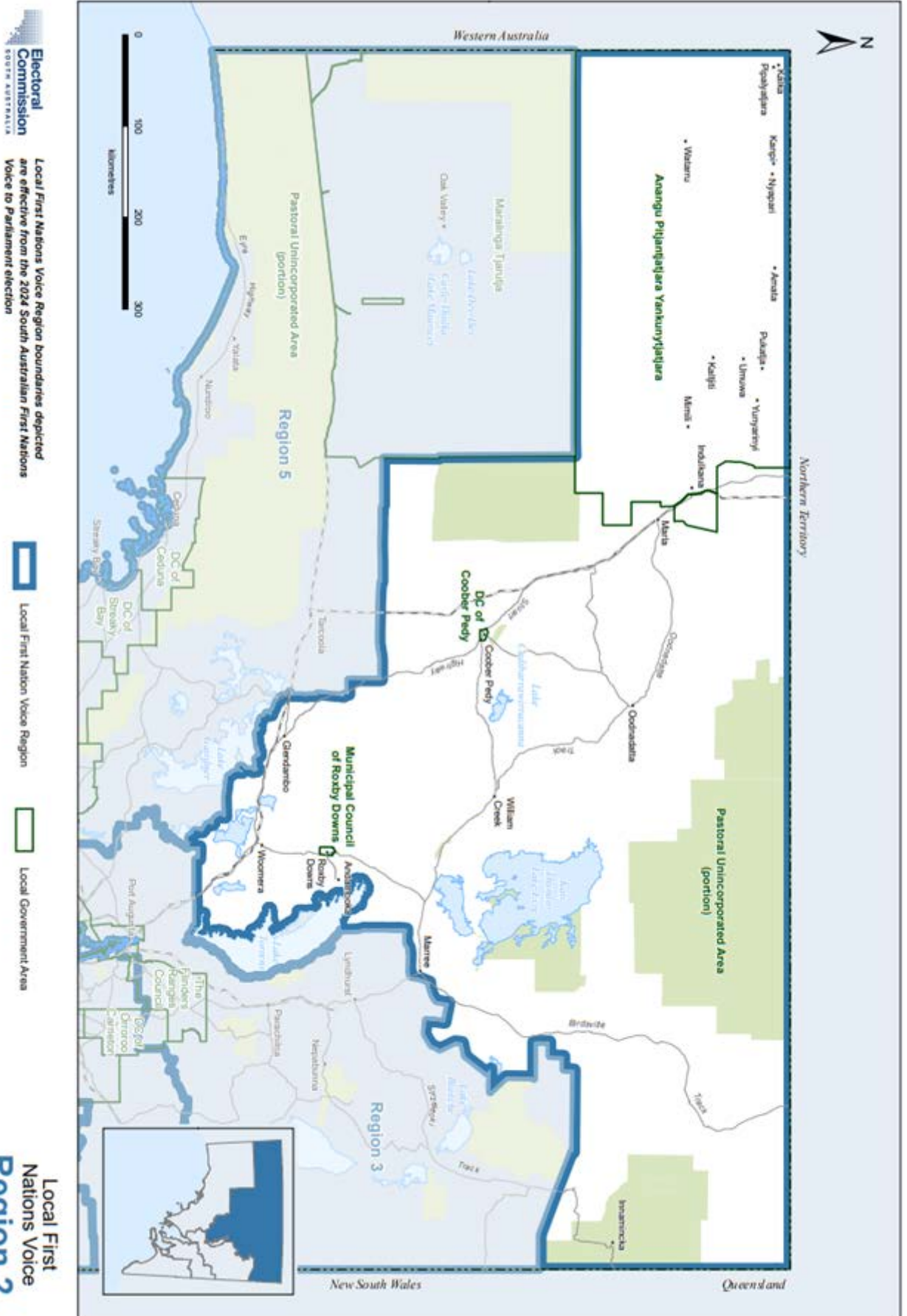


Appendix 2 – First Nations Local Voice Regions

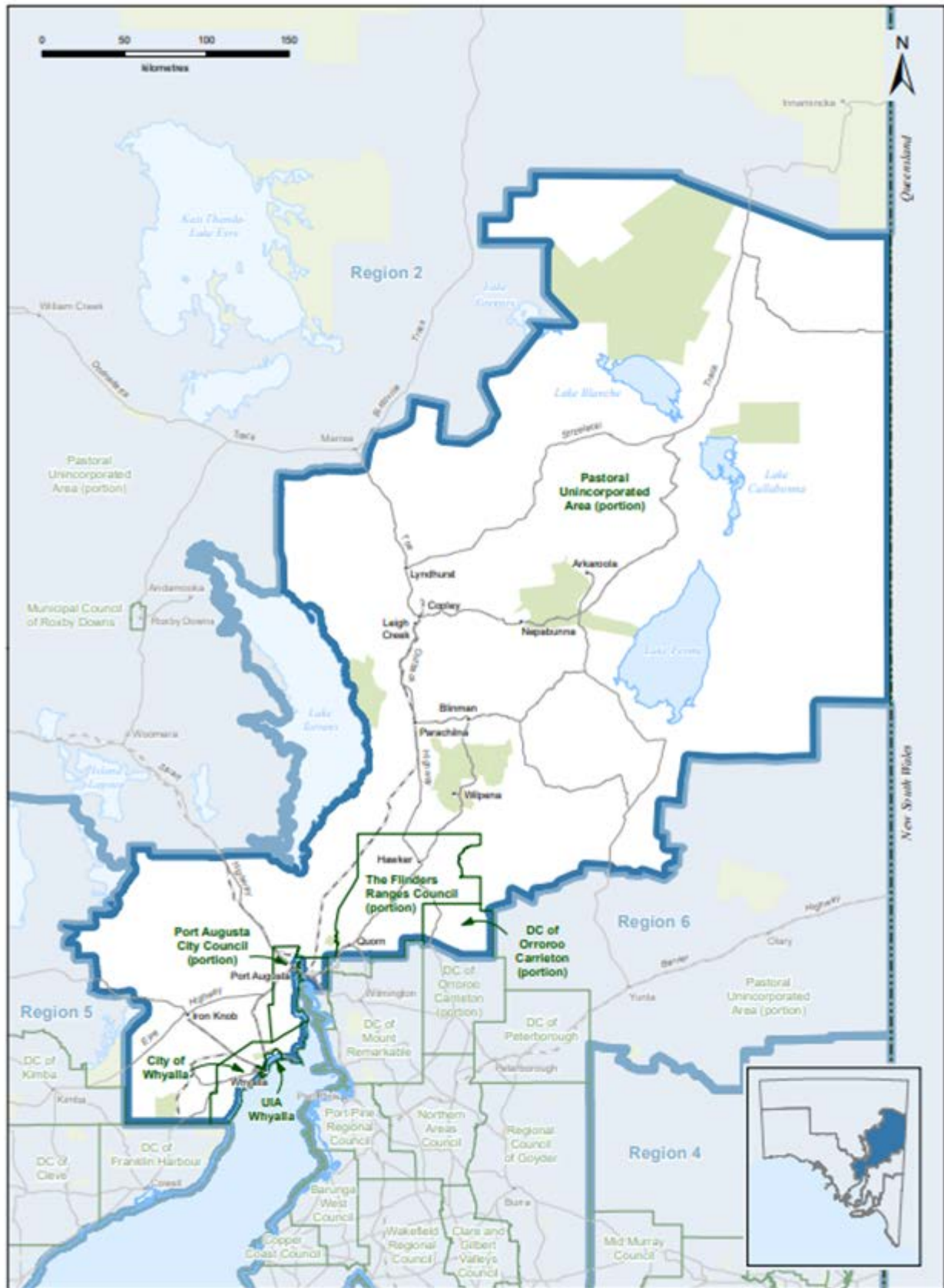
