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Australia Day Message from Tony Windsor MP Member for New England

Each year on Australia Day, the people of our great Nation have the opportunity to gather together and celebrate what it means to be Australians, what we have achieved and how we can work together to make our country an even greater place to live.

Australia Day means a lot of different things to different people and this in itself is a reflection of the freedoms we enjoy as a democratic country and the wide diversity of its many citizens.

Historically, Australia Day commemorates the raising of the Union Jack by Captain Arthur Phillip, Commander of the First Fleet, at Sydney Cove on 26 January, 1788, signalling the beginning of the Colony of New South Wales.

Over the years however, Australia Day has also helped to focus attention on a range of important issues such as the ongoing process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, the continued growth and development of our country as well as pride in our own Citizenship and Nationhood. It also provides us with an opportunity to honour the outstanding work and achievements of our citizens through the conferring of national and local awards and many people who have immigrated to Australia take their Pledge of Commitment at various Citizenship ceremonies conducted across our Nation.

Australia Day also sees the organisation of many hundreds of community activities and I would like to take this opportunity to commend the various local government councils and organisations who work tirelessly each year to coordinate these many free family events.

It is great to see the people of our Nation joining together in celebration and, whatever you choose to do on 26 January, whether it be organising a backyard barbecue, attending a local community event or just spending a quiet day at home, I hope that you have a great day and have the opportunity to celebrate with pride what it means to be an Australian.

Best wishes.

Tony Windsor MP
Member for New England