Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles has called for a formal review of the country’s annual Australia Day celebrations.

“Australia Day should be a truly inclusive, national celebration that showcases the diversity of our great country,” Mr Giles said.

“I have already written to the Prime Minister Tony Abbott expressing my view that official celebrations should be moved around the country to a different location each year. Maybe it should also be raised at COAG.

“I think it would be fantastic for the Northern Territory to host the officially ceremony in the future and I can’t think of a better backdrop for a celebration of Australia than Darwin Harbour, Katherine Gorge or our iconic Uluru.

“I’m sure there would also be huge interest from other regional centres such as Geelong, Broome, Newcastle, Ceduna, Townsville, and Launceston just to name a few.

“I think recent comments by interstate leaders show just how Canberra-centric this official celebration has become.”

The Northern Territory’s Australia Day Council Chair Daryl Manzie has echoed the calls for changes to the way the annual celebration is organised.

“It’s time for a rethink of how this national day is planned and celebrated and I’ll be writing to the Australia Day Council to formally propose a review,” he said.

“The National Australia Day Council receives $6 million to run these celebrations and I’d like to see a greater focus on cities and towns outside the capital.

“The NT has its own Australia Day Council Committee which selects our Territory awards finalists each year but we have no representation on the national committee which organises the national celebrations. This needs to change.

“We have huge local participation in Australia Day events with every NT Regional Council now involved in some way.
“It would be great for Territory towns and communities to have a chance to showcase their Australian pride on the national stage.

“I think the idea of hosting the awards announcement and celebrations somewhere like Uluru is an excellent one and it has my wholehearted support.”

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