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**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

TENTH ASSEMBLY

ACT Annual Report for National Closing the Gap Agreement

2022

**Presented by
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September 2022**



ACT
Government

ACT Annual Report for National Closing the Gap Agreement 2022

Jurisdictional report

September 2022



CLOSING THE GAP

ACT Government

ACT's Closing the Gap Annual Report

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Ministers Statement

I am pleased to present the ACT's first Annual Report on our jurisdiction's progress against the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement)*.

In July 2020, the ACT joined the Commonwealth, all other states and territories and the Coalition of Peaks in signing the *National Agreement*, a result of significant collective effort through the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. As part of this agreement, the ACT Government has committed to report annually on our progress against the Priority Reform Areas and relevant actions under the ACT's *Jurisdictional Implementation Plan* for the *National Agreement*. This includes reporting against the implementation of the Sector Strengthening Plans under the Agreement, which have to date been finalised for the Education, Early Childhood Care and Development sector and Health sector.

Our commitment to the *National Agreement* aligns with our pre-existing partnership with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019 – 2028 (the ACT Agreement)*.

Guided by the *National Agreement* and the *ACT Agreement*, the ACT Government has collaborated with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to undertake a range of important projects, including:

- Facilitating early community conversations around a process for Treaty;
- Funding and co-designing a new, purpose-built facility for Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation (Gugan Gulwan) to increase support for First Nations children, young people and families;
- Developing an Outcomes Framework which is used to measure and report on the impact the *National Agreement* and the *ACT Agreement* are having on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the Canberra region;
- Mapping 580 sites in Canberra that have either cultural significance, or can benefit from cultural caretaking practices, such as caring for cultural trees, providing future Indigenous planting, and suggested sites for cultural burns; and
- Committing to fully implementing the recommendations of the *Our Booris, Our Way* review into the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the child protection system, supported by a total of \$5.449 million funding through successive Budgets. A priority for this work is progressively transitioning services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, towards the goal of fully delegating authority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in care.

Parallel to the progress on these significant projects, the ACT Government is continuing to work to embed cultural responsiveness throughout Government processes and ensure the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community have a strong voice in all matters.

I am pleased to provide this first report on the ACT's progress under the *National Agreement*, but I acknowledge there is a long way to go to realise the vision of this shared work. I look forward to continuing to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to implement reform, programs and partnerships that strive to Close the Gap.

High-level summary

The ACT Government has been working to build a strong foundation of partnership, collaboration and self-determination to deliver our commitments under the *National Agreement*. This is demonstrated through our work to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a strong voice to government decision making, including through the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (the Elected Body) and other representative bodies. Established in 2008, the Elected Body has recently taken on a new function as the ACT's Coalition of Peaks representative, elevating their already crucial role as a partner to the ACT Government and bringing the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the ACT to the national level.

The *ACT Agreement* aligns closely with the four Priority Reform Areas and 17 socio-economic targets contained within the *National Agreement*. Through both the *National Agreement* and the *ACT Agreement*, the ACT Government is committed to transparent reporting on implementation progress and outcomes. An *Agreement Outcomes Framework (the Outcomes Framework)* was created to track progress against targets in both the ACT and National agreements. It measures the impacts both agreements are having on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Canberra region.

The *ACT Impact Statement (the Impact Statement)* is the statement of performance against the *Outcomes Framework*. The first *Impact Statement* and associated data dashboard were released in April 2022. The *Impact Statement* and dashboard provide a comprehensive overview of progress through data that compare against a baseline year, as well as providing year-on-year comparisons. The dashboard has been designed with the intent to house all published data to support ongoing reporting requirements under the agreements.

An ACT-specific target, aimed at increasing the number of high value contracts is included in the *Impact Statement*, along with a small number of increased *National Agreement* targets relating to:

- early childhood education;
- youth education, training and employment;
- adult employment and housing have been increased to maintain current parity or to achieve parity by 2031; and
- the target on reducing recidivism rates and the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men in incarceration has been increased from at least 15 per cent to 30 per cent by 2031.

The *Impact Statement* and dashboard do not provide quantitative data against Priority Reform Areas as a nationally consistent approach to measuring progress is currently being developed by the Productivity Commission.

As the *ACT Agreement* was finalised prior to the *National Agreement*, the ACT Government has been working to align the two agreements and streamline the reporting process. The 2021 *Impact Statement* delivers on the data requirements for this Annual Report and is provided at Appendix A.

Action items are reflected throughout the ACT's *Jurisdictional Implementation Plan*, which has been updated to reflect the ACT's progress.

The ACT Government benefits from strong partnerships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, including:

- The Elected Body, which was established over ten years ago and is the key representative body for the diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT;
- The United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC), a representative body of Traditional Owners in the ACT.
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga), which is the ACT's sole Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service. The ACT Government's partnership with Winnunga not only covers primary and allied health outcomes, but also provides health support to the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detainees.
- Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation is a youth and family focussed Community Controlled Organisation who has been operating in Canberra's south for over two decades.
- The Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee advises the Government on the management of Country in the ACT. The strong partnership between the ACT Government and Traditional Owners through the committee ensures Country is cared for and appropriately managed through cultural knowledge and resource management.
- The *Our Booris Our Way* review was a government-commissioned, exclusively Aboriginal review of the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the ACT's statutory child protection system. Following the review, an Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee (OBOW IOC) was established as an exclusively Aboriginal committee who continue to oversee the implementation of the 28 recommendations and 8 sub recommendations of the review, ensuring that self-determination remains central to how the Government responds to the significant challenge of overrepresentation in child protection.

These partnerships are just some of the ways the ACT Government is seeking to engage better with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the spirit of self-determination, to achieve their aspirations and address the matters that affect their lives. The Government acknowledges all of the contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders make to the community through the generous sharing of knowledge and culture.

The ACT Government acknowledges that the intergenerational impacts of colonisation, dispossession and the harmful policies and practices of past Governments, driven by institutional racism, are the root cause of the statistical gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians. The ACT Government acknowledges the ongoing experiences of institutional and personal racism faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT and across Australia.

There is work underway across the ACT Government to address systemic racism and improve the cultural safety and accessibility of government services. This includes the development of Reconciliation Action Plans and Cultural Integrity Frameworks across a range of government agencies, as well as specific programs of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expertise to improve the cultural responsiveness and safety of government agencies. Underpinning this work are efforts to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

While the data shows us that significant challenges remain in Closing the Gap, the ACT Government is pleased with the progress we are making in delivering new investments guided by the National Agreement. Some key highlights are listed below and are discussed in more detail throughout the document:

- The \$20 million Healing and Reconciliation Fund, which supports community identified priorities, which has to date included early work on facilitated Treaty discussions;
- Implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy (ATSIPP). The ATSIPP aims to maximise opportunities for growth within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and community service organisations, driving economic participation and development;
- Implementation of key *Our Booris, Our Way* recommendations, including:
 - funding in the 2021-22 Budget to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Commissioner;
 - early work towards supporting the development of community controlled organisations to partner in the delivery of services for children, young people and families engaged with the child protection system;
 - funding in the 2021-22 Budget to enable the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT to establish a Care and Protection Legal Advocacy Service, providing for two lawyer positions within the Family Violence Prevention Legal Service.
- As an initiative under *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*, up to 100 places are available at Koori Preschool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three year-olds. The Government is now undertaking a process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to co-design the evolution of Koori Preschool to ensure that it meets community needs now and into the future, particularly around cultural safety and integrity;
- The redevelopment of the Watson Health Precinct to support the construction and operation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation facility by Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga); and
- New funding in the 2021-22 Budget of more than \$11 million to deliver a range of programs and initiatives focused on addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT criminal justice system. This work combines new initiatives that are expected to have a real and immediate impact, and the continuation of established programs that have been demonstrating positive results.

The initiatives and reforms highlighted in this report show the ACT Government’s commitment to implementing the *National Agreement*. The ACT Government is committed to building and strengthening structures that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to practice self-determination and share decision-making with government as we progress together towards Closing the Gap.

What the data tells us

The data in this report reflect national age-standardised statistics that have been updated in the 2021-22 period. Other data reflecting additional targets within the *National Agreement* is reflected in the *ACT Impact Statement* at Appendix A.

Comparable data between national age-standardised statistics and ACT age-standardised statistics has been difficult to source. Therefore, ACT data is currently not available across many of the targets.

New data has been published for the below Closing the Gap targets. Directorate responses to this new data have been outlined in the Annual Report:

- Target 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives;
- Target 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong;
- Target 14: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing;
- Target 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system; and
- Target 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in child protection.
- Target 15: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters

While national age-standardised statistics indicates a narrowing in the gap of life expectancy for both women and men, and an increase in healthier birth rates, national age-standardised statistics indicates an increase from 2018 to 2020 in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide rates (see Tables 1-3).

The ACT remains below the national age-standardised incarceration rate, and although there was an increase in the ACT between 2019 and 2020, the rate decreased again in 2021. (see Table 4).

ACT age-standardised statistics indicated a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 years in out-of-home care than the National proportion in 2021 (66.8% compared with 57.6%). The most recent ACT result was lower than the previous cycles (compared with 72.3% in 2020 and 68.5% in 2019) (see Table 5).

Overall, the available data indicates the ACT has significant progress to make in closing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous residents, as continues to be the case across Australia. The ACT expects that many of the investments and reforms being made today may not be reflected meaningfully in the data for many years. However, there are already some positive signs that we are moving in the right direction, and that partnerships with and investments in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are the key to achieving our shared goals.

Target 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives

ACT data is not available for this measure. Nationally, no new data for this target has been available since 2015-2017. According to the national data, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males born in 2015–2017 are expected to live to 71.6 years and females to 75.6 years. Non-Indigenous males are expected to live to 80.2 years and females to 83.4 years. This results in a gap of 8.6 years for boys and 7.8 years for girls.

While the available data indicates that the gap in life expectancy was narrowing over time at least up to the period 2015-2017, the trend suggests that efforts to accelerate progress would be required to ensure the target is met. The limited data do not provide contemporary insights that might reflect the success of recent investments.

The ACT Government acknowledges that the determinants of life expectancy are broad and can be positively impacted by reform and investment across all areas of government. Noting this, some key ACT initiatives that may directly impact this measure include:

- Data improvements to capture and provide comprehensive information on a range of health and wellbeing issues;
- The Community Services Directorate (CSD), Canberra Health Services (CHS) and ACT Education Directorate are working collaboratively to ensure the Kindy Health Check initiative is informing policy and operational responses to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to meet developmental goals;
- The establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Programs Committee to co-ordinate services and provide input in Health system reform.
- The establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander integrated Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention and Aftercare Service, to be delivered by Thirrili Ltd, a community controlled service provider; and
- The redevelopment of the Watson Health Precinct to support the construction and operation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation facility by Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga).

Target 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives									
1	Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031								
CtG1.1	Difference in estimate life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Indigenous children at birth	ACT data					Australian data		
				2005-07	2010-12	2015-17	2005-07	2010-12	2015-17
		Males	years	n.a	n.a	n.a	11.4	10.6	8.6
	Females	years	n.a	n.a	n.a	9.6	9.4	7.8	
n.a. - Not available ACT data is not available for this measure.									

Nationally, between 2005–2007 and 2015–2017, the gap in life expectancy narrowed for males (from 11.4 years to 8.6 years) and for females (from 9.6 years to 7.8 years).

Table 1. Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy live

Target 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong

Table 2 below indicates that, within the ACT in 2019, 89.4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies were born at a healthy birthweight, this is a decrease from 2018 which was 91.4%. The number of non-Indigenous babies born of a healthy birthweight remains the same in 2019 at 94.5%.

While the ACT number has decreased since the previous year, when the variability bands associated with the trend data are taken into consideration, the ACT has been assessed as having 'no change' for 2020 and is still on track for the target being met by 2031.

The healthy birth rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies remains a focus of the ACT Government. To ensure the upwards trend and support early childhood development, the ACT Government funds Winnunga to support pregnant woman through a range of specialist health services, including but not limited to reducing rates of alcohol and other drug use during pregnancy and rates of smoking during pregnancy.

Target 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong									
2	By 2031, increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 per cent								
				ACT data			Australian data		
				2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
CtG2.1	Live-born singleton babies of healthy birthweight (2500-4499g)								
		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	per cent	np	91.4	89.4	88.8	88.9	89.5
		Non-Indigenous	per cent	np	94.5	94.5	93.9	94.0	93.9
np = not published *ACT data should be viewed with caution due to small numbers. The ACT had a decrease in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies born with a healthy birthweight in 2019 (89.4%), compared with the previous year (91.4% in 2018). Nationally, there was an increase over the same time period (89.5% in 2019, 88.9% in 2018).									

Table 2. Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong

Target 14: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

There is no comparable data for the ACT that has been able to be sourced for this target. Nationally, based on the current trend, this target is not on track to be met.