Region 1 – Central



Region 2 – Far North



Region 3 – Flinders and Upper North

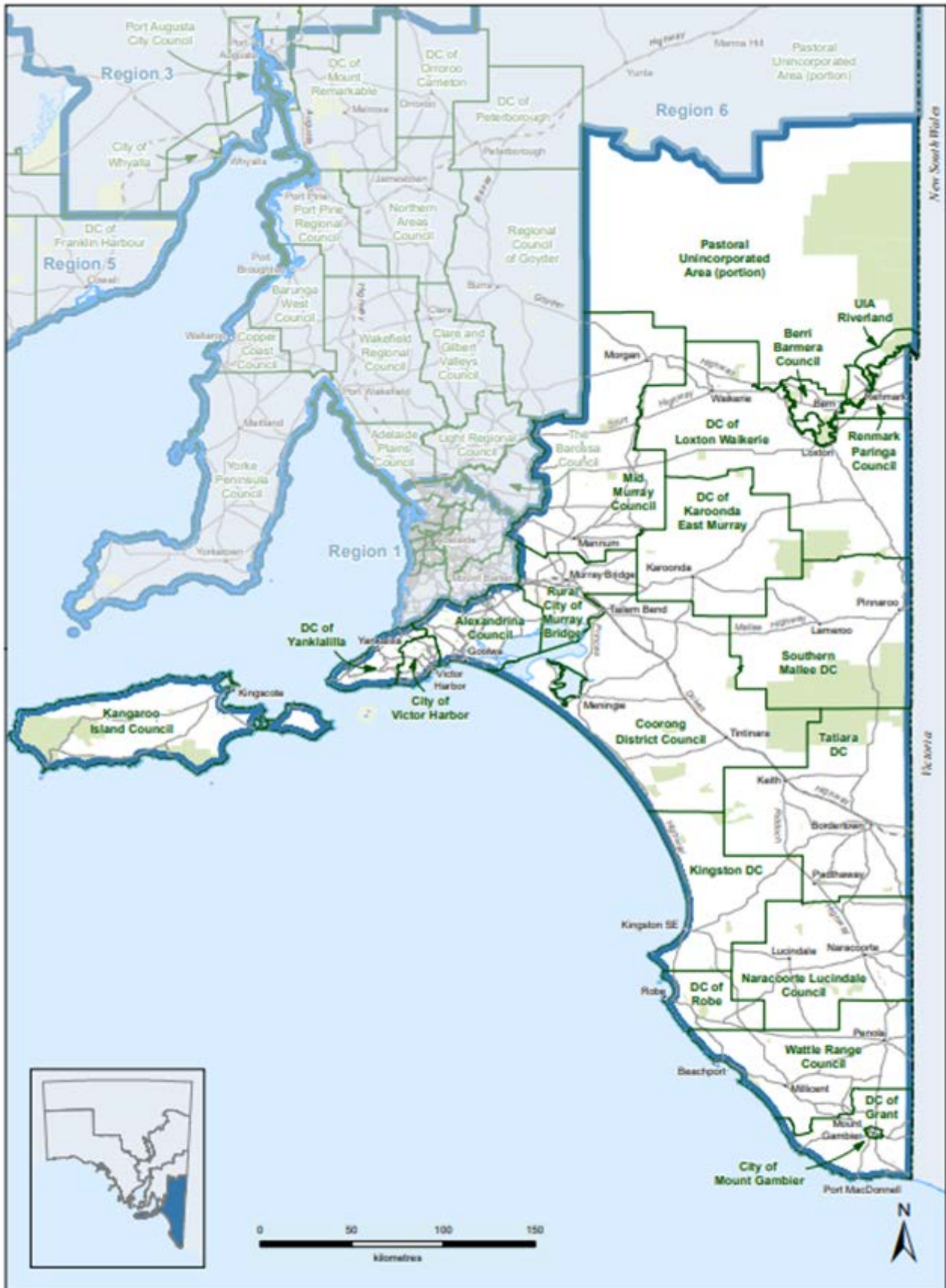


Local First Nations Voice Region boundaries depicted are effective from the 2024 South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament election

