



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

Aboriginal Project 2011 Mardi Gras Parade Report and Evaluation



ACON acknowledges the traditional owners of the land we operate on across NSW and remind people we are on Aboriginal land. ACON also acknowledges the Elders and in particular those reading this document.

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1. Acknowledgements

Our Community

The parade entry would not have been the success it was without the community members driving it especially Lawrence Shearer, Peita Green (and your fancy big red truck!), Rusty Nannup, Tim Bishop and Brian Doyle.

A huge thank you to everyone who put time and energy into coming along to the community meetings, volunteering your time and then turning up to come along in the Mardi Gras parade.

A special thank you for Destiny Haz Arrived for gracing us with your presence!

Uncle Max Eulo

For doing a Smoking Ceremony the entire length of the Parade route.

Our Photographer

Kim Hill.

Koori Mail

Darren Coyne, photographer and the Editor Kirstie Parker for the front cover!

ACON & SWOP staff

Annaliese Constable, Tjana Ishter and James Parfitt.

Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW

Monique McEwan, Dina Saulo.

A sincere thank you to all others who helped with the float either by promoting it to potential participants or by assisting with organising it.



Kim Hill, photographer and Peita Green, big red truck organiser

2. Recommendations for future Mardi Gras parade participation

Recommendation 1: Investigate other ways to conduct a smoking ceremony with parade participants.

Recommendation 2: Continue to inviting our Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community elders to ride in the Cadillac of the parade entry.

Recommendation 3: Give volunteers one task only on the day.

Recommendation 4: Give each participant with a bottle of water a chocolate and a piece of fruit when participants register.

Recommendation 5: Continue to have the big red truck and music for the 2012 community parade entry.

Recommendation 6: Float Organiser to have a mobile phone for group sms to notify registered parade participants of community meetings.

Recommendation 7: Continue to have online Parade registrations and poster promoting the parade and call out for participants to display in venues.

Recommendation 8: Seek partnerships with organisational partners to put on future parade entries.

Recommendation 9: Seek internal ACON projects for parade entry administrative tasks as well as partnership building between both Projects.

Recommendation 10: Hold 2 community meetings to plan the parade entry.

Recommendation 11: Continue to convene an email group for all registered parade participants and an anonymous feedback box on the Aboriginal Project Mardi Gras page.

Recommendation 12: Promote the online anonymous online feedback links on the Aboriginal Project webpage at all community meetings & in handouts.

Recommendation 13: Continue to design a t shirt in consultation with our community for future Mardi Gras floats.

Recommendation 14: Continue with radio interviews, advertorial in Koori Mail, Aboriginal Project e-newsletter and posters.

Recommendation 15: Continue to have a registration day the day before the parade and hand out a show bag of information and a final participant information sheet.

Recommendation 16: Continue to have Kim Hill and the Koori Mail take photographs for future parade entries.

Recommendation 17: Promote the achievement that the First Australians community float entry won the 'Say Something' Award from Mardi Gras.

Recommendation 18: Have a meeting with New Mardi Gras prior to the 2012 First Australians community parade entry to talk about the media strategy for 2012.

Recommendation 19: Allocate one task only to each volunteer/staff person and ensure they are aware of their role and are supported to do this an ACON staff member.

Recommendation 20: Review the survey findings and think about how they can assist in planning future parade entries.

Recommendation 21: Table the anecdotal participant feedback at the first Community Meeting for planning the 2012 parade entry.

Recommendation 22: Conduct a formal evaluation and collection of anecdotal feedback with parade participants, at a follow up BBQ event and the post Parade wind down at the pub.

SWOP Recommendation 23: Seek a volunteer Media Officer through an internship.

SWOP Recommendation 24: Recruit more volunteers and give them specific tasks for the parade day with specific duties for specific volunteers.

SWOP Recommendation 25: Plan monthly meet ups of Parade Participants

SWOP Recommendation 26: Have a specific meeting up area for after the parade

SWOP Recommendation 27: Have our own little get together after the parade or liaise with New Mardi Gras about ticket donation.

SWOP Recommendation 28: Make up parade day info packs.

3. Background to our Mardi Gras Festival Participation

Aim

The primary aim of the First Australians float in the 2011 Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, was to bring the Aboriginal community and Torres Strait Islander community together to celebrate the diversity of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, sistergirl and brothaboy (GLBSB) community members, increase visibility and build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GLBS community . The second aim was to provide people with health promotion material especially sexual health and HIV information.

Target group

The target group was Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as being part of the GLBSB community as well as their family and friends who support them.

