

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service invites you to webinar two of

# UNLOCKING VICTORIAN JUSTICE

## Aboriginal Community Justice Reports Project: Improving sentencing outcomes and reducing overincarceration of Aboriginal people

### Wednesday 10 March, 9am - 10.15am

### Registration Link: [tinyurl.com/UVJacjr](https://tinyurl.com/UVJacjr)

In 2017, the Australian Law Reform Commission recommended that State and Territory Governments, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, 'develop and implement schemes that would facilitate the preparation of 'Indigenous Experience Reports.' In 2018, the Victorian Government and the Aboriginal Justice Caucus **committed to piloting Aboriginal Community Justice Reports over the five-year period of Burra Lotjpa Dunguludja: Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement Phase 4.**

The Reports, modelled on Canada's Gladue Reports, and adapted for the Victorian context, will include a more **holistic account of individual circumstances**, including as they relate to a person's **community, culture and strengths**, as well as making recommendations regarding community-based options.

Join us for a panel of Australian and Canadian experts, who will **discuss the background and benefits of these Reports, and how to participate in the Project.**



**Judge Lawson**  
Judge in Charge  
of the County  
Court Koori Court  
Division  
Opening Speaker



**Nerita Waight**  
CEO of the  
Victorian  
Aboriginal Legal  
Service  
Panellist



**Larissa Behrendt**  
Associate Dean  
(Indigenous  
Research) at the  
University of  
Technology Sydney  
Panellist



**Lyne St-Louis**  
Founder and  
Director of Taiga  
Vision in Quebec,  
Canada  
Panellist



**Jonathan Rudin**  
Program Director  
at Aboriginal Legal  
Services in Canada  
Panellist



**Thalia Anthony**  
Professor of Law  
at the University of  
Technology Sydney  
Panellist

Andreea Lachs, Senior Policy, Research and Advocacy Officer at VALS, will be the panel moderator.



Victorian Aboriginal  
Legal Service

Our ACJR project partners are:



We acknowledge and respect the Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of the land that our office is located on.

You can find out more about the work of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service here [vals.org.au](https://vals.org.au), and support our work here [vals.org.au/donate](https://vals.org.au/donate).

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## **Judge Lawson**

Judge in Charge of the County Court Koori Court Division, Opening Speaker

Judge Lawson was appointed to the County Court in 2002. Currently she is the Judge in Charge of the County Court Koori Court division. Judge Lawson has a long association with the Koori Court having participated in the working party that led to the formation of the division in the Court. In 2008 she was the inaugural Judge in Charge. She has seen the Koori Court grow from the initial pilot that was conducted in the Latrobe Valley to its expansion to Melbourne, Mildura, Shepparton and Warrnambool.

Her Honour has a long-term commitment to improving access to justice for all and for providing for fair court processes. The Koori Court respects Aboriginal traditions and culture and one of the great features of the Koori Court is the participation of Elders & Respected Persons and Koori Court Officers who bring to the court their lived experiences, knowledge, history and culture and reflect the richness and diversity of Aboriginal communities in Australia.



## **Nerita Waight**

CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, Panellist

Nerita Waight is a Yorta Yorta woman and the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS). Nerita began her career in the public service before commencing work at VALS in 2014 to undertake both legal and policy work. As the CEO, Nerita is focused on developing innovative solutions to ensure that VALS provides legal and community justice supports at the earliest point and in a culturally safe and caring way.



## **Larissa Behrendt**

Associate Dean (Indigenous Research) at the University of Technology Sydney, Panellist

Distinguished Professor Larissa Behrendt is Associate Dean (Indigenous Research) at the University of Technology Sydney and the Director of Research and Academic Programs at the Jumbunna Institute. She is a lawyer, and an award winning writer and filmmaker. Larissa is the Chair of the Cathy Freeman Foundation, a Trustee of the Australian Museum, a board member of the Sydney Community Fund and a member of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. She is also the host of Speaking Out on ABC Radio National and the ABC local radio network.



## **Thalia Anthony**

Professor of Law at the University of Technology Sydney, Panellist

Thalia Anthony is a Professor of Law at the University of Technology Sydney and collaborates with researchers from the UTS Jumbunna Indigenous Institute for Indigenous Education and Research. Her research specialises in the criminal justice system and its intersections with colonisation. Dr Anthony's research projects seek to challenge the ways in which law enforcement systems engage with First Nations peoples and families. She works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, including the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, to enhance the role of self-determination and strengths-based approaches within and beyond the criminal justice system. Her books include *Indigenous People, Crime and Punishment* (2013) and *Decolonising Criminology* (2019).

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**Jonathan Rudin**

Program Director at Aboriginal Legal Services in Canada, Panellist

Jonathan Rudin received his LL.B. and LL.M. from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. In 1990 he was hired to establish Aboriginal Legal Services and has been with ALS ever since. Currently he is the Program Director. Mr. Rudin has appeared before all levels of court, including the Supreme Court of Canada representing ALS in *R v. Ipeelee*. At ALS he helped establish the Community Council – the first urban Aboriginal justice program in Canada in 1992, and in 2001 helped establish the Gladue (Aboriginal Persons) Court at the Old City Hall Courts in Toronto. Mr. Rudin has written and spoken widely on issues of Indigenous justice. His book, *Indigenous People and the Criminal Justice System* was released by Emond Publishing in 2018 and won the Walter Owen Book Prize from the Canadian Foundation for Legal Research in 2019. Mr. Rudin also teaches on a part-time basis in the Department of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at York University. Last but not least, he plays the mandolin and sings with Gordon's Acoustic Living Room, a group that plays regularly in Toronto and has a number of videos on YouTube.



**Lyne St-Louis**

Founder and Director of Taiga Vision in Quebec, Canada, Panellist

Lyne St-Louis is the founder and director of Taiga Vision in Quebec, Canada, an organisation which supports Aboriginal programs to offer and promote holistic and culturally meaningful ways to intervene with their people within the justice and correctional system continuum. She has worked with 25 Aboriginal communities in Quebec at different levels, particularly in the development and implementation of community justice structures based on the values, legal traditions, realities and needs of each Aboriginal community. In early 2012, she introduced Gladue reports in Québec. Lyne St-Louis is a psychoeducator, and a mediator in criminal, social and workplace matters. She is a trainer, writer and editor of Gladue reports. She was also in charge of the regional Inuit Justice Program in Nunavik from October 2014 to July 2018. In January 2014, she co-founded the First Peoples Justice Centre of Montreal.



**Andreea Lachs**

Senior Policy, Research and Advocacy Officer at VALS, Panel Moderator

Andreea Lachs is the Senior Policy, Research and Advocacy Officer at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service. Previously, at the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, she supported Elders in Law and Justice groups in remote Aboriginal communities to prepare letters for Northern Territory Local Court and Supreme Court judges sentencing Aboriginal people.



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