



MEDIA RELEASE

(Embargoed to Wednesday 26 January 2011)

Twelve “Australians of the Year” Call for a New Flag

The Chairman of Ausflag, the Hon Robert Webster, today released a statement by twelve “Australians of the Year” calling for a new flag. Their statement is as follows:

OUR OWN FLAG

We, the undersigned, have been extremely fortunate to have experienced the great honour and privilege of being chosen as Australians of the Year.

This role has deepened both our knowledge of and love for our unique nation.

Australia Day is the most appropriate day on which to reflect upon our identity. And there is no other symbol which better defines a nation’s identity than its flag.

Our current flag, only formally adopted in 1954, to replace the Union Jack, still highlights and promotes the flag of another nation. It is a transitional symbol, representing a stepping stone to a truly Australian flag.

We must boldly take the next step and define ourselves confidently and distinctly before the world.

Our new flag must be unambiguously and inclusively Australian, representing all of us equally.

We believe the time has come to embrace a flag worthy of our sovereign, independent, mature, egalitarian nation; our own flag.

We therefore humbly call upon the Parliament of Australia, to commence the process to design a truly Australian national flag, which, like our National Anthem, can then be put to a plebiscite of the Australian people.

**Professor Patrick McGorry
Professor Michael Dodson AM
Professor Tim Flannery
Professor Ian Frazer
Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE
Ian Kiernan AO
Dr Lowitja O’Donoghue AC CBE
Robert de Castella MBE
Shane Gould MBE
Evonne Goolagong AO MBE
Judith Durham OAM
Dawn Fraser AO MBE**

Mr Webster said: “This is a turning point in the flag debate and in our history. Some of Australia’s most distinguished citizens have now formally and openly embraced the call for a new flag. It’s now time to design a flag – Our Own Flag - as unique and powerful as the flags of the United States, Canada, New Guinea and South Africa, all of which were once dominated by the Union Jack.” A short history of the Australian flag and Ausflag’s reasons for seeking change is attached or at www.ausflag.com.au