Participants

This year we had 102 parade participants.

Members of the community were encouraged to register for the parade entry via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander project website, or by contacting ACON on our Freecall telephone number. They could also register for the parade at the Yabun Festival and Fair Day. Participants in the parade entry were from all over Australia and the world. There were groups of parents and their children, Aunties supporting their nephews and nieces, groups of friends, families and single people.



Participants in the 'Survivors' parade entry

Cultural elements

As a float for Aboriginal people planned by Aboriginal people, we wanted to include a number of culturally appropriate elements as possible. We did this by:

- coming together at two community meetings to plan the parade entry
- having a smoking ceremony by Uncle Max
- displaying the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag
- inviting our Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community elders to ride in the Cadillac of the parade entry.



Sharny Chalmers, Uncle Max Eulo & friend, Kim Hill walking up the parade route.

New Mardi Gras invited the First Australians float to conduct a smoking ceremony along the entire parade route. Having Uncle Max do the smoking ceremony was seen to be a strong cultural element. While it was good to provide the smoking ceremony it was suggested in future parade participants be involved in future smoking ceremonies.

Recommendation 1 : Investigate other ways to conduct a smoking ceremony with parade participants.

The inclusion of community elders to ride in the Cadillac was appreciated by community members to be inclusive of our elders especially those who are unable to walk the parade route.

Recommendation 2: continue to inviting our Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community elders to ride in the Cadillac of the parade entry.

Logistics

The logistics of facilitating 102 people was challenging.

In keeping with our tradition of giving food to our participants prior to the march, ACON approached our partner, the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW, to provide staff to assist us with putting on the parade due to lack of staff numbers in the Aboriginal Project. This one staff member was given three jobs

- to assist in registering people on the day
- to buy one bbq sandwich and one drink for each 102 parade participants
- undertake a survey of parade participants.

It was very lucky the volunteer staff member brought an assistant along, but there were too many tasks to complete.

Recommendation 3: Give volunteers one task only on the day.

Purchasing food and drink for over 100 people in a one hour marshalling period was hard work and not everyone got food in the end. One reason was the number of staff buying the food but also the crowds lining up to also buy food and the fact the food had to be cooked. A better way to provide refreshments to participants would be to give them something when they picked up their wristbands from ACON hours before they are due to marshalling. This would cut down on tasks in the marshalling area also.

Recommendation 4: Give each participant with a bottle of water a chocolate and a piece of fruit when participants register.

Theme and Float Decoration

The theme for the 2011 Mardi Gras parade was "Say Something". At the first community meeting it was decided the theme of the float should be 'Survivors' (please see the Attachments for the notes of the two community meetings). This was to acknowledge the survival not only of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, but especially of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gay, lesbian, bisexual people, sistergirls and brothaboys.

One of our community members volunteered a big red truck to be in the parade entry.

It was decided at the first community meeting that we would have music and from the back of the red truck as well as Uncle Max in there doing the smoking ceremony. This was to create a sense of atmosphere and to attract attention to the float.

Recommendation 5: Continue to have the big red truck and music for the 2012 community parade entry.



Participants around the big red truck

Participant Demographics

Where participants registered

Online	60
Phone	21
Community Meetings	17
Fair Day	4
	Total 102

This year's float saw 100 registered participants apply and 2 media passes. Many people registered online but the introduction of the Freecall phone for registrations worked well. The number of participants at the community meetings was really great. At the first community meeting there were 6 people in attendance (excluding 3 ACON staff).

At the second community meeting there were 17 in attendance (excluding 2 ACON staff).

The attendance numbers show the interest by the community in the parade entry. Participants were sent group e-mails, updating them on parade information and dates for community meetings. This was a great way for the participants to be informed on meetings and any changes to the parade. Participants who don't have access to email were called on the phone. This made communication very hard as when staff call on an ACON phone line, the recipient sees 'Private Number' come up on their phone. All ACON phone lines call out as 'Private Number' This is a barrier to services when people are screening their calls.

Recommendation 6: Float organiser to have a mobile phone for group sms to notify registered parade participants of community meetings.

Having posters at various outlets and sent out to our hardcopy mailing list worked well. It helped get the community awareness about the float and parade.

Recommendation 7: Continue to have online Parade registrations and poster promoting the parade and call out for participants to display in venues.



