

Tom Calma

Dr Tom Calma is an Aboriginal elder from the Kungarakan tribal group and a member of the Iwaidja tribal group in the NT. He has been involved in Indigenous affairs at a local, community, state, national and international level and worked in the public sector for 40 years and is currently on a number of boards and committees focusing on rural and remote Australia, health, education, justice reinvestment and economic development.

Dr Calma, a consultant, is the National Coordinator, Tackling Indigenous Smoking where he leads the establishment and mentoring of 57 teams nationally to fight tobacco use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Dr Calma's most recent previous position was that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission from 2004 to 2010. He also served as Race Discrimination Commissioner from 2004 until 2009.

Through his 2005 Social Justice Report, Dr Calma called for the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to be closed within a generation and laid the groundwork for the Close the Gap campaign. The Close the Gap campaign has effectively brought national attention to achieving health equality for Indigenous people by 2030 and the need to address the social determinants of health to achieve equality.

Dr Calma is a strong advocate for Indigenous rights and empowerment and has spearheaded initiatives including the establishment of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples and Justice Reinvestment.

In 2010, Dr Calma was awarded an honorary doctor of letters from Charles Darwin University and in 2011, an honorary doctor of science from Curtin University.

In the Queen's Birthday 2012 Honours Awards Dr Calma was awarded an Order of Australia; Officer of the General Division (AO) and in December 2012 he was announced as the ACT Australian of the Year 2013.