

Australia inquiry confirms Genocide against Indigenous Victorians



Published on July 3, 2025

Document Date: Sat, Jun 20 2026 04:35:52 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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MELBOURNE – A landmark inquiry has concluded that British colonists committed genocide against Indigenous Australians in Victoria, leading to the near-destruction of the Aboriginal population after colonization began in the 1830s.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission, Australia’s first Indigenous-led truth-telling body, released its findings after a four-year investigation. It found that the Indigenous population of Victoria

plummeted from 60,000 to 15,000 by 1851 driven by mass killings, disease, cultural erasure, child removals, and environmental degradation.

“This was genocide,” the report declared.

The Commission received over 1,300 submissions and held months of public hearings to document systemic injustices experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Its final report includes 100 recommendations, including reparations, comprehensive education reforms, greater Indigenous control over health services, and a formal apology to Aboriginal veterans excluded from land grants post-war.

While the findings were broadly supported, three of the five commissioners withheld approval of “key findings,” though no reasons were given.

Jill Gallagher, head of Victoria’s Aboriginal health peak body, called the genocide finding “indisputable,” urging all Australians to face the historical truth: “We don’t blame the living, but the living must act.”

In response, Premier Jacinta Allan said her government would “carefully consider” the report, which “shines a light on hard truths.”

The Yoorrook report marks the first of its kind nationally. Other states have launched similar initiatives, though some like Queensland have abandoned them following political shifts.

The inquiry follows a failed 2023 referendum that sought to enshrine an Indigenous advisory body, the Voice, into the Australian constitution.