Participants in the first Australians parade entry

4. Budget

Expenses	
Parade registration fee	100
Welcome to Country fees	500
Uncle Max smoking ceremony fee	320
Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council speaker fee	
150 t- shirts and singlets	2400
Food for parade participants	260
Cadillac for parade	880
Generator, CD player, speakers	206
Petrol for truck	50
Signs	520
Handles, paints, glitter, drill, screws	1684
Bubble cut outs	
Total	\$6920

5. “First Australians” Parade Entry

Partnerships

Due to short staffing in the Aboriginal Project, ACON approached two of our partners, the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW and the Kirkton Road Centre, and asked them for approval for their staff to assist in planning and putting on the parade entry as time work time.

This worked well and without the assistance of these staff, Monique McEwan & Dina Saulo from the AH&MRC and Brian Doyle from the Kirkton Road Centre, the parade entry would not have been so successful.

James Parfitt from the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) also assisted in putting on the parade entry. He assisted in the community meeting and was available on the day. He even dressed up as Condoman for the parade!

Recommendation 8: Seek partnerships with organisational partners to put on future parade entries.

We also had partnerships internally at ACON, with Annaliese taking notes for both community meetings and Sharny Chalmers from the HIV + Wellness Program assisting Uncle Max up the parade route. This was a great opportunity for our community members to be able to meet Annaliese and Sharny to put a ‘name to a face’ for this Project.

Recommendation 9: Seek internal ACON projects for parade entry administrative tasks as well as partnership building between both Projects.

Planning the parade entry

Following the principles of community development and self determination, the Aboriginal Project Team Leader facilitated two community meetings to plan the parade entry. The aim was to give people an overview of the 2011 parade logistics namely the new marshalling area food and drinks stalls. Please review the Appendix for the notes from the two community meetings as well as the handout flyers given during these two meetings.

The most important outcomes from the two community meetings were:

- Design and plan of the float theme ‘Survivors’
- Coming together and ownership by the community

- The donation of resources to the parade entry.

Participants in community meetings

Community Meeting No.1 9 Feb 2011	9 people (6 community members, 2 staff, 1 AH&MRC staff member)
Community Meeting No. 2 23 Feb 2011	18 people (2 staff, 1 SWOP staff member, 1 AH&MRC staff member, 1 Kirkton Road staff member)

There were 6 community members at the first meeting and 13 community members at the second meeting. This shows an increasing interest by the community into the ownership of the parade entry which we want to encourage and grow. The community meetings are fundamental to the planning and delivery of the First Australians float in the Sydney Mardi Gras parade.

Recommendation 10: Hold 2 community meetings to plan the parade entry.

To be inclusive of parade participants who were not able to attend the community meetings, we introduced a new planning process online where community members could provide feedback and suggestions. This was done through an email group as well as anonymous feedback on the Aboriginal Project webpage.

Recommendation 11: Continue to convene an email group for all registered parade participants and an anonymous feedback box on the Aboriginal Project Mardi Gras page.

There was no anonymous online feedback received which could mean everyone was satisfied or they did not know about this option. Increased use of the anonymous online feedback option must be a high priority for future parade entries and promoting them at all opportunities must be a priority.

Recommendation 12: Promote the online anonymous online feedback links on the Aboriginal Project webpage at all community meetings & in handouts.

T – Shirts

It was decided at the first community meeting that the parade participants should be given shirts and singlets with our theme printed on it, just like in the 2010 parade entry. Participants still had the option to dress up in costume or traditional dress if they desired, but for those who did not have a costume having the t-shirt was a good unifying item for the parade entry.

It was decided in the first community meeting the theme of the parade entry would be 'Survivors'. At this meeting the image for the t-shirts was workshopped and participants decided on having footsteps on the front to symbolise moving ahead, walking ahead and the survival of our people.



Front design of the t-shirts

SURVIVOR



Back design of the t-shirts

The back of the shirt was the word 'survivor'. In the first community meeting the t-shirt concept was created. This concept was presented to ACON's internal graphic designers who developed the design. The first draft was presented to the community at the second community meeting for their feedback and suggestions for changes.

Any left over shirts/singlets have been stored at ACON, to be used for future community events. The shirt/singlet design was made in a way, which did not limit the usage to the Mardi gras festival.

Recommendation 13: Continue to design a t shirt in consultation with our community for future Mardi Gras floats.

Signs for parade participants

The theme for the 2011 Mardi Gras was 'Say Something'. To really say something it was decided to give parade participants speech bubbles with words in them. This was a continuation of the Mardi Gras theme as they also used a specific speech bubble design in their promotion of the parade. The speech bubbles were filled with pride, political and Aboriginal words. Some speech bubbles read:

- Tiddas
- Stop interventin'
- Poofta pride

- This is Gadigal Land
- It's a pride thing
- I heart the Block
- Cock-a-doodle doooooo
- Hello Capitan
- Lezzo Love
- Deadly
- Treaty now
- We have survived
- Koori doori
- Stop hate crimes
- Freedom is a right worth fighting for
- There's nothing I would rather be than be an Aborigine
- 60,000 years
- Dyke
- Free, gay and happy
- Black velvet
- Love your brothers and sisters
- Land rights
- Shake your din!



