

Torres Strait Timeline

Torres Strait Islands discovered by Luis Baes de Torres a Spaniard and carries the name.	1606
Captain James Cook passes through the islands and takes possession and lays claim of Australia for Britain and erects flag on Possession Island.	1770
The marine industry develops in the islands on beche-de-mer and later the pearling industry in the 1860s.	1860's
London Missionary Society arrives and Christianity is introduced to the islands. The first landing at Darnley Island [Erub] on 1 st July 1871. This is celebrated annually as the 'Coming of the Light' or 'July 1 Celebrations' throughout Australia.	1871
Thursday Island is founded.	1876
Queensland Government appoints a Government Resident. Head men are appointed and given police powers in the outer islands.	1877
Torres Strait Islands are annexed to Queensland.	1879
Haddon's Expedition to the Torres Strait.	1888
Cambridge Anthropological Expedition [Haddon] to the Torres Strait.	1898
Queensland Government takes control of the islands from the London Missionary Society. Citizens become wards of State. (Aboriginal Protection Act). - Torres Strait People came under the similar legislation as the Aboriginal People. - Islands became Reserves - Segregated from outside world. - Personal/domestic & community affairs were under the control of the Chief Protector of Aboriginal Affairs.	1904
Maritime Strike, resulted not only from poor working conditions of pearl divers but rather the Islander's right to control wages and their own affairs. It was about equality and autonomy, which led to the establishment of local governing Island Councils.	1936
Introduction of new legislation which provided for elected community councils.	1939
Torres Strait Islanders contributed to the WWII in enlisting 700 soldiers.	1939-1945
Torres Strait Islanders Soldiers strike for equal pay, who were supported by white Australian service men.	1943
Torres Strait Islanders were allowed into mainland Australia, to pursue employment.	1947
AIATSIS is established in June as was then the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.	1964
Referendum – Torres Strait Islanders become citizens with equal rights.	1967
Torres Strait Islander Service men receive full entitlements.	1986
ATSIC comes into being as the main policy-making body for ATSI affairs.	1990
The High Court Mabo Decision establishes that the Meriam people hold native title over the Murray Islands, and the notion of terra nullius is proved invalid.	1992
Torres Strait Flag is designed by Bernerd Namok	1992
The Torres Strait Regional Authority is established (TSRA) with equal powers as ATSIC.	1994
Murray Island Native Title case won in the Federal Court of Australia, 3 rd June 1997. This is commemorated as Mabo Day yearly on the anniversary date. Plaintiffs were Eddie Mabo, James Rice and Meb Salee.	1997
The Island Coordinating Council under the Community Services Act superceded by the Local Government Authority Act and become local government regional councils.	2007

Sources used for Torres Strait Timeline

	John Oxley Library Call Number
Torres Strait: people and history by John Singe	J 994.38 sin
Kerkar Lu: contemporary artefacts of the Torres Strait Islanders / Lindsay Wilson	F 704.039915 wil
Stars of Tagai: the Torres Strait Islanders by Nonie Sharp	J 994.38
Mina mir lo ailan mun: proper communication with the Torres Strait Islander people..	P 305.89915
The Reality of a Dark History: from contact and conflict to cultural recognition / by Val Donovan	J 305.89915
Pearl-shelliers of Torres Strait: resource use, development and decline, 1860s-1960s by Regina Ganter	J 338.372411 gan
Mixed relations : Asian-Aboriginal contact in North Australia	Q 303.482 GAN

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