In 2020, the suicide rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was 27.9 per 100 000 people (for NSW, Queensland, WA, SA and the NT combined). This is an increase from 27.2 per 100 000 people in 2019, and 25.0 per 100 000 in 2018 (the baseline year).

During the 2021-22 financial year the ACT Government approved and funded a new culturally appropriate and integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention and Aftercare Service for the ACT; the first of its kind in Australia. Thirrili Limited, a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Postvention and Aftercare Service, has commenced delivery of this unique new service, in partnership with the Wayback Support Services within the Woden Community Services of the ACT. The delivery of this new service is based upon close consultations and collaboration with key ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.

Target 14: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing									
14	Significant and sustained reduction in suicide rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero								
				ACT			Australian* data		
				2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
CtG14.1	Mortality due to suicide, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people age-standardised rate per 100,000 population, Total (NSW, Qld, WA, SA and the NT)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Rate (AS) per 100,000	na	na	na	25.0	27.2	27.9
Rate (AS) - Age Standardised Rate ACT data is not available for this measure. *Australia total includes NSW, Qld, WA, SA and the NT only.									

Table 3. Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

Target 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

Through the *ACT Agreement*, the ACT Government’s commitment to reducing the rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has been strengthened, with a target to achieve parity with the rate of incarceration of non-Indigenous people by 2031. This more ambitious target is reflected in the *Impact Statement* at Appendix A.

In 2021, the ACT age-standardised incarceration rate per 100,000 adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population was 1641.8, a decrease from 1893.0 in 2020. The ACT remains below the national rate. At this stage, the COVID-19 impacts on crime cannot be quantified and other reasons for reductions in crime have not been meaningfully explored or identified. While providing some positive movement towards the 2031 target, it is as yet unclear whether this positive trend will be maintained.

The 2021-22 ACT Budget includes funding of more than \$11 million to deliver a range of programs and initiatives focused on addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT criminal justice system. This investment includes new initiatives that are expected to have a real and immediate impact and the continuation of established programs that have been demonstrating positive results.

These include:

- screening detainees for cognitive disability at the Alexander Maconachie Centre;
- expanding the Galambany Circle Sentencing Court;
- re-establishing the Interview Friends program;
- continuing the On Country program;
- continuing the Culturally appropriate bail and reporting sites and Ngurrambai Bail Support programs; and
- establishing a one-on-one intensive case management program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detainees to reduce recidivism.

Flexibility is also provided in the programs for future initiatives to be introduced based on consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Target 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system									
10	By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent.								
				ACT data			Australian data		
				2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
CtG1 0.1	Age-standardised imprisonment rate per 100,000 adult population at 30 June	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Rate (AS) per 100,000	1,703.9	1,893.0	1,641.8	2,142.9	2,087.0	2,222.7
		Non-Indigenous	Rate (AS) per 100,000	109.1	101.3	84.0	171.4	158.6	162.2

Rate (AS) - Age Standardised Rate

*It is not possible to reproduce the exact age-standardised rates as published by the ABS as the rates calculated using the method provided are based on unperturbed data, whereas the published data by age range is perturbed to protect the confidentiality of individuals.

*Comparisons of imprisonment rates should be made with care, especially for states and territories with relatively small populations. Small changes in numbers can cause variations in rates that do not accurately represent either real trends over time or consistent differences from other jurisdictions.

Table 4. Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

Target 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system

Over the last three years, rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out of home care in the ACT has fluctuated. As at 30 June 2021, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care was 66.8 per 1000 children, which is a decrease from 72.3 per 1000 in 2020. Over the same period the non-Indigenous rate remained stable at 5.2 per 10,000.

The implementation of the *Our Booris, Our Way* review is the ACT Government’s central focus in addressing the overrepresentation and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families engaged in the child protection system. Additionally, the broader *Next Steps for Our Kids 2022–2030 (Next Steps)* strategy will guide significant reform and investment across the child protection and broader family support service system. *Next Steps* aligns with and reinforces *Our Booris, Our Way*, ensuring that this self-determined process is baked into the broader reform agenda.

Key ACT initiatives to address overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out of home care include:

- The establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Commissioner. The Government has recently accepted all recommendations of a co-design report, developed by the Jumbunna Institute with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and is in the process of developing legislation which will establish the Commissioner;
- Fully embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in legislation, policy and practice. The ACT Government has engaged SNAICC National Voice for Our Children (SNAICC) to conduct culturally appropriate consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and child and youth protection staff, which will inform how the Government embeds the principle in a revised *Children and Young People Act*;
- Supporting the development and growth of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in the child and family support space, with a view towards transitioning responsibility for case management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people;
- Continuing to work with the Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee to fully implement the true intent of the recommendations of the *Our Booris Our Way* review.

Target 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system									
12	By 2031, reduce the rate of overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (0-17 years old) in out-of-home care by 45 per cent								
				ACT data			Australian data		
CtG12.1	Children aged 0-17 years in out-of-home care	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Rate per 1,000	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
				68.5	72.3	66.8	54.2	56.3	57.6

	at 30 June, Rate per 1000 children	Non- Indigenous	Rate per 1,000	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.0
<p>ACT had a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 years in out-of-home care than the National proportion in 2021 (66.8% compared with 57.6%). The most recent ACT result was lower than the previous cycles (compared with 72.3% in 2020 and 68.5% in 2019).</p>									

Table 5. Target: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system

Target 15: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters

There is no comparable data for the ACT that has been able to be sourced for this target. Nationally, in 2021, the area of land mass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s legal rights or interests was 4,027,232, a increase from 3,911,679 in 2020. In 2021, the area of sea country subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s legal rights or interests was 90,555, an increase from 90,252 in 2020.

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) manages 75% of the land in the ACT as National Parks and Nature Reserves and has committed to working with Traditional Owners to ensure their cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters is recognised and valued.

The governance mechanism to ensure Traditional Custodians are engaged in the work of caring for Country is through the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee (DNCCC). The DNCCC provides advice, guidance, direction and decisions for the ongoing environmental and land management of Country by EPSDD.

Target 15: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters									
15A	By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in Australia’s land mass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s legal rights or interests.								
15B	By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s legal rights or interests in the sea.								
				ACT data			Australian data		
				2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
CtG15.1	Area of Land mass and Sea country subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests at 30 June	Land mass	Sq km	not avail.	0	0	not avail.	3,911,679	4,027,232
		Sea country	Sq km	n.a	n.a	n.a	83,644	90,252	90,555
not avail. = Not available n.a = Not Applicable									

Table 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters

Embedding Priority Reforms

Priority Reform 1 – Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making

The ACT Government is committed to continuing to support the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in government decision making, including through existing partnership arrangements with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee, the ACT Reconciliation Council, and the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee.

The policy and placed-based partnerships outlined below respond to a range of local priorities for the ACT Government and the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. While some of the below partnerships do not meet all of the formal partnership elements outlined in the *National Agreement*, they provide valuable advice from Community to government and support shared decision-making.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body

The ACT Government benefits from more than a decade of working in formal partnership with the democratic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (Elected Body). The Elected Body was established in 2008 to enable the full diversity of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to have a strong, democratically elected voice to government.

The Elected Body and its advocacy on behalf of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community shapes ACT Government policy direction and scrutinises government decision making and service delivery.

The Elected Body, as representative of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT, is an equal partner to government in the development of the *ACT Agreement*. Through the *ACT Agreement*, the ACT Government and the Elected Body are committed to supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to actively influence and participate in social, economic and cultural life.

The Elected Body has the power to hold public hearings, providing opportunity to hold Ministers and officials to account and giving the Elected Body the access it requires to appropriately scrutinise the Government's implementation of the *ACT Agreement*.

The Elected Body is represented on both the ACT Government's Strategic Board and Inter-Directorate Committees, consulting on a broad range of government policy and program delivery. These Committees are whole-of-government forums and are inclusive of ACT Government Senior Executive and officials with oversight and responsibility for providing strategic leadership on all aspects of the ACT and National agreements.

The Elected Body is also a member of the national Coalition of Peaks, and together with the ACT Government, as members of the Joint Council, work to implement the *National Agreement*.

The ACT Government has allocated funding to provide remuneration to Elected Body members and a Secretariat support; being a senior officer and two additional support staff to carry out appropriate

administrative functions of the Elected Body. Additional funding is also provided to the Elected Body to ensure all required consultative practices are carried out appropriately.

2021 was an election year for the Elected Body, with the fifth Elected Body taking office in July 2021.

United Ngunnawal Elders Council

The United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC) is a Traditional Owner representative body, providing advice to the ACT Government in relation to heritage and connection to land matters for the Ngunnawal people. UNEC also provides advice to the Elected Body in accordance with section 9 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008*.

UNEC is made up of representatives nominated by several Ngunnawal family groups. The Council meets up to four times a year in Canberra at various locations, including community-based organisations.

The ACT Government has, through the Healing and Reconciliation Fund, provided funding to assist UNEC through employment of a dedicated secretariat, as well as remunerating members through sitting fees.

Healing and Reconciliation Fund

The ACT Government has fully funded a \$20 million Healing and Reconciliation Fund to support community priorities over the next decade.

The governance structure for the Healing and Reconciliation Fund is in the developmental phase. There has been funding of \$102,000 allocated over a 12-month period for governance and contract management across broader Healing and Reconciliation Fund projects. However, the Fund was designed to support early priorities in parallel to the development of the governance structure.

An early priority identified by the community was Treaty. In the first half of 2022, the Fund supported a facilitator to engage Traditional Owners in early conversations about Treaty.

Further priorities identified through community consultations include establishing a Ngunnawal Language Centre and continuing to support opportunities to identify future projects to share Ngunnawal culture and language.

Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee

The Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee (DNCCC) is a strong partnership that continues to be actively engaged in the work of EPSDD with engagement across all areas of the portfolio. The DNCCC's engagement in environmental and sustainable activities empowers self-determination for Ngunnawal people in speaking for Country to ensure Ngunnawal cultural values, knowledge and aspirations have a distinct role in the natural and built environments of the ACT, as part of their responsibility for the care and management of Country. The committee continue to meet monthly and have provided advice, guidance and decision-making for several activities including but not limited to the following:

- Cultural Resource Management Plan;
- Ngunnawal Ngadjung Water Initiative
- ACT Water Governance;
- Mulligan's Flat Woodland Sanctuary Governance Reform and Implementation Plan;

- Acton Waterfront and City Cultural Centre;
- Tidbinbilla Functional Review;
- ACT Planning Bill;
- National Koala Monitoring Program;
- Fire Recovery Projects;
- Jarramlee Subsidence Project; and
- Jarramlee Ground Map Draft Consultation.

This partnership improves engagement with Ngunnawal people to work together and support the integration of cultural knowledge in management of Country and to provide support and assist in a decision-making capacity for the Directorate and its staff, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal. This committee has been allocated \$70,000 this financial year.

Advisory bodies across government

The ACT Government also consults with a range of internally administered advisory groups with specific policy expertise or interest. These include:

- The Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee, who oversee the implementation of the *Our Booris Our Way* review into the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the child protection system;
- The Justice Advisory Group and Justice Caucus, which provides input and guidance on the development, implementation, and monitoring of progress against the Justice Focus Area Action Plan of the *ACT Agreement*;
- The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Advisory Group, which provides advice to the ACT Government on education and training matters that affect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, parents and communities;
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Reference Group at Canberra Health Services, which works to ensure the community has input into services provided by CHS and information provided to the community; and
The ACT Reconciliation Council, who act as community leaders for Reconciliation and promote the ACT's nation leading Reconciliation Day Public Holiday.

The ACT Government is committed to building and strengthening genuine partnerships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community of the ACT. This includes reviewing all partnerships to ensure they remain appropriate avenues for the community to provide advice to and share decision making with Government, including advisory groups and reference groups. This will be our main focus over the next 12 months to ensure we are bringing all government and community parties together in the best way possible.

Priority Reform 2 – Building the Community-Controlled Sector

As a small jurisdiction, the ACT has only a small number of existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across a limited set of sectors. As well as investing in significant infrastructure improvements and service expansions for existing ACCOs, the ACT Government is focussed on supporting the community to establish new organisations in sectors where there isn't currently an ACCO delivering services.

Two specific areas of focus are the creation of a community-controlled housing organisation and a community-controlled service focusing on children, young people, and families.

The ACT Government has also provided support or undertaken work to:

- construct a purpose-built facility to increase the service capability for Winnunga Nimmitjiah Aboriginal Health and Community Services;
- design a purpose-built facility in collaboration with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation;
- support Yerrabi Yurwang Child and Family Aboriginal Corporation as a new and emerging organisation;
- work towards transitioning Boomanulla Oval and Yarramundi Cultural Centre to sustainable community control;
- establishing ACCOs providing support to people exiting or being diverted from the justice system;
- support existing ACCOs to support families and young peoples through the COVID pandemic; and
- develop Sector Strengthening Plans under the National Agreement. These plans focus on Early Childhood Care and Development; Housing; Health; and Disability detailing how we will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in these sectors to develop their Workforce; Capital infrastructure; Service provision; and Governance.