Participants in the First Australians float 'Survivors'

Promoting the parade entry

The 2011 parade entry was promoted utilising several mediums these included:

- one radio interview on Koori Radio 93.7FM
- one radio interview on National Indigenous Radio
- Aboriginal Project E-news mail outs
- Posters mailed directly to a range of community members and organisations.

All these mediums directed people to the ACON website and the Aboriginal Project, where interested participants could register to join the parade.

Thanks to parade volunteer Lawrence Shearer for organising and then being on the air for promoting the parade on Koori Radio and National Indigenous Radio. Without such a dedicated volunteer this would not have happened.

The were placed at many different community organisations such as Redfern Community Centre, Redfern AMS and various sex on premises venues around Sydney. Posters were also sent to coastal and rural organisations around NSW.

See the appendix for copy of 2011 Mardi Gras poster.

Recommendation 14: Continue with radio interviews, advertorial in Koori Mail, Aboriginal Project e-newsletter and posters.

Registration and T-Shirt pick up day

There was registration held on Friday 5 March February, the day before the parade. Participants in Sydney metropolitan area were required to come into the ACON office between 10:00am and 7:00pm. They came into register for the parade and collect show bags (filled with safe sex information) and a t-shirt or singlet and final parade information sheet. See appendix for this information sheet. Out of 100 registered participants a number of 50 attended. This was a great way for the participants to familiarize themselves with the venue for marshalling and to meet Aboriginal Project staff. Some participants took showbags for non participants in the parade.

Recommendation 15: Continue to have a registration day the day before the parade and hand out a show bag of information and a final participant information sheet.

The day of the Parade

On Saturday 5 March 2011 participants were asked to drop into ACON 9 Commonwealth St Surry Hills anytime between 10am and 6pm to register and pick up their wristbands. The wristband was the only way participants could get into the parade.

Last year it was identified to have 'Parade Helpers' identified at community meetings to assist people in finding toilets and marshalling. We did not have Parade Helpers but rather had the one staff person from the AH&MRC, their support person and the staff member from Kirkton Road Centre. The jobs of the Parade Helpers was not shared equally among them all so it was

A community member, Kim Hill and Darren Coyne from the Koori Mail, were our two photographers on the day. It was great to have these two people to document our parade entry as they had done it the previous year also.

Recommendation 16: Continue to have Kim Hill and the Koori Mail take photographs for future parade entries



Destiny Haz Arrived leading the First Australians float

Since the Parade Entry

Our parade entry won the "Say Something" Award from Mardi Gras. This is a great achievement and recognition for the parade entrants who came along and said something about being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and our GLBTSB brothers and sisters.

Recommendation 17: Promote the achievement that the First Australians community float entry won the 'Say Something' Award from Mardi Gras.

Since the Parade Entry we have received verbal feedback from community members about their experiences. This year was the first year we were invited to do smoking ceremony and some people felt the media did a disservice to the parade participants by not having them in the media promotions

Recommendation 18: Have a meeting with New Mardi Gras prior to the 2012 First Australians community parade entry to talk about the media strategy for 2012.



The First Australian's parade entry 'Survivors'

6. Evaluation

Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation is an important component of the project and information gathered will shape our planning for future parade entries we facilitate.

We use the following ways to collect information

- On the ACON Aboriginal Project webpage
- Counting the number of participants at the community meetings
- Incidental feedback collected from parade participants
- Feedback from a survey of parade participants
- Anonymous feedback form on the ACON Aboriginal Project webpage before and after the parade.

We use this information to collate an Evaluation Report as well as the Funding Acquittal to our funding body, NSW Health.

Survey of Parade Participants

A survey was conducted with participants of the First Australian float in the 2011 Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade. The aim of the survey as to gather information from parade participants around agency accessibility and service provisions to better inform future programs and services. Please find attached the tick a box template used.

