

Aboriginal flag to permanently fly above Sydney Harbour Bridge as premier blasts timeframe

NSW premier Dominic Perrottet says original advice move would take two years was 'ridiculous' since bridge built in nine years



NSW premier Dominic Perrottet says the Aboriginal flag will soon have a permanent home atop the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Australian Associated Press

Sat 5 Feb 2022

The Aboriginal flag will have a permanent home atop the Sydney Harbour Bridge “as soon as possible”, the New South Wales premier, Dominic Perrottet, has said.

“We’ve been working through this for some time,” he told reporters in Sydney on Saturday.

The premier said the first advice received was that it would take two years to do, something he felt was excessive considering the bridge itself was built in nine years.

“I’ll climb up there and and put it up myself if I need to,” Perrottet said.

He earlier told Nine Newspapers he found it ridiculous “that we could build the Harbour Bridge in the 1920s, but apparently we can’t put a flagpole on the bridge in 2022”.

The bridge’s two flag poles currently show the Australian and NSW flag, with the state flag replaced by the Aboriginal flag on 19 days each year.

He said the move was part of a new government approach to acknowledging Indigenous Australians in NSW that would include the remediation of Sydney's Goat Island and its return to Aboriginal ownership.

"Part of the change we are looking at today is empowering all ministers to have buy-in to that responsibility," he said. "There are many issues that go right across the board, across different departments.

"If we all work together and have a key focus, I want all our ministers to be minister for Aboriginal affairs in their own right.

"We can't truly be proud of our country unless we are working together to achieve true reconciliation," Perrottet said.

"That's a combination of both symbolic reconciliation and practical reconciliation."

The premier said it was important to engender a deeper understanding of Indigenous culture, something he said had been lacking and was "a travesty".