Children, young people and family support services

A key recommendation of the *Our Booris Our Way* review was to undertake a feasibility study into an Aboriginal Child Care Association in the ACT. This feasibility study has been completed, and work is now focussed on supporting the establishment of one or more ACCOs who can deliver child and family welfare services, with a view to Government ultimately being able to transfer a range of services, including case management responsibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children involved in the child protection system.

However, the Government acknowledges that it is the right of any ACCO to determine which services it delivers and what its relationship with Government is. The Government will continue to engage in good faith with the community, including existing and emerging ACCOs and the OBOW IOC, in this important work.

Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Rehabilitation Facility

The ACT Government has committed to supporting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential alcohol and other drugs (AOD) Rehabilitation Facility, allowing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people access to a residential AOD specialist rehabilitation facility. The facility will support individuals regardless of their existing healthcare arrangements and operate as a culturally-based therapeutic community, preferably operated by an Aboriginal community-controlled health services provider with relevant specialist AOD clinical expertise.

A model of care has been developed by Winnunga, and the ACT Government has provided funding to Winnunga to engage consultants to design and build culturally appropriate residential infrastructure.

During the 2021-22 financial year the ACT Government funded a new culturally appropriate integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention and Aftercare Service for the ACT, the first of its kind in Australia.

Thirrili Limited, a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Postvention and Aftercare Service, has commenced delivery of this unique new service, in partnership with the Wayback Support Services within the Woden Community Services of the ACT. The delivery of this new service is based upon close consultations and collaboration with key ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.

The program will deliver culturally responsive crisis intervention and prevention through a model developed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm

The ACT Government is working with the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm (NBHF) Board, community representatives and UNEC to further develop the NBHF into a residential model. The residential model will be supported by the Living Web, and the NBHF Healing Framework, a model of cultural care developed through community consultation and workshops.

ACT Health Directorate engaged in a deep co-design approach supporting self-determined outcomes. There has been a significant uplift in activity in 2022, with an anticipated August release of an approach to market for residential service provision.

Education Regulation

The ACT's Regulatory Authority are ready to support the sole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled service in Jervis Bay to operate in scope of the National Quality Framework (NQF). Evaluations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs leads to opportunities to contribute to, adjust or reprioritise program funding.

Justice programs and services

The ACT Government provided around \$2 million in funding for ACCOs to provide legal services and justice programs in 2021-22 and over \$3 million is committed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers 2022-23.

The Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT is funded to provide legal services in the form of a Duty Lawyer and Trial Advocate, as well as the Nurrumbidgee Bail Support and Front Up Services to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people applying for bail or who have outstanding warrants.

Yeddung Mura (Good Pathways) Aboriginal Corporation is funded to provide support for individuals engaged in the justice system through the Transitional Accommodation Program, Galambany Circle Sentencing Court Support, Yarning Circles and Throughcare support services.

Yeddung Mura and Winnunga are also funded to provide the family-centric support program 'Yarrabi Bamirr', working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to improve life outcomes and reduce or prevent contact with the justice system, particularly trans-generational offending.

Priority Reform 3 – Transforming Government Organisations

The ACT Government is focusing effort on a number of key priorities to ensure government agencies and the services they provide are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2020 senior government officials progressed six whole-of-government projects:

- **Addressing Systemic Racism:** scoping conversations identified the following priorities- finalise ACT Public Service (ACTPS) Framework for Addressing Systemic Racism, identify measures to be used across ACTPS, and develop guidelines to identify racist and discriminatory systems and processes throughout ACTPS;
- **Cultural Integrity:** a draft Cultural Integrity Guide for Senior Executives is being developed to support an ACTPS-wide Cultural Integrity Framework and ‘best practice’ guide;
- **Mandatory Reporting:** frontline workers’ insights shared with ACTPS leaders on possible opportunities and solutions to improve mandatory reporting processes and increase and strengthen pathways to early support for families;
- **Recruitment and Retention:** 6% increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in ACTPS, consultation on Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Agenda, recruitment guidelines reviewed, ACTPS supported to undertake Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) Inclusion training;
- **Procurement:** more business and budget contracts, creation of an online Practical Tendering workshop; virtual business showcases, guide for working with the ACT Government, and ATSIPP eLearning Module; and
- **Support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled (ACCO) Sector:** actions to build the sector and support existing ACCOs.

Engagement services

The ACT Government engaged Future Friendly to conduct focused engagements with target groups to understand the barriers to accessing government services and identify opportunities to improve.

The project included more than 30 hours of one-on-one qualitative research such as interviews and user testing. Eight people who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander were included in this work. To develop this approach, the ACT Government consulted with the Elected Body and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to determine the scope of the project.

The Future Friendly project specifically examined the Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration process, accessing concessions and accessing drivers’ licenses.

A final Future Friendly Barriers to Service report (the Report) with findings has been provided to the ACT Government. The Report was distributed across government and work is underway to develop strategies to address the identified barriers and facilitate better initial design and delivery of community-centred services to ensure they are accessible, empathetic and inclusive. Identified barriers to ACT Government services included some people having limited awareness of services available, overly complicated processes, insufficient support, and a lack of trust that they would be treated fairly when engaging with a service.

Further internal workshops will be conducted to develop an approach for addressing the barriers identified in the Future Friendly Report.

Commissioning for Outcomes

The Commissioning for Outcomes reform initiative aims to change the way that government, the non-government organisation (NGO) sector and community members partner to design and deliver services.

As part of commissioning, Directorates will engage closely and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and community-controlled organisations to support the development and delivery of community-led and designed solutions.

As commissioning is about a different way of relating and partnering, processes will likely involve all, or most of, the engagement approaches listed under transformational element f – Improve Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be engaged early, to work through appropriate engagement processes to support cultural safety and participation;
- The purpose of engagements will be clearly articulated, and timeframes given;
- Listening Reports are a key part of commissioning and will be utilised to inform participants of how their feedback and knowledge is being used to support decision-making; and
- Commissioning is underpinned by a series of principles which aim to ensure robust, respectful and transparent processes. Participants are able to provide feedback at any time, both through corresponding with teams, and through formal survey processes to let government know if these processes are living up to the principles.

Commissioning processes have commenced, or will shortly commence, across a range of sub-sectors (including housing and homelessness, child and family services, mental health, and alcohol and other drugs). These processes will involve collaborative design and development of services to ensure they better meet the needs of all Canberrans.

In line with the commissioning principles and priorities, these processes will involve meaningful engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to discuss and develop community-led solutions which support self-determination and culturally safe service delivery.

The Commissioning for Outcomes reform initiative will improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and deliver this service with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and people to inform the embedding of self-determination and methods to build organisational capacity building.

Our Booris, Our Way

The *Our Booris, Our Way* review was a wholly Aboriginal-led review of the experiences and overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people involved in the child protection system. The review culminated in a final report, which includes 28 recommendations and 8 sub-recommendations. The Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee have been working closely with the ACT Government Directorates to fully implement the recommendations of the review.

Ensuring that Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) staff have the cultural knowledge and skills to respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families is a significant emphasis of the *Our Booris Our Way* recommendations. This includes explicitly embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in practice, policy and legislation. In response to this recommendation, CYPS work in partnership with SNAICC to deliver SNAICC Training on the Child Placement Principle as core training to all CYPS staff who work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. SNAICC has also been engaged to consult with the community on how the Child Placement Principle could be explicitly included in legislation as part of a broader project to modernise the ACT's *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

Another key recommendation of the *Our Booris Our Way* review is the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner, whose role would include monitoring, advice and advocacy on systemic and individual cases of children and young people involved in the child protection system. The work to establish the Commissioner is well underway.

Reconciliation Action Plans

The ACT Government continues to evolve and improve staff understanding and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the implementation of directorate Reconciliation Action Plans or Statements of Commitment, as well as through actions under the both the *ACT Agreement* and the *National Agreement*.

Cultural Integrity Frameworks

Some ACT Government Directorates are developing Cultural Integrity Frameworks to establish an organisational cultural baseline and to guide the directorate's cultural development. A staged evaluation and review of staff knowledge and implementation will be undertaken to inform and evaluate approaches for improvement. This includes a multiple sources of evidence approach to determining current organisational, sub-unit and individual development requirements.

These frameworks support the delivery of a range of professional learning programs for ACT Government staff aimed at improving cultural competence and increasing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and knowledges and will assist in addressing systemic racism.

The Addressing Systemic Racism Working Group

The Addressing Systemic Racism Working Group is a diverse and inclusive cross-directorate group with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and is open to all ACT public servants who are willing to participate. The working group will soon be providing a draft discussion paper and proposed strategy to stakeholders within the ACT community for feedback and guidance.

The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) has contributed to whole of government work to address systemic racism through a series of surveys for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff that ran throughout 2020 and 2021. The information gathered through the surveys is currently being analysed by CMTEDD and a PhD student to inform future work in this area.

The 'Addressing Systemic Racism Strategy' will be developed in Phase 2 of this work and will guide the ACT Government to address the challenges associated with systemic racism. These efforts will showcase the ACT Government as an institution with genuine cultural integrity, helping to ensure that Canberra is a city that is inclusive and values all people within community.

Together, Forward

Together, Forward is Canberra Health Services' (CHS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Needs Assessment and Action Plan. It was developed in 2021 in partnership with the CHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group and states the key priorities for CHS to improve access to services and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Canberra Health Services (CHS) has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Steering Committee with Elected Body and community representation to oversee *Together, Forward* to meet National Safety and Quality in Healthcare Standards (National Standards) and ACT and national agreement actions.

CHS will commence a review of *Together, Forward* in the second half of 2022 to update the data and content of the needs assessment, which will inform the development of new actions in partnership with the CHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group.

To date, *Together, Forward* has delivered:

- Yarning Circles to capture and learn from patients' journeys. The learnings from yarning circles will inform a report with a focus on improving health services and ensuring they are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- a review of the management of outpatient waitlists and working to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seen within the recommended time frame. In 2022-2023, this will include a focus on the paediatric outpatient waitlist;
- work to create and maintain a welcoming environment at the Canberra Hospital, in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This includes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Room at Canberra Hospital being relocated to be co-located with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Service, for example;
- a review of maternity services to improve cultural safety, increase access to antenatal care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and increase the number of babies born with a healthy birthweight;
- work to increase access to middle ear examinations and reduce the wait time for outpatient review and ear nose and throat surgery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially children;
- in response to the recommendations of the *Our Booris, Our Way* review, CHS is reviewing the Child Protection Policy and Child and Prenatal Concern Guideline to ensure it is consistent with legislation and reflects the *Our Booris, Our Way* recommendations along with the recommendations from the review of Child Protection Services; and
- implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer for the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List Program to provide cultural support and referrals into drug and alcohol and mental health support services.

Culturally Safe Agencies

In order to improve cultural safety and be responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Directorates have engaged external Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait consultancies to improve cultural awareness and capability in the directorates and support policy design. Opportunities for staff to attend the Indigenous Leadership Summit 2022 and the Garma Festival have also been provided.

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network has been established, which comes together once a month to yarn and discuss their roles, engagement opportunities and connect over days of cultural significance.

The Yuma induction program provides an understanding of working for ACT Government, and the expectations and requirements of fulfilling their roles. The induction includes a cultural component MurriMatters: Transforming Relationships program to create a shared cultural narrative to provide professional and pastoral support from a cultural perspective for the new staff and their supervisors.

In 2021-22, the Government worked to shift the focus from the quantity of activities to realising the direct impact of quality activities across the Directorate and with the community.

The ACT Government has undertaken a range of actions to develop positive relationships with Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This has included identifying ways to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and developing effective ways to engage with stakeholders.

Procurement

The ACT Government has developed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy (ATSIPP) to maximise opportunities for growth within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and community service organisations, driving economic participation and development.

The ATSIPP commenced on 1 July 2019. An initial review of the policy was completed in 2021 and saw some minor amendments to the policy to improve clarity and practical delivery against reporting requirements. The implementation program for the ATSIPP is ongoing, with training and education activity being delivered to government agencies.

A comprehensive review of the policy will commence soon, undertaken by an ATSIPP Review Committee. As part of this review, the committee, which includes senior executive representation from directorates and agencies and a member of the Elected Body, will consider achievement to date against targets and measures as well as areas for improvement.

In addition to the ATSIPP, the *ACT Consideration of Government Procurement (Charter of Procurement Values) Direction 2020*, seeks to ensure All ACT Government directorates adhere to a set of key values as they undertake procurement activity. The first value contained within the Charter reflects the importance of ensuring that the economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is considered in any procurement process.

Priority Reform 4 – Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level

The ACT Government works with the Elected Body to continually strengthen ways to share data and information through the *Impact Statement*, supporting the community to identify and monitor priorities under the *ACT Agreement*.