The survey was conducted by two volunteers (one being the AH&MRC staff member and the other the mother of the AH&MRC staff member) with a copy each of the survey on clipboards during the one hour when participants registered and picked up their entry wristband and signs to carry in the parade. These two staff also had the job of taking food orders and going to buy the food for all parade participants. They were to be assisted by another staff member hired for the day but due to family commitments, they did not assist. Twelve participants participated in this survey out of 102 who registered on the day, meaning 11% of parade participants gave feedback for the survey. Information about the survey is given here to show what we wanted to achieve and was a good idea. The tasks of purchasing food for all parade participants and getting all parade participants to answer questions for the survey meant that both tasks were not done to the best ability.

Recommendation 19: Allocate one task only to each volunteer/staff person and ensure they are aware of their role and are supported to do this an ACON staff member.

Survey Questions and Feedback

First Australians float 'Survivors' 2011

How did you hear about us?

- 75% of the participants indicated that they had heard about ACON through their friends.
- 16.6% of the participants indicated that they had heard about ACON through a service provider.
- 8.3% of the participants indicated that they had heard about ACON via the Mardi gras poster.
- No participant indicated that they had heard about ACON by either E-news, SX/SSO or at Fair Day.

Have you used ACON services before?

- 33% of the participants answered yes.
- 66% of the participants answered no.

Would you use an ACON service now?

- 83% of the participants answered yes.
- 16.6% of the participants answered no.

Would you suggest us to your friends?

- 100% of the participants answered yes.

Recommendation 20: Review the survey findings and think about how they can assist in planning future parade entries.

Anecdotal Participant Feedback

Anecdotal feedback is information workers collect, and recall from yarns with participants and other community members.

The anecdotal feedback we received was

- Can we have next year a dance routine for everyone to do together
- There weren't enough black faces in the float, can there be more advertising in rural NSW to encourage people to come to Sydney for the parade
- Is it possible to have didge players or some local performers singing
- Are we able next year to have more of a focus on traditional culture
- Speak to Mardi Gras about the media coverage of the First Australians float

Recommendation 21: Table the anecdotal participant feedback at the first Community Meeting for planning the 2012 parade entry.

Unfortunately we did not conduct a formal evaluation of the Parade entry with participants.

Recommendation 22: Conduct a formal evaluation and collection of anecdotal feedback with parade participants, at a follow up BBQ event and the post Parade wind down at the pub.

Mardi Gras Parade Coordinator Feedback

Meggan Grose

Planning this Mardi Gras Parade Entry was a challenge as we were missing our two most proud community members and ACON staff members – Cassandra Anderson and Michael Blakeney – Campbell. Their spirit was with me while working with our community to put this parade entry on.

It was great to have high community participation in planning the entry and even on the day we were turning back people who wanted to register on the day. Each and every year the popularity of the First Australians float grows as more and more of our community want to be out and proud either for themselves or to support their GLBT sisters and brothers. It was a pleasure to be involved in this most popular community developments & performance arts event.

What worked well

1. Community meeting attendance
2. T-Shirts for all participants
3. Gift bags given to participants before the parade.

What didn't work so well

1. Having staff do more than one job
2. Participants not assisting on parade day because it's just too exciting!

SWOP Aboriginal Worker Feedback

James Parfitt

This was my first Mardi Gras Parade and I must say I enjoyed the whole experience. I believe that the organising team before and on the day made a huge effort. I thought that the pre meetings were great and beneficial, especially knowing that the design of the shirts to the amount of numbers of the parade and organising those people on the day.

What worked well for 2011

- The Parade Coordinator, Meggan.
- The weekly meetings pre parade. It was a good time to meet other participants as well as organising the shirts, cars etc.
- The very small team who created the sign's and banners. More help would have been appreciated.
- The shirts. They showed a stance of unity and sending the same message.

What didn't work so well 2011

- Security after the parade. As we was the first to finish the police and security where not quite ready and an incident did occur with one of the participants being harassed.
- Not enough helpers on the day.
- Parade organisers not telling us of the change of entrance to parade marshalling area.

I would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

SWOP Recommendation 23: Seek a volunteer Media Officer through an internship.

A person to handle media questions and Media release especially at the time of the Indigenous parade passing the main media cameras and TV hosts. Have media release information ready, especially info about the importance of the smoking ceremony, importance of Elders and brief history of the parade float.

SWOP Recommendation 24: Recruit more volunteers and give them specific tasks for the parade day with specific duties for specific volunteers.

Rough figures of volunteers needed:

- 1x personal assistant (PA) for the day for the Parade Coordinator.
- 2 x people to handle the marshalling.
- 1 person at the marshalling area before the parade
- 1 x person at the parade start itself
- 1 x person to run people back and forth

- 3 x people handling and organising the food/drinks and odds and ends.
- 2 x people to organise the signs, before and after March.

