



## Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

The national peak body for Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander children and families  
[www.snaicc.org.au](http://www.snaicc.org.au)

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

**17 March 2015**

#### **Statement by SNAICC Chairperson Sharron Williams**

### **Australia loses a great Aboriginal leader: vale Dr Alf Bamblett**

Australia has lost a tireless champion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights with the passing of Dr Alf Bamblett.

Dr Bamblett leaves behind a monumental legacy both in Victoria and at the national level, including the creation of SNAICC.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, he was the driving force behind the creation of numerous community-controlled agencies that would become the bedrock for the Aboriginal community in Victoria, including the Aborigines Advancement League, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, and Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL).

Dr Bamblett was an articulate and, when the need arose, feisty advocate advising the highest levels of government on issues such as Indigenous education, disadvantage, family violence, land rights, economic development and justice.

He became a long-serving chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee and helped draft the ground-breaking Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, which empowers Aboriginal participation and decision-making as the drivers for improving justice outcomes in the state.

At the national level, Dr Bamblett was instrumental in setting up SNAICC in the early 1980s as a response to the high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being removed from their families. His wife Muriel was also prominent in SNAICC's creation, and would go on to serve as Chairperson of SNAICC with great distinction.

As ATSIC Commissioner for Victoria in the 1990s, Dr Bamblett played an integral role in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and was an influential advocate on Indigenous economic development.

As well as fighting for the rights of Aboriginal people, Dr Bamblett's other great passions in life were his family and music. No social or cultural event in Melbourne was complete without Dr Bamblett's Stray Blacks band. And he was at his vibrant, energetic best when it came to karaoke sessions, or as he called it, Koorioke.

Dr Bamblett's passion, drive and vision will be greatly missed.

On behalf of the SNAICC National Executive and staff, I extend our deepest condolences to Muriel and her family.

**Media inquiries: Frank Hytten, SNAICC CEO, on (0432) 345 652;  
Giuseppe Stramandinoli, SNAICC Media Officer, (0419) 508 125**