Outcomes Framework

The *Outcomes Framework* was developed in April 2021 and is used to track progress against targets in the *ACT Agreement* and the *National Agreement*. It measures the impact that the ACT and National agreements are having on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Canberra region. Progress against the *Outcomes Framework* is reported annually by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs through the *Impact Statement*.

The *Outcomes Framework* is based on the 10 Focus Areas from the *ACT Agreement*, which are delineated into four Core Focus Areas (Children and Young People; Community Leadership; Cultural Integrity; and Inclusive Community) and six Significant Focus Areas (Lifelong Learning; Justice; Economic Participation; Health and Wellbeing; Housing; and Connecting Community).

The *Outcomes Framework* also incorporates the four Priority Reform targets and 18 socio-economic targets from the *National Agreement*.

In order to streamline the reporting against both the ACT and national agreements, the *Outcomes Framework* and *Impact Statement* reflects some deviations from the *National Agreement*, including:

- An ACT target aimed at increasing the number of high value contracts has been included;
- One national target relating to sea rights has been omitted and is anticipated to be replaced by an inland water target recently agreed by the Joint Council on Closing the Gap;
- A small number of national targets relating to early childhood education; youth education, training and employment; adult employment and housing have been increased such that the targets seek to maintain parity or to achieve parity by 2031;
- The target on reducing the rate of adults held in incarceration has been increased such that the target now seeks to achieve parity with the rate of incarceration of non-Indigenous people by 2031;
- Indicators for the Priority Reform Areas and new targets on access to information have been included and more work will be undertaken to develop ACT proxy indicators and annual reporting metrics where appropriate; and
- A national target on community infrastructure will be incorporated into the Outcomes Framework at the appropriate time.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Strategic Board Committee (SBC) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inter-Directorate Committee (IDC), which include the Deputy Chairperson and/or Chairperson of the Elected Body, were consulted over a period of twelve months on the development of the *Outcomes Framework*.

The Elected Body was involved in the development of the *Outcomes Framework* and called for more data to be provided by Government on the impact the agreements are having in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This led to the development of the *Impact Statement* and dashboard.

Impact Statement and dashboard

The first *Impact Statement* and associated data dashboard was published in April 2022 and represents the first public report using the *Outcomes Framework*. The first *Impact Statement* is attached to this report at Appendix A.

The *Impact Statement* and dashboard comprise a compilation of ACT data that provide a signal of this jurisdiction's annual progress against a set of ACT indicators closely aligned with the 22 Closing the Gap targets. Targets, indicators and data are presented under the ten Focus Areas of the *ACT Agreement*. The *National Agreement* measures progress on many Closing the Gap targets using data that is not available on an annual basis. In addition, ACT data for a small number of targets is not reported due to population size.

In addition, the dashboard includes data against each metric for any additional years between the baseline and current year data, providing a year-on-year comparison. The categories of progress are attributed to each data item and indicator across all years.

For the first *Impact Statement*, where available, 2020-21 financial year and 2020 calendar year data is compared to 2018 baseline data and one of five categories of progress attributed to each indicator based on data movement. These attributions are;

- Positive change: data suggests improvement in community outcomes;
- Negative progress: data suggests a movement away from achieving community outcomes;
- No significant change: unable to assess change in community outcomes, or movements are not statistically significant compared to the baseline year;
- Unclear: unable to assess change in community outcomes, due to either variation in results across a set of metrics, small data samples which have a high variance, or the first year of data so no change can be determined; and
- No data: no data currently available for this indicator for the reporting period.

While most of the data is already published and does not provide precise measurement of progress against *National Agreement* targets, this is the first time this data has been published together, ACT baselines have been established and progress against indicators assessed.

The dashboard contains more information than the *Impact Statement* including multiple years of ACT data on each metric for the years between baseline and current year data. It is anticipated that the dashboard will be a useful reference for those requiring more detailed knowledge of data including data movements over a number of years.

The ACT Government will update the dashboard twice each year for the life of the *ACT Agreement* to reflect published data updates and data included in each *Impact Statement*. It is anticipated that this dashboard will become the main data source for the ACT going forward, with all directorate's data being input into the dashboard upon publication. Collating this data in a single, publicly accessible location will allow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and the broader community, to stay informed on how the

ACT is tracking towards Closing the Gap, as well as help support reporting requirements under both the *ACT Agreement* and *National Agreement*.

The Elected Body were consulted throughout the development of the *Impact Statement* and dashboard to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the way this information can be accessed.

Data improvement initiatives

As a first step towards addressing the underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the health system, the ACT Health Directorate is undertaking a data linkage project to improve use of the Indigenous identifier in health data.

The data linkage project aims to improve use of the Indigenous identifier through engagement and education of service providers as partners. Additionally, the data linkage project aims to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data sovereignty principles through the establish of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led governance mechanism.

The ACT Health Directorate will approach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and ethics committees to endorse the ethics submission and project plan. The Elected Body and it's Health Representative are members of the data working group and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led governance mechanism.

Once complete, this will afford a better understanding of the extent of service gaps and help the ACT Health Directorate identify priorities for improvements to systems and services.

This sharing practice will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations access to the same data and information, subject to privacy requirements and processes to ensure data security and integrity.

A health data dashboard has been developed to monitor a key suite of quality and safety measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engaged with health services. Information displayed on the dashboard will include the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the outpatient waitlist seen within designated time frame, number of babies born with healthy birthweight, healthcare associated complication rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who discharged themselves against medical advice compared to the general population. This data set was developed in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group.

The dashboard has been created and is being tested. Once the dashboard goes "live", it will be available to all staff and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group.

Other data projects progressed during 2021 include:

- The ACT Government released *Together, Forward* in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group, incorporating national, territory and organisational level data to identify priority areas for reform;
- The ACT Government also committed resources through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Project to establish a good understanding of the population, demographics, likely health and wellbeing needs in the next 10 years and the location and nature of the services required;

- Commencing a review of *Together, Forward* in July 2022 to update the data and content of the needs assessment, which will inform the development of new actions in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group. Actions will be aligned with the Closing the Gap Actions; and
- Under the Reducing Recidivism Research and Evaluation Collaboration a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice initiatives are undertaking process and outcomes evaluations. The evaluations are drawing on administrative justice data, program metrics and quantitative data, which includes input from those with lived experience or experience in front-line delivery. This will contribute to the evidence base available to the Government and community; and inform future program design and investment.

Supporting Closing the Gap Goals

The ACT Government will continue to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and community-controlled organisations to implement the *National Agreement* and the *ACT Agreement* in the spirit of partnership and self-determination.

Additional efforts and investment the ACT Government is undertaking in reaching *National Agreement* targets and actions are outlined below.

Early Childhood Education and Care

The ACT is currently consulting on an ACT specific Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Strategy which will consider the specific needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education and care workforce.

The Strategy is a commitment under *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*, which includes commitments to:

- increase coaching and mentoring opportunities for the ECEC workforce;
- establish a professional development fund;
- development of professional standards for early childhood educators;
- expansion of the early childhood teacher degree scholarships program; and
- recognition of early learning and early childhood teachers in ACT law.

The ACT's ECEC Workforce Strategy will align to, and localise implementation of, the *National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy*.

The ACT is also currently undertaking modelling and design work to implement universal 3-year-old early learning from 2024. This work includes mapping of ECEC capacity across the ACT, including capacity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific ECEC. This mapping will be used to inform future planning needs and decisions.

Early Childhood Education and Care Quality Assurance (ECECQA) Authorised Officer training provides the basis for the provision of quality culturally appropriate regulatory practice. Additionally, Authorised Officers working within the Quality Assurance team of CECA have completed the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence* course provided by the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. Authorised Officers have completed relevant training in Trauma Informed Practice and this training has been provided to the broader education and care sector.

The update currently being undertaken of the education and care sector's curriculum documents has seen the addition to the draft documents of a new principle: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives, and the inclusion of the practice of cultural responsiveness. This update has generated consistent referencing within the draft documents to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being. These changes will generate a further increase in supporting materials and resources relevant to Authorised Officers and the sector in general once the documents are approved and implemented.

Traineeships

The ACT Government will support eligible traineeships, apprenticeships, and Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed under the Employment Inclusion Program. This includes subsidising the cost of the training delivered by the Registered Training Organisation and funding additional learning support to ensure the successful completion of the training.

ArtsACT provide policy and funding advice to government on a range of initiatives to enhance and support the arts and cultural heritage of the ACT. ArtsACT have developed an *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Consultation Action Plan (the Arts Consultation Action Plan)*, which includes commitment to ongoing support of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Network and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Officer in ArtsACT.

In addition, ArtsACT has recruited an Assistant Director for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts Engagement to support implementation of the *Arts Consultation Action Plan* and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Network. ArtsACT is building stronger partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to support enhanced outcomes that reflect the Canberra's unique culture and identity. The new Arts Policy will prioritise elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' cultural and artistic practices.

Design and construction work

ACT Government directorates work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reference and advisory groups to consult on matters relating to construction of and upgrades to buildings, including culturally appropriate design works. An example of the success of these projects is demonstrated in the artwork section for Centenary Hospital for Women & Children (CHWC) Expansion. Through engagement with the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, the artwork concept plans will include a substantial proportion of the artwork budget dedicated to Aboriginal artwork.

The Canberra Hospital Expansion Project, the largest investment in Health infrastructure in the ACT since self-government, includes a 10% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation target, developed as part of the project's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Plan (ATSIP Plan) and realised in the Deed with the Head Contractor. This represents a multi-million dollar investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business, employment, and training opportunities, demonstrating the value of the ATSIPP:

The following table summarises the current status against the targets within the ATSIP Plan.

Table 41 Summary of ATSIP Plan expenditure against targets

Item	Target as per D&C Deed	Target - Against the Awarded Trade Costs (Early Works & Main Works)	Total project expenditure to date (\$)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment	5%	\$12,599,855.35	\$786,604.77
Procurement through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	4%	\$10,079,884.28	\$1,315,026.64
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training	1%	\$2,519,971.07	\$233,255.03
TOTAL (ex GST)	10%	\$25,199,710.70	\$2,334,886.44

The ACT Government continues to conduct annual industry wide briefings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises on securing opportunities for design and construction works with ACT Government, including civil works, greenfield commercial projects, renovations and modernisation works. Commencing in 2018, these industry briefings have been well attended and include information on upcoming tender opportunities. In addition to this, the ACT Government has had a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises Liaison Officer since 2019 to foster networks between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises, ACT Government and the ACT Construction Industry.

The ACT Government is currently developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Centre of Excellence, called Yurauna Centre, with Ngunnawal Elders and knowledge holders participating in the site selection for the new Yurauna Centre.

Balarinji (an Indigenous run Design Agency) facilitated workshops and one-on-one sessions with local Ngunnawal Community members, current Yurauna students and educators to determine requirements for the Centre as well as areas where Ngunnawal input and stories may be used throughout the CIT Campus Woden projects. Further consultation with Ngunnawal stakeholders will continue throughout reference and final design for Yurauna.

Conclusion

The ACT Government reiterates its commitment to self-determination, through co-design, partnership and investment in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

As we progress work to deliver outcomes envisaged by the *National Agreement* and *ACT Agreement*, the Government will continue to partner with the Elected Body, ACCOs and the broader community to support equity and self-determination for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT.

Appendices

Appendix A – ACT Impact Statement 2021 ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement Impact Statement 2021

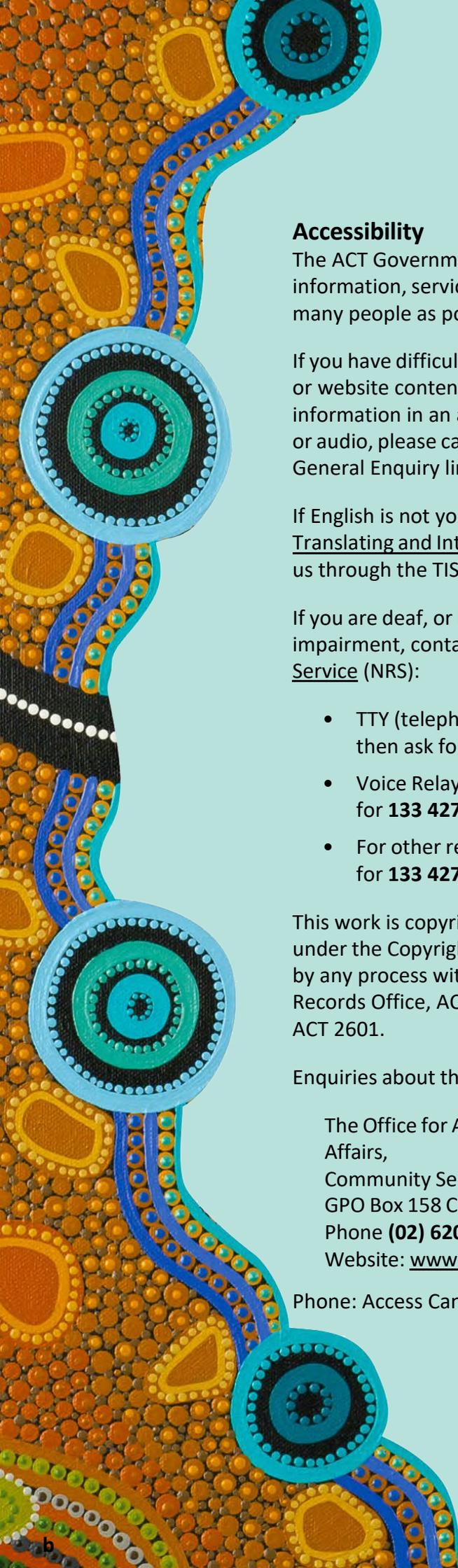
Appendix B – ACT Progress Report on Sector Strengthening Plans (ACT Health, and Education Directorates)

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement on Closing the Gap 2019-2028



ACT Impact Statement 2021





Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues, accessible to as many people as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document or website content and would like to receive the information in an alternative format, such as large print or audio, please call the Community Services Directorate's General Enquiry line on **133 427**.