SWOP Recommendation 25: Monthly meet ups of Parade Participants

A suggestion was made by a community member to meet up around once a month to keep information up to date regarding the float, keep the vibe going and introducing more of our mob to ACON and SWOP services.

Staff could use this time to make contacts to better target our clients in the professional arena. Information share is a two way street. It would be a valuable to use this time to do an "Indigenous Sexual Health Survey".

SWOP Recommendation 26: Have a specific meeting up area for after the parade

The majority of the 2011 entrants I spoke to was about having no where to change and no where to gather after parade, there was also an incident where one of the parade marchers where harassed by 4 trouble makers. So to have a safer environment as well as the interstaters and out of towners have a place to just yarn up afterwards and share their experiences

SWOP Recommendation 27: Have our own little get together after the parade or liaise with New Mardi Gras about ticket donation.

The majority of our mob could not afford the Mardi Gras after party tickets and having our own small event could bring more unity to the Indigenous GLBTIS community.

Having most of ACON and SWOP'S Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients at the same place and the same time could be used as a great time to deal with and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sexual health issues as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GLBTIS issues.

SWOP Recommendation 28: Make up parade day info packs

I thought of having small giveaway info packs that would include the normal relevant information as well as minor information about

- Transportation information for after the Mardi Gras, buses and trains
- Sexual Health promotional material, i.e. Condoms, lubes and dams
- Information about after party (if we have one)
- Sexual health info booklet

7. Appendix

Notes from the two community meetings

First Australians Mardi Gras Float

Community Meeting 1 Notes

Wednesday February 9, 2011

Chair: Meggan

Notetaker: Annaliese

Attendance: Meggan, Lawrence, Rusty, Tim, Dina, Ronnie, Peita, Siri, Annaliese

GENERAL INFORMATION

Announcements

- This year there will be food stalls, toilets and non-alcoholic drinks available in the parade marshalling area.
- There will be Freecall phone option for the First Australians Float for people who do not have online access.
- New Mardi Gras (NMG) have invited the First Australians float to be the first official float of the parade following the 'rev up' from the Dykes on Bikes.

Decisions

- Any people who register for the float but do not show up on the day will have their arm bands redistributed to people who may turn up unexpectedly on the day.
- Group accepted invitation but reiterated that there needs to be a flow from their float to the following float so as to create a unity and ensure there is no separateness to the First Australians float with the rest of the parade.

ACTION – Siri to seek payment from NMG for Uncle Max and the smoking ceremony to be done throughout the entire parade route.

THEME

Announcement: The theme for Mardi Gras is 'say something'. This theme is made visual by having empty speech bubbles that individuals can fill in themselves.

Decisions:

- The First Australians Float will carry large speech bubble signs (with wind holes) with different political messages.
- The speech bubbles will be different colours reflecting the Aboriginal and also Torres Strait Islander flags.
- The overall theme of the First Australians Float will be survival – "I have survived", "40,000 years of survival", 'Surviving and thriving', 'Survival Day'.
- T-shirt design to have footprints on the front and the word 'SURVIVOR' on the back.

ACTION: Meggan to book ACON room for parade registration day Friday march 4th. This space will also be used to paint banners/speech bubbles.

ACTION: Meggan to seek separate change areas for women and men to get ready on the day of the parade.

ACTION: Meggan to get draft design of t-shirts for next community meeting.

Decision: There will be 4 songs for the float. The following two songs were decided on:

- Nothing I'd rather be than Aboriginal
- We have survived

The other ideas for songs included:

- I will survive
- Say it loud I'm black and proud
- Treaty – Yothu Yindi

ACTION: Rusty to explore records for a 'raunchy' black song

LOGISTICS

Decision: To have Uncle Max travel on the back of Peita's (registered) vintage international harvesting truck

ACTION: Peita to send photos of truck to Meggan.

ACTION: Lawrence to ask Uncle Max if he is okay to be on the back of the truck to do the smoking ceremony near the sound system.

Decision: That the organisers of the First Australians float should be the people to look after Uncle Max. Pick him up, get him home. It was suggested that one person could be nominated to look after the elders.

ACTION: Lawrence to bring full size Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag to parade.

ACTION: Meggan to ask registered Torres Strait Islander participant if they would like to carry the Torres Strait Islander flag.

PROMOTION

Announcement:

- Koori Mail are sending a reporter to take photos on the day of the parade.
- The event is in the Koori mail calendar.
- Koori radio will be doing an interview.