- Local First Nations Voice Region
- Local Government Area

Local First Nations Voice Region 3

Region 4 – Riverland and South-East



Region 5 – West and West Coast



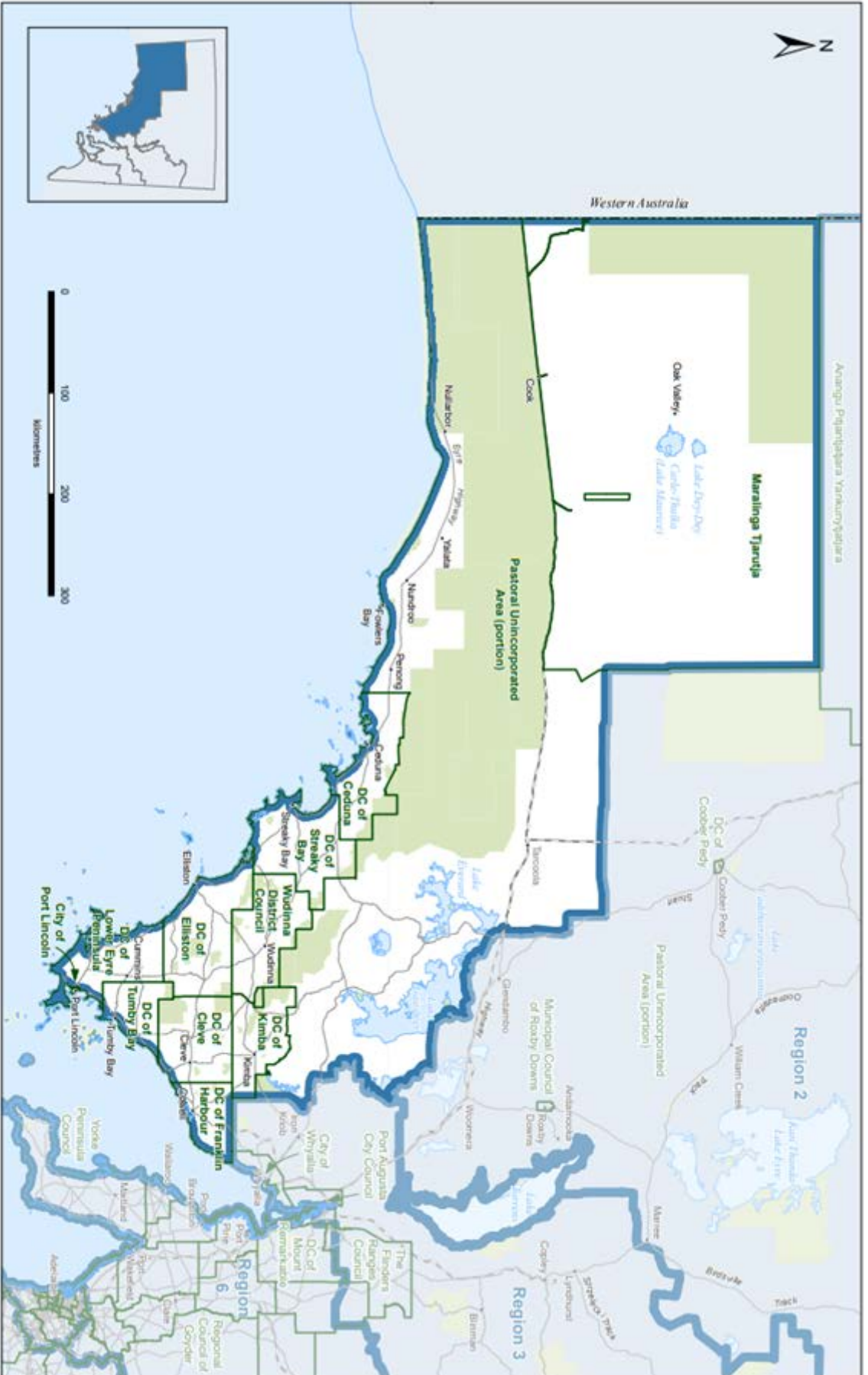
Local First Nations Voice Region boundaries depicted are effective from the 2024 South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament election



