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Press Release

We don't want an end to celebrations

Tasmanian Aboriginal leader Michael Mansell said after the large rally in support of 'change the date' in Hobart today that, "Non Aboriginal Australia must understand that we are not trying to spoil their public holiday, we are simply trying to get a change of date. This is a moral issue for the whole of Australia even though it has the biggest impact on Aboriginal people. We are not asking anyone to abandon their celebrations and we are not trying to make this an Aboriginal issue".

Mr Mansell said Tasmania is well placed to take the lead on the matter at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). "If Premier Hodgman can tell the other Premiers that the Tasmania government wants the date of celebration changed, we have no doubt the other Premiers will back him. Tasmania will be able to take the lead in Aboriginal Affairs once again. We urge the Premier to do at the first opportunity.

Mr Mansell said that around 1200 people turning out in support of changing the date on a beautiful summer day in Hobart is "a very firm indication that the pendulum has swung right behind us".

Michael Mansell

26.01.17