If English is not your first language and you require the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National, contact us through the TIS phone interpreting service on **131 450**.

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS):

- TTY (telephone typewriter) users phone **13 36 77** then ask for **133 427**;
- Voice Relay users' phone **1300 555 727** then ask for **133 427**;
- For other relay calls, see the NRS website then ask for **133 427**.

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Enquiries about this publication should be directed to:

The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs,
Community Services Directorate
GPO Box 158 Canberra City, ACT 2601
Phone **(02) 6207 9784**
Website: www.communityservices.act.gov.au

Phone: Access Canberra **13 22 81**

Terminology

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028 Annual Report 2019 provides outcome reporting, and describes ACT Government funded initiatives, for people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the ACT.

The ACT Government generally describes Australia's first peoples as 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander' and in this report describes Australians of other backgrounds as 'non-Indigenous'.

This report also uses the terms 'Indigenous' when discussing data in text or in tables, when quoting other sources, specific program or policy titles, or third-party data.

The term 'Indigenous' is understood to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in the understanding that they are not a homogenous group.



Strength in Community

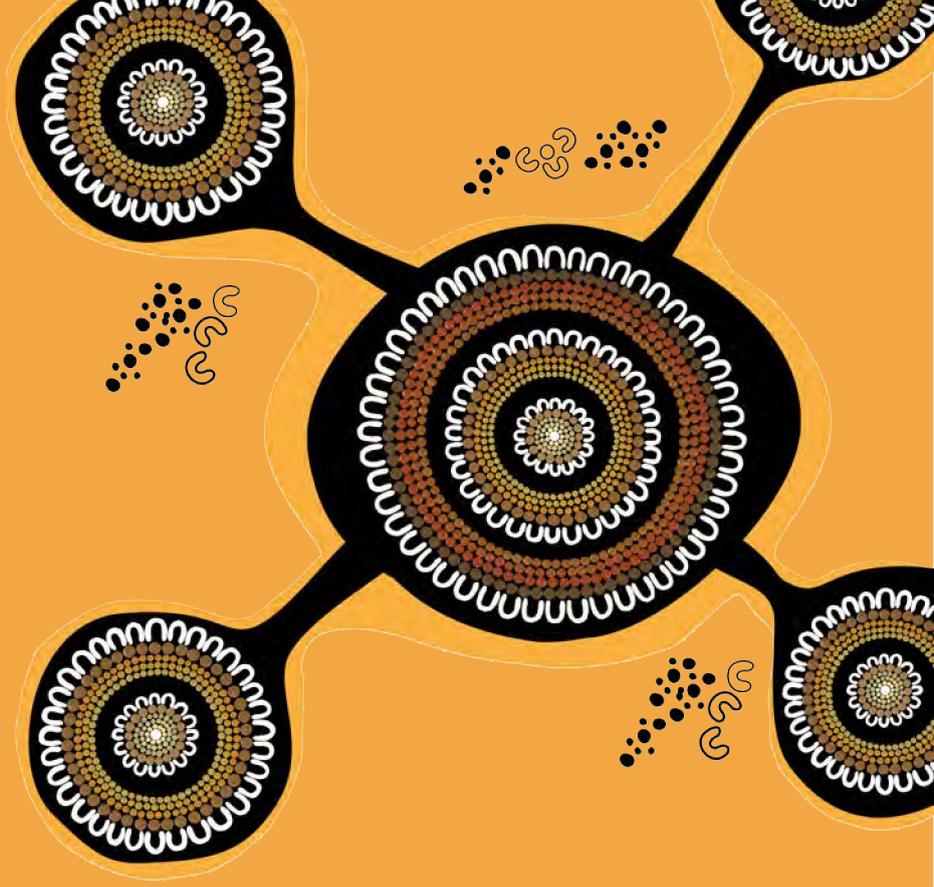
Acknowledgements

Indigenous artwork and graphic elements

Leah Brideson's artwork *Strength in Community* was commissioned for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019–2028 and is used in this publication with the artist's consent. Ms Brideson was born in Canberra and is a descendent of the Kamilaroi people from her grandmother's country in Gunnedah, Breeza and Quirindi. A detailed description of *Strength in Community* is included on the Agreement.

Document & graphic design

IB.Creative (www.impressionbay.com)
Graphic design: Conan Fulton (IB.Creative)



*Gulanyin dhuniang,
Ngalawirinyin, dhunayinyin,
Ngunnawal dhawra.*

*We acknowledge that we are
on the lands of the Ngunnawal.*

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement on Closing the Gap 2019-2028

ACT Impact Statement 2021

Minister's foreword

I am pleased to present the first Impact Statement that tracks the ACT's performance against the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2018 (the ACT Agreement) and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020 (the National Agreement).

The ACT Agreement includes a commitment to develop an Outcomes Framework and present an annual statement of performance. The Outcomes Framework was finalised in 2021 and this report responds to the commitment to provide a statement of performance for the 2020-2021 financial year.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected body has stressed the importance of measuring impact against the ACT Agreement, despite the many challenges. The Government agrees, and our commitment is reflected in this report.

As this is the first Impact Statement, I look forward to working with Agreement partners to strengthen future reports and embed the principles of data sovereignty.

For much of the 2020-21 reporting period our lives were impacted by the COVID pandemic. All parties to the Agreement and our service providers gave priority and worked tirelessly to support the safety and wellbeing of the community. Work on implementing Agreement commitments was impacted during this time.



Given this context I am particularly pleased to see measurable progress made in several areas, with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT experiencing:

- continued high preschool enrolment for children in the year prior to fulltime schooling;
- steady growth in enrolment of three-year-olds in preschool programs;
- signs of improved readiness for school reflected in the ACT Kindergarten Health Check;
- some small but encouraging reductions in the number of children and young people in out of home care, and also entering out of home care;
- a reduction in the rate of people returning to incarceration;
- more students achieving year 12 certificates;
- an increase in patients starting emergency department treatment on time; and
- an increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and proportion of budget being contracted by ACT Government directorates.

I acknowledge the need to continue to work with the Elected Body and other community leaders on key priorities to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT to achieve equitable outcomes.

The Government appreciates that publication of large amounts of data can be confronting. Our aim is to share the data we have in a way that informs and empowers the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, government agencies and non-government partners to focus our efforts on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.

I look forward to continuing to improve the way we measure and report on impact during Phase Two of the Agreement.

Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith,
*ACT Minister for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Affairs*



Head of Service's foreword Working in Partnership

As Head of Service, I am proud that the ACT Public Service continues to work in collaboration with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to achieve the priority of equitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ACTPS is committed to self-determination as the guiding principle in the delivery of programs and services to the community and we will continue to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to address matters that are important to them.

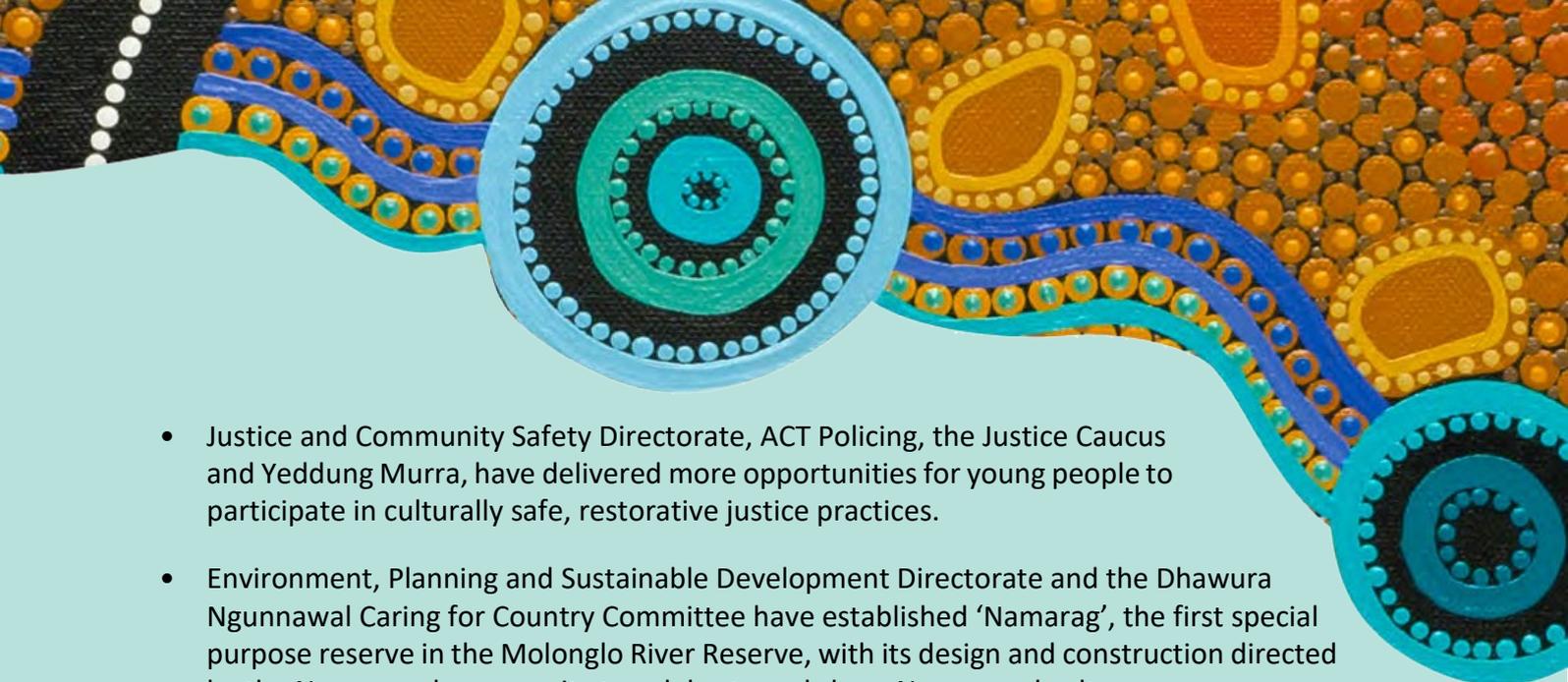
It is important that we take time to reflect each year and track our performance and identify where we need to do more. Through this Impact Statement we have an opportunity to measure our performance and see the difference our Service is making as we collectively work to meet commitments and targets under the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028* and *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

I am particularly pleased to see an increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the ACTPS. We need to keep improving our offer as an employer of choice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who add significant strength to our Service as we deliver services and programs on behalf of our Ministers to our community.

Data also shows that we are improving our support of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses as we implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy across the Service.

Our commitment to working with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners is strong including with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and many community groups and providers. Key achievements delivered over the past year through these partnerships include:

- Canberra Health Services and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group have worked to improve access to treatment for children requiring ear, nose and throat surgery. This partnership resulted in an end to the long-wait list in 2021. However, we know we have more to do when it comes to accessing specialist health care.
- Health Directorate and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Working Group developed a community-led commissioning process to support the establishment of a culturally appropriate suicide prevention and aftercare service for the ACT region.

- 
- Justice and Community Safety Directorate, ACT Policing, the Justice Caucus and Yedding Murra, have delivered more opportunities for young people to participate in culturally safe, restorative justice practices.
 - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee have established 'Namarag', the first special purpose reserve in the Molonglo River Reserve, with its design and construction directed by the Ngunnawal community to celebrate and share Ngunnawal culture.
 - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate and the ACT Reconciliation Council successfully delivered the 2021 Reconciliation Day event, one of the most successful on record.
 - Community Services Directorate with guidance from the Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee has worked to strengthen the cultural proficiency of staff working in Child Youth Protection Services, embed the Child Placement Principle and provide culturally appropriate support to families.
 - Education Directorate's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers and Cultural Integrity Coordinators strengthened the cultural integrity of ACT Public Schools and met the needs and aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by creating learning environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are nurtured, celebrated, and shared with the broader community.
 - Major Projects Canberra engaged with the United Ngunnawal Elders Council and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the Canberra Hospital Expansion project to support employment opportunities and ensure a culturally appropriate and welcoming facility.
 - Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Ngunnawal communities, has identified public spaces at the Lyneham shops, Greenway Park, John Knight Park and Narrabundah shops for the installation of Aboriginal cultural art. There are plans for future sites across the city.

