



Media Release

SUNDAY, 9 APRIL, 2023

Vale Russell Taylor, AM

Beyond Blue pays its respects to Board Director **Russell Taylor AM**, who passed away recently.

Russell, a proud Kamilaroi man, had been a member of the Beyond Blue Board since September 2019.

"Russ was a thoughtful, compassionate leader who dedicated his life to advancing the interests of First Nations Peoples," **Beyond Blue Chair The Hon Julia Gillard AC** said.

"He was a passionate advocate for community social and emotional wellbeing and Beyond Blue is deeply grateful for his contribution. We will miss him.

"We honour his profound legacy and send our deep condolences to his family, friends, and community."

Mr Taylor was instrumental to Beyond Blue's advocacy and work for better wellbeing for First Nations Peoples, including Beyond Blue's support for the full implementation of Uluru Statement from the Heart and Close the Gap campaign, and as co-chair of Beyond Blue's Reconciliation Action Plan working group.

He often spoke about his hope for change and his belief that a Voice to Parliament will contribute to better outcomes for First Nations Peoples and communities.

"Russell's deep expertise and understanding, wise counsel and empathy strengthened our thinking and decision making. That has been appreciated by all and especially by those of us who worked closely with him. It has been a privilege to learn from him over the past four years," **Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman** said.

Mr Taylor's work with Beyond Blue was part of a distinguished career that spanned decades of public service.

He received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Technology Sydney in 2019 and was named NAIDOC Male Elder of the Year in 2018.

After retiring as the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, he became an owner and director of the Burbangana Group. He served on the boards of the Healing Foundation, Lowitja Institute, and Nature Conservation Trust and as a delegate to the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples.

He was awarded Membership of the Order of Australia in 2015 for significant service to the community as a cultural leader and public service executive.

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