



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

15 OCTOBER 2026

Cocky Guides marks International White Cane Day on Sydney Harbour, celebrates a year of White Cane Mingle and heads west to Orange

Cocky Guides Australia marked International White Cane Day today with a day of connection on and around Sydney Harbour, a first-birthday lunch for its White Cane Mingle social initiative, and news that the Mingle is expanding to the Central West of NSW.

The not-for-profit social enterprise, which runs sensory-rich, small-group travel experiences for blind and low-vision travellers, began the day in Lavender Bay with Laura Stone, founder of Sydney by Kayak.

Sydney by Kayak won Gold at the 2025 NSW Tourism Awards and Silver at the Australian Tourism Awards, and is certified by Ecotourism Australia. Together with its community, the business has raised more than \$103,130 for local conservation projects and removed more than 43,082 kilograms of rubbish from Sydney Harbour – as heavy as a humpback whale.

The group heard about two of the projects behind that work: the Seahorse Hotel, a habitat structure that gives seahorses a safe place to shelter and breed, and the Boulder Rock Pools in Lavender Bay, which are bringing marine life back to the harbour's edge.

"Sydney Harbour is something you can hear, smell and feel, not just see. Sharing our conservation work with Cocky Guides reminded us that everyone has a stake in a healthy harbour, and everyone deserves to experience it," said Laura Stone, founder of Sydney by Kayak.



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One year of White Cane Mingle

The group then gathered for lunch to celebrate the first anniversary of White Cane Mingle, the social connection initiative Cocky Guides runs in collaboration with Moorebank Sports Club. The Mingle gives blind and low-vision people a regular, relaxed place to meet, share a meal and make friends.

White Cane Mingle comes to the Central West

Cocky Guides also announced a new White Cane Mingle network for the Central West of NSW, based in Orange. The first meet-up is on Friday 6 November 2026 at 11am at the Orange Ex-Services Club.

"International White Cane Day is about independence and inclusion, and both start with getting out and connecting with people. After eight years of travelling with blind and low-vision Australians, and a year of the Mingle at Moorebank, we know how much a regular catch-up matters. We can't wait to meet the Central West community in Orange," said James "Buck" McFarlane, founder of Cocky Guides Australia.

Stay in the loop

Cocky Guides invites travellers, families, carers and supporters to sign up for its newsletter at cockyguides.com.au to stay up to date and be first to book new experiences and White Cane Mingle meet-ups.

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CONTACT

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ABOUT COCKY GUIDES

Cocky Guides Australia is a not-for-profit social enterprise creating multisensory group adventures and inclusive tourism experiences for blind and low-vision travellers. Since 2018, Cocky Guides has delivered experiences across more than 70 Australian destinations, combining travel, community connection, confidence building, and accessibility advocacy through lived experience. The organisation also works with tourism operators, destinations, and visitor economy stakeholders to improve inclusive tourism awareness and accessibility outcomes across Australia.

For more information, visit www.cockyguides.com.au

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL WHITE CANE DAY

International White Cane Day is held on 15 October each year to recognise the white cane as a symbol of independence for people who are blind or have low vision.