On behalf of the ACT Public Service, I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to build on these achievements and deliver outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT.

Kathy Leigh, *Head of ACT Public Service*

At a glance

This Report

- presents information under the 10 focus areas in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028;
- includes socio-economic targets and the four priority reform areas from the National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020;
- focuses on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, identifying other populations where appropriate;
- provides data against ACT indicators that signal the ACT's progress against targets;
- compares data available on 31 December 2021 against a baseline to assess the status of progress made; and
- highlights areas where progress has been made and identifies those areas where further work may be needed

Additional Information

- Sources of data and multiple years of data are included in the Impact Statement Dashboard on the Strong Families and CSD websites:

www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia/impact-statement

- National Agreement Closing the Gap target information and data is on the National Agreement and Productivity Commission websites:

www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement
www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data

- Strategies, achievements and activity taking place under the ACT and National Agreements is available in ACT directorate Annual Reports

How to read this document

The following tables show performance against the four core focus areas and six significant focus areas in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Agreement 2019-2028 (the ACT Agreement).

Each table shows:

- targets in each focus area;
- ACT data reported for the National Agreement;
- the indicators and data we use to measure and track progress;
- how we performed in the reporting year; and
- the status of our progress.

Targets

Targets are taken from the National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020 (the National Agreement) and many extend for a few years beyond the current 2028 end date of the ACT Agreement. The ACT Government increased a small number of national targets (see for example targets 14 & 15) and added a target on wealth creation (see target 16). The four priority reform areas in the National Agreement have also been endorsed by the ACT Government and are reflected in the Cultural Integrity, Inclusive Community, Community Leadership and Connecting the Community focus areas of the ACT Agreement.

National Agreement data

ACT data reported for the National Agreement has been included where it is available. Sometimes this is baseline data where it is relevant to the target. In other cases, the most recently reported data is included. Data relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population appears in black text and data for the non-Indigenous population appears in grey text.

Indicators and data

Indicators are a statement of the change required in the activity being measured for each target. For example: *Increase in patients starting treatment on time* (Target 17). Indicators have been selected based on their ability to signal the ACT's likely progress against targets on an annual basis.

This Impact Statement uses data available at 31 December 2021. Where data is reported as 2021 data this refers to the financial year 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Where data is reported as 2020 data this refers the calendar year 1 January to 31 December 2020. Any exceptions are identified.

For more details on the data mix and limitations, see *Interpreting the data below*.

Measuring performance

This report focuses on the movement of data against indicators, comparing the most recent data against the baseline. This data movement reflects a longer-term trend, in contrast to short term, year by year movement. This is important for understanding progress on targets that are over a 10 year period.

How to read this document

Status of progress

Five categories are used to describe the assessment of progress towards closing the gap against indicators, by comparing the first year of data (baseline) to the most recent year.

-  **Positive change:** data suggests improvement in community outcomes
-  **Negative change:** data suggests a movement away from achieving community outcomes
-  **No significant change:** unable to assess change in community outcomes, or movements are not statistically significant compared to the baseline year
-  **Unclear:** unable to assess change in community outcomes, due to either variation in results across a set of metrics, small data samples which have a high variance, or the first year of data so no change is able to be determined
-  **No data:** no data currently available for this Indicator for the reporting period.

Interpreting the data

All data reported in the Impact Statement relates to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community unless otherwise stated. The ACT's small Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population means a very small change in the number of people can appear to be significant change when expressed in percentage changes.

For example, in *Health and Wellbeing*, there is a relatively small number of babies born each year and just a few more babies born with healthy birthweights in one year can appear to be a much more significant positive change when expressed as a percentage. Equally, a small reduction in the number of healthy birthweight babies can appear to be a more significant negative change when expressed as a percentage.

Care should be taken in assessing movements in some data.

For example, in *Children and Young People*, a drop in the number of people seeking support in relation to domestic and family violence could reflect fewer people experiencing this form of violence. Alternatively, just as many or even more people could be experiencing domestic and family violence and a smaller proportion is seeking support. There has been considerable national debate on this issue and the development of more effective data in this area is being considered.

The measurement of progress against ACT indicators is not a precise measurement of progress against targets. Some indicators have a high predictive value while others only measure one aspect of an indicator and target.

For example, in *Economic Participation*, employment data available on an annual basis is limited to public service employment for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. A more complete picture of employment in the ACT will be provided through the 2021 Census of Population and Housing data due to be published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2022.

Much of the data in this report is publicly available in other reports including through the Productivity Commission's annual Report on Government Services (ROGS) and Closing the Gap dashboard, various Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare publications and Territory data sources like the Community Services Directorate Step Up Snapshot Report.

More information on sources of all data as well as additional years of data is available online in the Dashboard referred to in *Additional Information above*.

The Impact Statement and supporting Dashboard are based on the same information, however they differ slightly due to the way information is displayed.

Additional data notes and caveats should be taken into account when interpreting the data contained in this report and covered by the Productivity Commission's Closing the Gap website referred to in *Additional Information above*.

Example Focus Area - Economic Participation

This section provides an explanation of the information reported in the focus area tables below.

Information reported

Economic Participation

Equality of access to employment and growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and community services organisations which drives economic development across community.



Target 14 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15–24 years) who are in employment, education, or training to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australian youth.

National Agreement Data: ACT 73.7 % / 86.1 % (non-Indigenous) in 2016

X Increase in youth aged 15–24 in education, training or employment

The number of students (15–24) enrolled in VET and public schools was 748 in 2020, a decrease from 1139 in 2018.

The proportion of people (15–24) employed in the ACT by the Australian Public Service and ACT Public Service was 5.57% in 2021, a decrease from 7.25% in 2018.

Explanation

Focus Area from the ACT Agreement

This is the Quality Life Outcome from the ACT Agreement.

The diagram shows the status of progress made against the four Indicators relating to Economic Participation targets.

For example: Positive change has occurred for three indicators and negative change has occurred for one Indicator.

Based on A National Agreement on Closing the Gap Socio-Economic Target.

Note that the ACT has set a higher level of ambition for some National Agreement targets (in this case raising the target from 67% to achieving parity by 2031).

Data reported against the National Agreement (please see Additional Information above for links to websites).

For example: In 2016 in the ACT, 73.7% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 15–24-year-olds and 86.1% of non-Indigenous 15–24-year-olds were in employment, education or training.

ACT Indicator measured each year to provide a status of ACT progress.

For example: There has been a negative change in the data reported against this indicator.

There are two pieces of data used to measure the above indicator. Indicators may use data that is not complete due to data limitations.

For example: This data item only includes students in public schools and VET and is a partial measure. Data on students enrolled in private schools in the ACT in 2020 was not available.

The second data item relates to employment in the public service in the ACT and is also only a partial measure of employment in the ACT. There is no other employment data available on an annual basis for the ACT.

Children and Young People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people growing up safely in their families and communities.

Children and Young People



5 out of 9 Indicators

No Significant Change

Target 1 - Maintain parity between the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Indigenous children enrolled in year before full-time schooling (YBFS) early childhood education.

National Agreement Data: ACT 115.4%* / 96.7% (non-Indigenous) in 2020

- ✔ **Continued high enrolment of children in the year before full-time schooling.** In 2020, estimated enrolments of children in a preschool program continued to exceed 100%*.
*(Note: Proportions greater than 100% due to numerator and denominator being drawn from different sources).
- ✔ **Increase in the enrolment of 3-year-olds in a preschool program.** 75.1% of eligible 3-year-olds were enrolled in 2020, an increase from 35.2% of eligible children in 2018.

Target 2 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census to 55%.

National Agreement Data: ACT: 26%/ 50% (non-Indigenous) in 2018

- ✔ **Increase in young children developmentally on track in the ACT Kindy Health Check.** 76.8% of children were assessed at the lowest risk category in the ACT Kindy Health Check Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire in 2020, an increase from 68.4% of children in 2018.

Target 3 - By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care by 45%.

National Agreement Data: ACT: 199 children and young people aged 0–17 or 68.5 (per 1,000) in year ending 30 June 2019 (the baseline year)

- ⊖ **Decrease in children and young people in out-of-home care.** 243 (30%) children and young people (aged 0–17) were in out-of-home-care in 2020, a decrease from 260 (31%) in 2018.~
- ✔ **Decrease in children and young people entering Out-Of-Home care.** 35 (28%) children and young people entered out-of-home care in 2020, a decrease from 52 (34%) in 2018.~
- ⊖ **Increase in children and young people exiting Out-Of-Home care.** 24 (20.8%) children and young people exited out-of-home care in 2020, a minor increase from 22 (17%) in 2018.~
- ⊖ **Increase in children and young people aged 0-17 years supported to stay with, or return to, their family and kin environments.**
 - 8 (11%) children and young people reunified in 2020, compared to 10 (9%) children and young people in 2018.
 - 29 (100%) of children and young people reunified who did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months in 2019, an increase from 7 (64%) children and young people in 2018.~

Target 4 - By 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50%, as progress towards zero.

National Agreement Data: ACT data not available, currently being developed.

- ⊖ **Decrease in people needing crisis support in relation to domestic and family violence.** People presenting to Domestic Violence Crisis Support services for support per month (crisis and legal support) was 62 in 2021, a minor decrease from 63 in 2018.
- ⊖ **Decrease in people experiencing homeless as a result of domestic and family violence.** People homeless or at risk of homelessness citing domestic and family violence as the main reason was 120 out of 671 (17.8%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people homeless or at risk of homelessness in 2020, a minor increase from 116 out of 693 (16.7%) in 2018.~

Cultural Integrity

A society that supports the aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contributes to the building of respectful, fair and sustainable communities.

Cultural Integrity

1 out of 1 Indicators

No Data

National Priority Reform Three: Transforming Government Organisations

Target 5 - By 2031, reduce experiences of racism and discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within government systems by at least 80 per cent as progress towards zero.

National Agreement Data: Not available. Work currently underway to determine nationally consistent approach to measuring progress.

The national approach will inform ACT data development.

The ACT Government is focusing effort on a number of key priorities to ensure government agencies and the services they provide are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In 2020 senior government officials progressed six whole-of-government projects:

- *Addressing Systemic Racism:* scoping conversations identified priorities: finalise ACTPS Framework for Addressing Systemic Racism, identify measures to be used across ACTPS, develop guidelines to identify racist and discriminatory systems and processes throughout ACTPS.
- *Cultural Integrity:* draft Cultural Integrity Guide for Senior Executives being developed to support an ACTPS-wide Cultural Integrity Framework and 'best practice' guide.
- *Mandatory Reporting:* frontline workers' insights shared with ACTPS leaders on possible opportunities and solutions to improve mandatory reporting processes and increase and strengthen pathways to early support for families.
- *Recruitment and Retention:* 6% increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in ACTPS, consultation on Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Agenda, recruitment guidelines reviewed, ACTPS supported to undertake SBS Inclusion training.
- *Procurement:* more businesses and budget contracted (see Economic Participation) creation of an online Practical Tendering workshop; virtual business showcases, guide for working with the ACT Government, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy eLearning Module.
- *Support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled (ACCO) Sector:* actions to build the sector and support existing ACCOs, including through the Healing and Reconciliation Fund, are detailed under Community Leadership (below).

An example of the government's commitment to transform the way we work is reflected in the establishment and support for the operation of an independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Implementation Oversight Committee.

Resources have also been provided to improve frontline services, including embedding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and cultural expertise within Child and Youth Protection Services to achieve recommendations from the *Our Booris, Our Way* Report.

Work is also underway to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Children and Young People Commissioner in line with Recommendation 7 of the *Our Booris, Our Way* report.

Inclusive Community

A self-determined and inclusive society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are valued, respected, and experience a life free of racism and systemic discrimination (three indicators).

Inclusive Community



2 out of 3 Indicators

No Data

National Priority Reform Four: Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level

Target 6 – Increase the number of regional data projects to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make decisions about Closing the Gap and their development.

National Agreement Data: Not available. Work currently underway to determine nationally consistent approach to measuring progress.

 The national approach will inform ACT data development.

The ACT Government works with the Elected Body to continually strengthen ways to share data and information through the Impact Statement, supporting the community to identify and monitor priorities under the ACT Agreement.

- In 2021, the Agreement Outcomes Framework was finalised and work on the first statement of progress, or impact statement, commenced. Completion of the impact statement for 2020–21 was delayed until 2022 due to the COVID pandemic.