Decision: All participants need to be informed that they should only bring what they want to carry along the entire route and that they may need to throw things out that they are not willing to carry. Inform everyone the float does not return to ACON.

ACTION: Tim to leave car at end of parade route for sound system storage.

Decision: That the First Australians Float choose or be part of the decision about who travels in the car AMS provides. Or that the car not be used at all and the funds previously used to pay for the car be redistributed to transporting Uncle Max and the sound system etc. If the AMS car is involved it should travel behind the First Australians Float. Communicate to AMS if they are unhappy with this situation that the First Australians Float are happy to support the AMS's nomination for their own float.

ACTION: Meggan to ask Nic to communicate this decision to AMS.

Decision: The float T-Shirt will be white and will have two footprints on the front and "survivor" on the back in black.

ACTION: Meggan to organise design and circulate to group.

Next Meeting - Wednesday 23 February 5pm – 6pm ACON 9 Commonwealth St Surry Hills, Lower Ground Level room 10. Phone Meggan on 9206 2042 or 1800 063 060 for more info.

First Australians Mardi Gras Float Community Meeting 2 Notes

Wednesday 23 February 23 2011

Chair: Meggan

Minutes: Annaliese

Attendance: Meggan, Lawrence, Rusty, Tim, Dina, Ronnie, Cliff, Elizabeth, Francis, James, Wendy, John, Phillip, Morris, Trent, Colin, Destiny, Annaliese (I've missed a few can you remember?)

Agenda

1. Minutes from last meeting
2. Parade Briefing Day – Friday March 4
3. Parade Day - Saturday March 5

1. Minutes from last meeting

Overview of Parade

- First Australians Float is before Chief of Parade
- Uncle Max doing Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. Smoking ceremony will continue up route on the back of Peita's Red Vintage truck. Rusty described the colour as 'follow me home and fuck me red'.
- First Australians Float theme is 'Survival'
- Songs have been chosen and include 'I'm a survivor'.
- Perhaps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag to be attached to truck.
- People will be carrying speech bubbles to fit with Say Something theme of Mardi Gras. speech bubbles can be filled with your own message.
- There are 20 large speech bubbles to be carried (with air holes built in)
- There is a limit of 100 people for the float.
- You can register online.
- You can register for other people and pass on the information.
- There will be dressing spaces on parade day separated by gender.
- First Australians Float position is A1.
- There are 135 floats. The parade goes for 4 hours in total and starts at 7:45.
- 450 000 people watch on Foxtel
- 500 000 watch on the streets
- There will be a Koori radio announcement
- The float has 40 registrations so far

ACTION – The tailgate of the ute needs to be checked to see if it can sit straight and how much weight it can take if is flat. If the tailgate is upright it needs to be checked for safety in terms of how well it locks in place.

ACTION – Extra flags will be handed out to punters along the route.

T-Shirt

- White T-shirts. Footprint on front. 'Survivor' on back. Koori flag and Torres Strait Islander flag on back as well as ACON website address.

2. Parade Briefing Day – Friday March 4

- All people registered for the First Australians Float must attend the Briefing Day at ACON to pick up your wrist band which will gain you access to the march.
- You can send a representative to pick up your shirt and collect information and your wristband as long as you are already registered.
- You need to bring photo ID
- Will find out on briefing day what time to be at ACON for parade day.
- This day is for preparing the large speech bubbles and smaller individual speech bubbles. These messages are to be based around the 'survival' theme and should be strong and political.
- Idea to have large speech bubble travelling on red truck with Uncle Max
- People can register up until the 4th (Friday)

ACTION – Meggan to scan and distribute map of marshalling area.

ACTION – Meggan to look for photos of first Koori float in Mardi Gras 1986 . Keep these for future use.

3. Parade Day - Saturday March 5, 10am – 6pm at ACON

- You need to bring photo ID
- Nobody is allowed to be intoxicated or to be carrying alcohol in the marshalling area or at ACON.
- Only bring with you what you are willing to carry on the 5km parade bearing in mind you may also be carrying a speech bubble sign.
- Each First Australians Float participant will be allocated \$10 for food and a drink in the marshalling area.
- Redfern AMS unable to confirm car as of yet. ACON is investigating options.
- Lawrence said Jeffrey Samuels (who can't walk the entire route) wants to come so a car would be good. Rusty seconded this. It was agreed that only people who require assistance walking can have access to the car if one is provided.
- The order of the First Australians Float will be – Red truck and Uncle Max then people on foot then the AMS car.
- New Mardi Gras provides 2 'parade angels' to help the floats move along smoothly and to minimise gaps and jams. If people are warned many times by the angels they may be asked to leave the parade..
- 3 photographers on day – Kim Hill + 2 others. Koori Mail will be there too.
- NITV – Chris Bonny may be coming to parade (TBC)

- 2 celebrities involved in float – Codoman! and Destiny Haz Arrived!