Local First Nation Voice Region

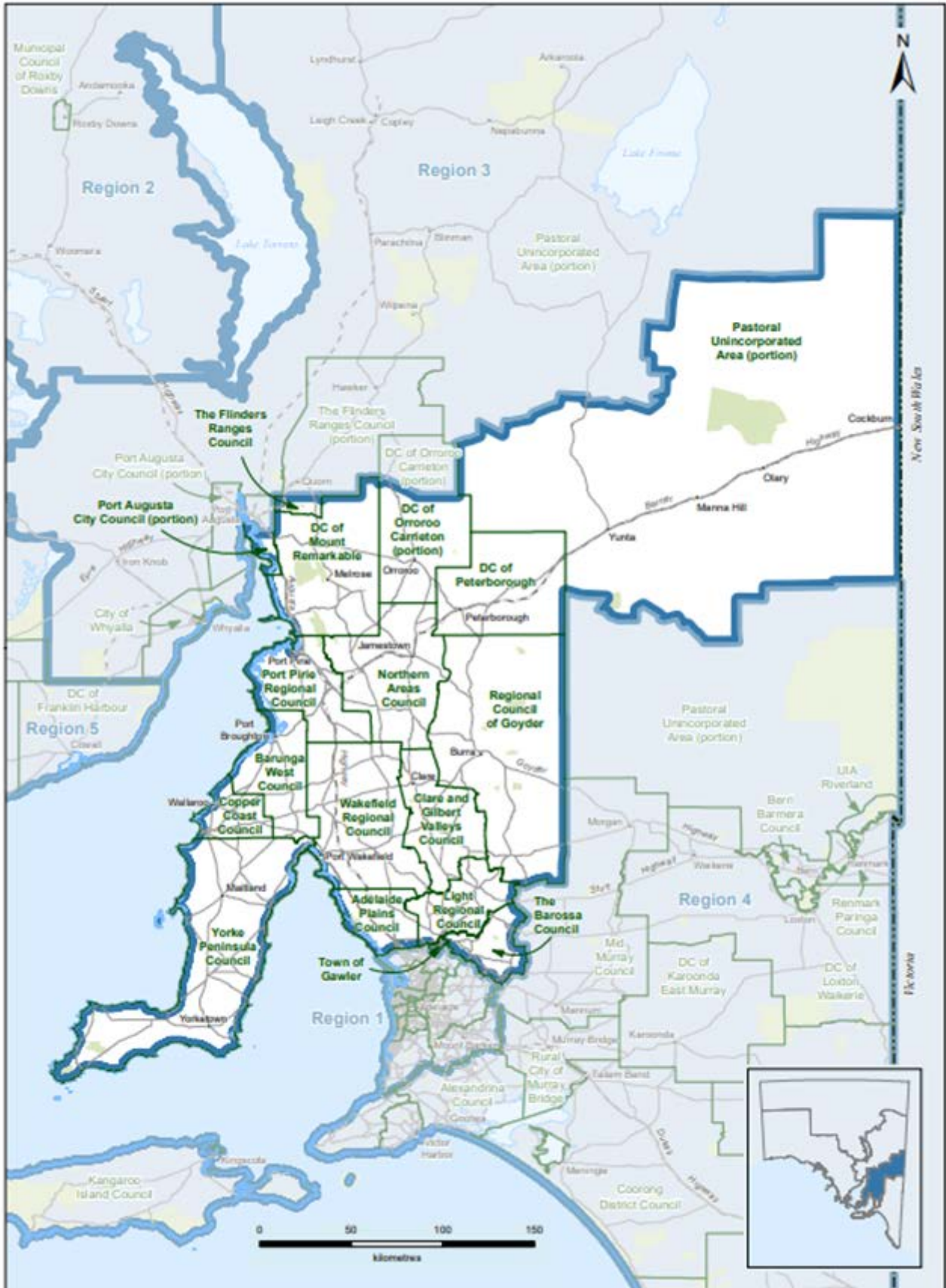


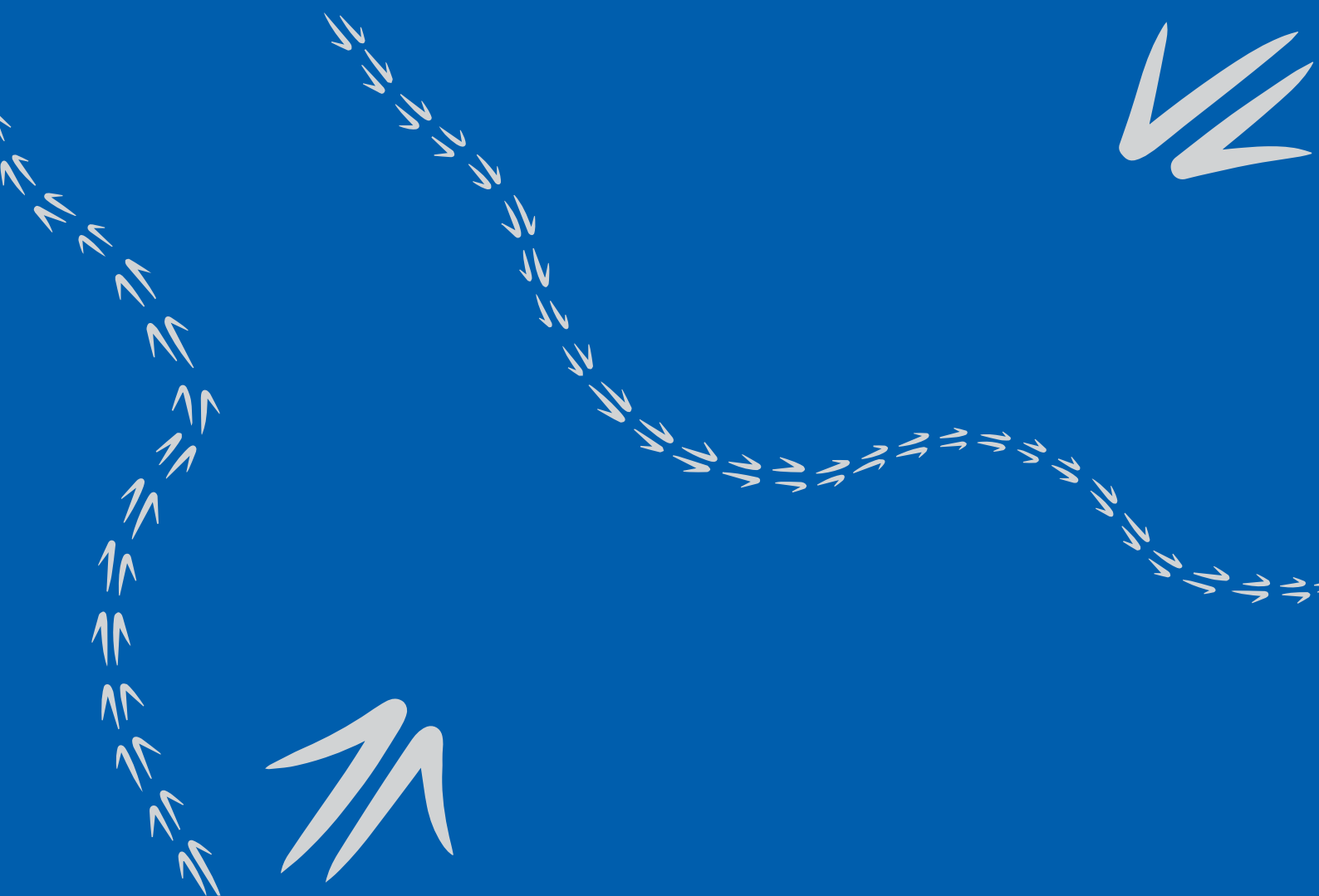
Local Government Area



Local First Nations Voice Region 5

Region 6 – Yorke and Mid-North





**FIRST
NATIONS
VOICE**
TO SOUTH
AUSTRALIA'S
PARLIAMENT

Commissioner for First Nations Voice, South Australia