Other data projects progressed during 2021 include:

- Canberra Health Services (CHS) published Together Forward in collaboration with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group, incorporating national, territory and organisational level data to identify priority areas for reform.
- the ACT Government also committed resources through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Project to establish a good understanding of the population, demographics, likely health and wellbeing needs in the next 10 years and the location and nature of the services required

Target 7 – By 2031, there is a sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.

National Agreement Data: Nationally in 2019, there were 123 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken, with 14 considered strong. No data available for states and territories.

 **Increase in the visibility and use of Aboriginal languages of the Canberra region:** This is the first year data has been collected. In 2021 there were at least 15 initiatives supporting the revitalisation of languages of the Canberra region, including workshops, courses and the naming of Namarag - Molonglo River Reserve and Budjan Galindji Grasslands Nature Reserve.

Target 8 – By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion.

National Agreement data: Nationally in 2015, 73.5% of people aged 15 years and over accessed the internet in their home

 ACT data development required.

Community Leadership

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples having a strong voice, are decision makers on issues that impact them and lead in the achievement of positive life outcomes.

Community Leadership

2 out of 2 Indicators



No Data

National Priority Reform One: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making

Target 9 – There will be formal partnership arrangements to support Closing the Gap in place between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments in each state and territory enshrining agreed joint decision-making roles and responsibilities and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have chosen their own representatives.

National Agreement Data: Not available. Work currently underway to determine nationally consistent approach to measuring progress.

The national approach will inform ACT data development.

The ACT Government is committed to continuing to support the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in government decision making, including through existing partnership arrangements with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (the Elected Body), United Ngunnawal Elders Council, ACT Reconciliation Council and Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee.

The ACT Government benefits from more than a decade of working in formal partnership with the Elected Body and its advocacy on behalf of communities in the ACT. The Elected Body is represented at the ACT Public Service Strategic Board Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inter-Directorate Committee. These are whole-of-government senior executive and officials' committees with responsibility for providing strategic leadership on all aspects of the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement.

The Elected Body is also a member of the national Coalition of Peaks and together with the ACT Government, as members of the Joint Council, works to implement the National Agreement.

2021 was an election year and the fifth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body took office in July 2021.

Also in 2021, work commenced on establishing a \$20 million Healing and Reconciliation Fund (over 10 years) to be administered in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The fund will support priorities identified through the ACT Agreement with an initial focus on a language centre and community conversation about a Treaty process for the ACT.

Target 10 - By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in Australia's landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests.

National Agreement Data: In 2020, 3,907,141 square kilometres of the land mass of Australia were subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights or interests

Increase in decision-making role on parks and reserves which make up 70% of the ACT land mass.

Ngunnawal Traditional Custodians (Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee) meet monthly with government (Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate) to make decisions on the management of Country. These decisions are captured in an action plan co-designed and jointly delivered by government and Traditional Custodians.

A joint management agreement is being developed in 2022.

Connecting the Community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members are connected to strong families and social and support networks, building upon the foundation of community leadership.

Connecting the Community

1 out of 1 Indicators



No Data

National Priority Reform Two: Building the Community-Controlled Sector

Target 11 - Increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

National Agreement Data: Not available. Work currently underway to determine nationally consistent approach to measuring progress.

In 2021 the ACT Government invested in the establishment of new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). Two specific areas of focus are the creation of a community-controlled housing organisation and a community-controlled services sector focusing on children, young people, and families. The *Our Booris Our Way* Implementation Oversight Committee is collaborating with government to develop the approach to working with community to establish more child and family services through the next stage of *A Step Up for Our Kids* Strategy.

The ACT Government has also provided support or undertaken work to:

- construct a purpose-built facility to increase the service capability for Winnunga Nimmitjyah Aboriginal Health and Community Services;
- design a purpose-built facility in collaboration with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation;
- support Yerrabi Yurwang Child and Family Aboriginal Corporation as a new and emerging organisation;
- work towards transitioning Boomanulla Oval and Yarramundi Cultural Centre to sustainable community control;
- establishing ACCOs providing support to people exiting or being diverted from the justice system;
- support existing ACCOs to support families and young peoples through the COVID pandemic; and
- develop Sector Strengthening Plans under the National Agreement. These plans focus on Early childhood care and development; Housing; Health; and Disability detailing how we will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in these sectors to develop their Workforce; Capital infrastructure; Service provision; and Governance.

Life-long Learning

Respect is given to preserving the world's oldest living culture which enhances inclusion and empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to fully engage in lifelong learning and positive generational experiences.

Life-Long Learning



1 out of 2 Indicators 

Negative Change

Target 12 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (aged 20–24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96%.

National Agreement Data: ACT: 77.4 % in 2016. New data will be available from the Census in 2022.

- Increase in young people completing year 12 or equivalent qualification.
 - 77 students in public schools achieved a Senior Secondary Certificate in 2020 representing 69% of students who commenced year 12 in that year. This compares to 66 public school students in 2018, again representing 69% of students who commenced year 12 in that year.
 - The number of students completing a VET qualification at year 12 or equivalent was 277 in 2020, a decrease from 298 in 2018.

Target 13 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25–34 years who have completed a tertiary qualification (Certificate III and above) to 70%.

National Agreement Data: ACT 62.1% in 2016. New data will be available from the 2021 Census of Population and Housing in 2022.

-  **Increase in adults completing a tertiary qualification:** The number of students completing a VET qualification at Certificate III and above was 37 in 2020, a decrease from 95 in 2018.

Economic Participation

Equality of access to employment and growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and community services organisations which drives economic development across community.

Economic Participation



3 out of 4 Indicators ✓

Positive Change

Target 14 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15–24 years) who are in employment, education, or training to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australian youth.

National Agreement Data: ACT 73.7% / 86.1% (non-Indigenous) in 2016

- ✗ **Increase in youth aged 15–24 in education, training or employment.**
- The number of students (15–24) enrolled in VET and public schools was 748 in 2020, a decrease from 1139 in 2018.
 - The proportion of people (15–24) employed in the ACT by the Australian Public Service and ACT Public Service was 5.57% in 2021, a decrease from 7.25% in 2018.

Target 15 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25–64 years who are employed to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australians.

National Agreement Data: ACT 70.1% / 81.7% (non-Indigenous) in 2016

- ✓ **Increase in people aged 25–64 years employed in the ACT by the Public Service.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 2564 were 2.09% of all people aged 25-64 employed in the ACT by the Australian Public Service and ACT Public Service in 2021, an increase from 1.9% in 2018.

Target 16 - Increase the proportion of high value contracts awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

National Agreement Data: N/A This is an ACT-specific target

- ✓ **Increase in ACT Government spending with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises.** The percentage of the Addressable Spend spent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises was 2% in 2021, an increase from 0.20% in 2019.
- ✓ **Increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises contracted by the ACT Government.** The number of unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enterprises attributed a value of Addressable Spend was 90 in 2021, an increase from 61 in 2019.

Health and Wellbeing

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equity in health and wellbeing outcomes.

Health and Wellbeing



3 out of 7 Indicators

No Significant Change

Target 17 – Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.

National Agreement Data: ACT data not published due to population size.

- ✓ **Increase in patients starting treatment on time.** 46.4% of patients started emergency department treatment on time in 2021, an increase from 43% in 2019. This compares to 48.4% in 2021 and 46.5% in 2019 for non-Indigenous patients.
- ? **Increase in patients receiving elective surgeries on time.**
 - Category 1: 98.1% (98.5% non-Indigenous) in 2021, an increase from 94.9% (96.4% non-Indigenous) in 2019.
 - Category 2: 55.8% (63.0% non-Indigenous) in 2021, a decrease from 66.1% (75.5% non-Indigenous) in 2019.
 - Category 3: 61.1% (74.0% non-Indigenous) in 2021, a decrease from 67.3% (78.7% non-Indigenous) in 2019.
- ⊖ **Decrease in patient walk-outs in emergency departments.** In 2021, 8.6% of patients did not wait to be seen in emergency departments, a minor increase from 7.7% in 2019. This compares to 4.5% in 2021 and 4.6% in 2019 for non-Indigenous patients.

Target 18 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91%.

National Agreement Data: ACT 91.4% / 94.5% (non-Indigenous) healthy birthweight babies in 2018.

- ? **Increase in babies with a healthy birthweight.** The proportion of babies born each year with a healthy birthweight was 87% in 2019, a minor decrease from 90.5% in 2018.~
- ⊖ **Increase in women attending five or more antenatal visits.** The annual rate of women attending at least five antenatal care visits was 86% of pregnant women in 2019, a minor decrease from 87.3% in 2018.~

Target 19 – Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero.

National Agreement Data: Currently being developed

- ✗ **Mental health overnight bed days of care remain similar over time.** The total number of mental health overnight bed days was 775 in 2021, an increase from 664 days in 2019. (Note: evidence shows a rise in use of mental health services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021).

*(Note: work is currently underway to improve social and emotional wellbeing indicators.)

- ⊖ Parity is maintained for mental health total average length of stay for overnight patients. The total average length of mental health stay for overnight patients was 16.9 days in 2021, a minor decrease from 18.1 days in 2020 and 17.8 days in 2019. For non-Indigenous patients length of stay was 18.1 days in 2021, a minor increase from 17 days in 2020 and 16.1 days in 2019.

*(please see note above)

Housing

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equitable access to affordable, secure and appropriate housing suitable to their needs

Housing

1 out of 1 Indicators 



No Significant Change

Target 20 – By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australians.

National Agreement Data: ACT 91.6% / 95.1% (non-Indigenous) in 2016

 **Increase in public housing households living in appropriately sized housing.** In 2020, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public housing households living in appropriately sized housing was 93.3%, no significant change from 93.5% in 2018. This compares with 95.2% of all public housing households in 2020, and 95.5% in 2018.~

~ financial year data

Justice

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities thrive in a safe environment and have equitable access to justice and culturally safe restorative justice, prevention and diversion programs.

Justice



1 out of 4 Indicators

Positive Change

Target 21 – By 2031, reduce the rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve parity with the rate of incarceration of non-Indigenous people.

National Agreement Data: ACT 1,891.1 / 99.8 (non-Indigenous) per 100,000 in 2020

- Decrease in adult incarceration.** The rate of adult incarceration was 1,500.5 per 100,000 adults in 2020, a minor increase from 1,471.5 in 2018. 2020 data reflects some improvement over the 2019 result where the rate was 1602.50 per 100,000 adults.
(Note: A different data source is used to measure the National Agreement target which reflects a small positive change for the same period).~
- Increase in 18–25-year-olds referred to restorative justice.** This is the first year data has been available. In 2021 one out of four eligible people was referred meeting the target of 25% of eligible people being referred to restorative justice by ACT Policing.
(Note: eligibility in 11 cases not determined at time of reporting)
- Decrease in return to custody for adults within two years.** 47.8% of adults returned to custody in 2020, a decrease from 61.4% in 2018.~

Target 22 – By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) in detention by at least 30 per cent.

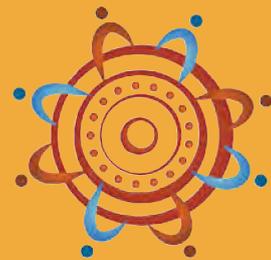
National Agreement Data: ACT data last reported in 2011-12 (at 52.6 per 10,000) and not reported in following years due to small numbers.

- Decrease in the detention of young people:** ~
 - The number young people in detention on an average day was 5 in 2020, a minor increase from an average of 4 young people in 2018.
 - The number of young people in detention during the year was 23 in both 2020 and 2019.
 - The total number of custody nights was 1,877 in 2020, an increase from 1,374 in 2018.

~ financial year data



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Priority Reform Two: Building the community-controlled sector

Jurisdictional Actions

National Agreement Clause 47: Government Parties will include in their Jurisdictional annual reports information on action taken to strengthen the community-controlled sector based on the elements of a strong sector, as outlined in Clauses 118 and 119.

In their annual reports, jurisdictions, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, may prioritise implementation of different Sector Strengthening Plan actions at different times, depending on the requirements of the sector in a particular jurisdiction. Progress on implementing Sector Strengthening Plans for Health and Early Childhood Development Care, agreed in-principle by Joint Council in December 2021, is outlined below. Ongoing annual reporting will also provide progress updates on jurisdiction's actions to implement the Housing and Disability Sector Strengthening Plans, which have not yet been agreed by Joint Council, as well as additional Sector Strengthening Plans as they are developed.

Progress on key Australian Capital Territory actions from the Early Childhood Care and Development and Health Sector Strengthening Plans is outlined below.

Action Table Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Sector Strengthening Plan

A. Workforce

Goal: A dedicated and identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, with specialist skills and training relevant to the sector, with wage parity.