ACTION – Ronnie said he will ask the elders at the Werrigal Centre about their involvement in parade if car can be provided.

ACTION – Press release or public information about float to be released. The group needs to nominate a spokesperson. Lawrence was nominated.

ACTION – Lawrence to make notes re: media for Foxtel etc so announcers know what the float is about and the message that it carries. Also the significance of it's positioning.

Next Important Date!

Friday 4 March from 10am until 7pm

All registered participants – or their nominee – MUST drop into ACON 9 Commonwealth St Surry Hills to pick up their 'SURVIVOR' t-shirt and last minute information about picking up your wristband and directions into the marshalling area.

Have a happy and safe Mardi Gras!

See you at ACON on Friday 4 March from 10am until 7pm.

ACON Aboriginal Project

First Australians Parade Entry

Mardi Gras Parade 2011

Very Important Information

- All participants in the Parade Entry will be **walking**. The only people in a car will be community Elders provided by Redfern AMS.
- You **MUST** come to the **Pre Parade Briefing Day** at ACON 9 Commonwealth St Surry Hills on **Friday 4 March between 10am and 6pm**.
- If you have **friends or family** who are thinking about coming in the parade entry, get them to register online at www.acon.org.au because if you are not registered you cannot participate!
- Start thinking about **your outfit**. How will you stand out in the parade entry? This year we want participants to SAY IT LOUD.
- Are you signed up for the **email updates** about our parade entry? Sign up today at mgrose@acon.org.au or call Meggan on 9206 2000.

On the day of the Parade

What to Bring

- Costumes, flags, props, signs – get creative with the theme ‘Say Something’ – but remember you are responsible for items you bring and will have to carry it the whole night
- Snacks
- A small backpack you can carry all night
- Comfortable shoes
- Sun protection
- Medication
- Plans for how you will get home

What Not To Bring

- Friends or family who are not registered!
- Glass
- Alcohol
- Drugs

REMEMBER: The parade is great fun but it’s also a very long day. You need to be available from 12pm at least to be marshalled in the parade. The parade doesn’t conclude until around 10pm so get a good night’s sleep the night before, wear good shoes and carry a small backpack with snacks!

STAY SAFE THIS MARDI GRAS SEASON!

Community Meeting number 2 hand out

ACON Aboriginal Project

First Australians Parade Entry Mardi Gras Parade 2011

Very Important Information

**You MUST come to ACON 9
Commonwealth St Surry Hills
tomorrow Saturday 5 March between
4pm and 5pm to pick up your wrist
band.**

**Once you get your wrist band proceed
to the **Participant Entry Gate** and get in
by 6:30pm. It's located on the map
attached.**

On the day of the Parade

What to Bring

- **Photo ID** – if you don't have it you won't be let it the Parade
- **Money** for the food & drink stalls in the Marshalling area and the End of Parade areas.
- **Costumes, flags, props, signs** – get creative with the theme 'Say Something' – but remember you are responsible for items you bring and will have to carry it the whole night
- **Snacks**
- A small **backpack** you can carry all night
- **Comfortable shoes**
- **Sun protection**
- **Medication**
- Plans for **how you will get home**

What Not To Bring


- **Alcohol** – people will be breath tested in the marshalling area and removed if drunk
- Fireworks, projectiles, things to throw into the crowd
- **Glass**
- **Drugs**

REMEMBER: The parade is great fun but it's also a very long day. The parade doesn't conclude until around 10pm so get a good night's sleep the night before, wear good shoes and carry a small backpack with snacks!

STAY SAFE THIS MARDI GRAS SEASON!

The Parade Entry Mardi Gras poster

SYDNEY MARDI 11 ABORIGINAL GAY & LESBIAN GRAS AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARADE ENTRY



JOIN US IN OUR PARADE ENTRY

TO REGISTER BY
1 MARCH AT WWW.ACON.ORG.AU/ABORIGINAL OR FREECALL 1800 063 060.

SYDNEY MARDI 11
GAY & LESBIAN GRAS



acon
BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

Show bag contents list

- ACON's Mardi Gras info postcard
- ACON Aboriginal Project postcard
- ACON Aboriginal Project female and male safe sex packs
- NSW Health Safe sex playing cards
- ACON STI gay men booklet