

Student resource sheet

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were legally recognised as flags of Australia on 14 July 1995.

The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas, a Luritja man from central Australia, and was first flown on National Aboriginal Day in July 1971 in Adelaide. It has bands of black and red with a central yellow sun. The red at the bottom represents the earth and Aboriginal people's relationship to it. The black above represents all Aboriginal people past, present and future. The yellow sun is, of course, the source of life. In 1997, the Federal Court of Australia officially recognised Harold Thomas as the creator of the flag.

The Torres Strait Islander flag was designed by Bernard Namok from Thursday Island. It has horizontal bands, two of green for the land and one of blue for the sea. The bands are separated by black lines representing the people, and the white dari/dhoeri in the centre is a traditional headdress and represents Torres Strait Islander culture. The five-pointed white star represents the importance of navigation via the stars to the seafaring Islanders, as well as the five island groups: the northern, eastern, western, central and southern divisions. Originally made from bird feathers, dari/dhoeri are now made from a range of materials.

Online sources

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Aboriginal_Flag

<http://www.tsra.gov.au/the-torres-strait/torres-strait-flag>