Early Childhood Education and Care workforce development

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A1	Examine 2021 National ECEC Workforce Census data to develop an accurate picture of the current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ECEC workforce across Australia, and the workforce for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ECEC services.	Australian Government In collaboration with state and territory governments and sector representatives.	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	This is a Commonwealth led national action and the ACT will engage with the Commonwealth as this work progresses.
A2	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career development through secondary school career engagement, preparation of the workforce, on the job staff development, mentoring, career development and progression.	All governments and sector representatives.	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	The ACT is currently consulting on an ACT specific ECEC Workforce Strategy which will consider the specific needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education and care workforce. The Strategy is a commitment under <i>Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT</i> , which includes commitments to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase coaching and mentoring opportunities for the ECEC workforce; • establish a professional development fund; • development of professional standards for early childhood educators; • expansion of the early childhood teacher degree scholarships program; and • recognition of early learning and early childhood teachers in ACT law.
A3	Support for tertiary qualification pathway programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early educators in line with promising practice.	All governments and sector representatives.	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	

A4	Development of long- term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce development plan that identifies priorities and actions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce development, in conjunction with the implementation of the National Children’s Education and Care Workforce Strategy.	All governments and sector representatives.	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	The ACT’s ECEC Workforce Strategy will align to and localise implementation of the National Children’s Education and Care Workforce Strategy.
A5	Support, develop and resource community- based workforce development initiatives led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education and care services.	All governments and sector representatives.	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	

Family support and child protection workforce development

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A6	Scope current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and community-controlled child protection and family support workforce and projected workforce development needs in line with sector growth under Priority Reform Two of the Closing the Gap Agreement.	Australian Government In collaboration with state and territory governments and sector representatives	Existing or to be determined by the parties.	Action plans under <i>Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i> are currently being developed by the Australian Government in collaboration with State and Territory Governments.
A7	Develop and implement strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and community-controlled sector workforce development.	All governments and sector representatives	To be determined by the parties.	The ACT Government continues to support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisations (ACCOs) in the ACT. The Government committed funding in response to Recommendation 6 of the <i>Our Booris Our Way</i> Review to undertake a feasibility study into an ACCO in the child and family services sector, including services for families engaged with the statutory child protection system. The study is critical in providing the Government with an understanding of what is required to support an ACCO, including the workforce needs of an organisation working with families involved with child protection and young people in out of home care.
A8	Develop the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the child and family sector workforce engaged through DSS grant funding.	Australian Government In collaboration with state and territory governments and sector representatives	\$7.7 million over three years.	The ACT Government will continue to collaborate with the Australian Government and other states and territories to progress work to develop the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the child and family sector workforce. The ACT Community Services Directorate requires child protection staff to undertake cultural development training through the ACT's Cultural Development Program to assist staff to reflect on their practice, improve their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture, and improve the way they work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

A9	Assess the needs of and increase the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations in the child and family sector (specific initiative led by DSS).	Australian Government In collaboration with state and territory governments and sector representatives	\$3.2 million over two years.	This is a specific initiative led by DSS. The ACT will engage with the Commonwealth as this progresses while undertaking specific work to increase the involvement of ACCOs in the ACT child and family sector.
A10	Priorities for action <i>under Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i> to be developed.	Community Services Ministers	To be determined by the parties.	<p>Action plans under <i>Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i> are currently being developed by the Australian Government in collaboration with State and Territory Governments.</p> <p>Released in June 2022, <i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i>, the ACT strategy for strengthening families and keeping children and young people safe (Next Steps), outlines six reform domains that were developed to align with the goals under <i>Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i>.</p>

B. Capital Infrastructure

Goal: Capital infrastructure needs identified and consistent funding steam.

Early childhood education and care capital infrastructure development

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
B1	Identify capital infrastructure gaps for community controlled ECEC services and support capital infrastructure development through relevant programs to address gaps	All governments, in consultation with sector representatives	To be determined by the parties.	<p>The ACT is currently undertaking modelling and design work to implement universal 3-year-old early learning from 2024. This work includes mapping of ECEC capacity across the ACT, including capacity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific ECEC.</p> <p>This mapping will be used to inform future planning needs and decisions.</p>
B2	Scope service gaps to inform roll out of future community-controlled integrated early year's services in locations of high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and high child vulnerability.	All governments and sector representatives	To be determined by the parties.	
B3	Identify and plan for opportunities to transfer land and building ownership to community-controlled early years services to support their long-term sustainability and security			

Family support and child protection capital infrastructure

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
B5	<p>Map and review existing infrastructure for multi-functional community hubs that can address the multiple psychosocial needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children delivered through community-controlled organisations.</p> <p>Consider opportunities to address infrastructure gaps and needs.</p>	To be determined	To be determined by the parties.	<p>The ACT Government is committed to supporting the growth of ACCO sectors and will continue to work directly with existing and emerging ACCOs on their infrastructure needs.</p> <p>Consistent with this approach, the ACT Government is currently undertaking a project to construct a new, purpose-built facility for Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation.</p> <p>The ACT Government and Gugan Gulwan have worked in close partnership to develop plans for a new facility, to be built on the existing site of the service, with construction fully funded by the ACT Government. The new facility will enable expanded services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families in a familiar and culturally safe setting.</p>

C. Service Delivery

Goal: Clearly defined standards and requirements for service delivery

Early Childhood education and care service delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
C1	Undertake an assessment of the supporting materials and resources, and Authorised Officer training under the NQF and NQS to address gaps and ensure they provide quality, culturally appropriate and accessible supports to Authorised Officers and services for the regulation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.	All governments and sector representatives. ACECQA, in collaboration with all governments and sector representatives, for elements of the action within their areas of responsibility.	To be determined by the parties.	<p>ACECQA Authorised Officer training provides the basis for the provision of quality culturally appropriate regulatory practice. Additionally, Authorised Officers working within the Quality Assurance team of CECA have completed the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence</i> course provided by the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. Authorised Officers have completed relevant training in Trauma Informed Practice and this training has been provided to the broader education and care sector.</p> <p>The update currently being undertaken of the education and care sector’s curriculum documents has seen the addition to the draft documents of a new principle – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives, and the inclusion of the practice of cultural responsiveness. This update has generated consistent referencing within the draft documents to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being. These changes will generate a further increase in supporting materials and resources relevant to Authorised Officers and the sector in general once the documents are approved and implemented.</p>

C2	Provide support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to operate within the scope of the NQF, where appropriate, and to meet and exceed standards against the NQS.	All governments and sector representatives, in collaboration with ACECQA.	Australian Government funding of \$1.5 million for the Quality and Safety Training Package. Further resources to be determined.	The ACT's Regulatory Authority are ready to support the one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled service in Jervis Bay to operate in scope of the NQF. There are currently no community controlled organisations in the ACT in the ECEC sector.
C3	Support for Aboriginal community controlled ECEC sector through expansion of existing programs and services (Note: Action overlaps significantly with E3 below).	All governments and sector representatives.	Connected Beginnings \$81.8 million CCCFR \$29.9 million. State and territory support to be determined.	There are currently no community controlled organisations in the ACT in the ECEC sector.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
C4	Develop and implement strategies to build community-controlled sectors to respond to child and family needs at levels aligned to engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with child protection systems.	State and territory governments.	To be determined by the parties.	<p><i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i>, the ACT Strategy for strengthening families and keeping children and young people safe, was launched in June 2022.</p> <p>The reform domain <i>Our Booris, Our Way</i> reaffirms the Government’s commitment to the <i>Our Booris, Our Way</i> review and to a systemic response to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families. This includes a commitment to the phased transfer of proportionate funding for ACCO delivery of services to respond to child and family needs.</p> <p>Work under the priority initiative “development of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and transition responsibility for case management” has commenced.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completion of a feasibility study; • preliminary work undertaken to talk with the community about potential models and establishment phases, and options for service responses; and • funding for the initial suit of diversionary services secured. <p>The ACT Community Services Directorate and Minister for Families and Community Services has met with the existing ACCOs to understand how the Government can build a stronger community controlled sector in the ACT. These forums have been run with particular focus on building services that can be delivered to children and families involved, or at risk of involvement, with the child protection system.</p>

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
C5	Identify opportunities to progressively transfer authority in child protection to community-controlled organisations.	State and territory departments with responsibility for child protection and family support.	To be determined by the parties.	<p><i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i> commits to develop the ACCO child and family services sector with a view towards transitioning responsibility for case management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to one or more organisations as their capacity develops. Work on options to progressively transfer authority is being discussed with the community, with an initial focus on diversionary services and capacity building. Preliminary work has included looking at models from other jurisdictions and considering applicability for the ACT context.</p> <p>As the ACT's ACCO sector continues to develop, the Government will seek opportunities to transfer and expand the delivery of child protection and family support services through an ACCO.</p> <p>The ACT Government has committed to modernising the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i> to remove legislative barriers to the transfer of authority in child protection to community-controlled organisations, and this work is underway.</p>
C6	Improve multidisciplinary responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with multiple and complex needs.	Commonwealth Department of Social Services and state and territory.	\$49 million.	<p><i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i> commits to a more systemic approach to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander overrepresentation in the child protection system. Investment in the development of ACCOs will include partnering in the delivery of integrated responses to respond to families with multiple and complex needs, with an initial focus on diversionary services.</p> <p>This work forms part of reform to the broader child and family services sector to provide culturally safe and inclusive services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child, young people and their families.</p>

D. Governance

Goal: Governance of individual organisations, including compliance with sector-specific regulatory systems.

Early Childhood education and care governance

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
D1	Investigate mechanisms to consolidate and streamline reporting and compliance requirements for community-controlled integrated early years services.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	While the ACT does not currently have any community controlled early years services, the ACT Community Services Directorate and the ACT Human Services Register are committed to ensuring that any organisation that wishes to become a registered Care and Protection Organisation will be supported throughout the registration process.
D2	National, state and territory community-controlled peak organisations provide direct supports for quality governance development, with government resources and support.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	While the ACT does not currently have a community-controlled peak organisation other than in the health sector, if a peak was established, the ACT Government would commit to provide quality governance development, resources and support. Models operating in other jurisdictions are being considered for the ACT context.

Child protection and family support governance

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
D3	Governance measures under <i>Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i> .	Community Services Ministers	To be determined by the parties.	Governance arrangements under <i>Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031</i> are currently being developed by the Australian Government in collaboration with State and Territory Governments.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
D4	Investigate mechanisms to consolidate and streamline reporting and compliance requirements for community-controlled child protection and family support services.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	<p>While the ACT does not currently have any community controlled organisations operating in the statutory child protection and family services sector, the ACT Community Services Directorate and the ACT Human Services Register are committed to ensuring that any organisation who wish to become a registered Care and Protection Organisation will be supported throughout the registration process.</p> <p>Further, preliminary work is underway in consultation with the ACT Human Services Registrar with responsibility for the assessment and approval of care and protection organisations under the Children and Young People Act 2008. Streamlined reporting requirements will be built into contract agreements and form part of a new <i>Next Steps of our Kids</i> performance management framework to be co-designed in 2022-23.</p>
D5	Investigate the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led standards for the community-controlled sector in each state and territory.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	The ACT is actively engaged in examining the work of other jurisdictions including participating in ANZSOG community of practice including seminars led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regulators.

E. Consistent Funding Model

Goal: Across the early childhood care and development sector, funding for organisations is available/predictable and supports organisations to be responsive to the needs of those receiving the services.

Early Childhood education and care service delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
E1	Review early childhood education and care program and funding arrangements, including in Implementation Plans, to determine and implement changes needed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community- controlled ECEC services.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	Not applicable. ACT does not fund ECEC. These services are funded by the Commonwealth.
E2	Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community- controlled service delivery.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	Not applicable. ACT does not fund ECEC. These services are funded by the Commonwealth.
E3	Develop an agreed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community- controlled early childhood education and care sector definition and scope to inform efforts to build and strengthen the sector.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	This is a Commonwealth-led national action and the ACT will engage with the Commonwealth as it progresses.

E4	Reduce service gaps and establish new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled integrated early years' services in locations of high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and high child vulnerability.	All governments and sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	The ACT Government will shortly release a First 1000 Days Strategy that recognises the need to address service gaps and better integrate the range of early years services across health, early childhood education and family services. The Strategy has been informed by the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and specifically recognises the factors that support the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations people.
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Child protection and family support service delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
E5	Develop jurisdictional plans for developing and resourcing community-controlled organisation functions aligned to the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.	State and territory child protection departments	N/a	<i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i> commits to the establishment of ACCOs and transition of responsibility for case management. This includes the phased transition of existing funding that is proportionate to the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the statutory child protection and out of home care system. Next Steps also recommits to ongoing work to fully embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle across legislation, policy and practice.
E6	Assess the needs of and increase involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations in delivery in Commonwealth child and family sector programs (specific initiative led by DSS).	Australian Government Department of Social Services	\$3.2 million over two-years	Not applicable to the ACT. This is a specific initiative led by DSS.
E7	In line with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, increase the proportion services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	All governments	N/a	<i>Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030</i> commits to the establishment of ACCOs and transition of responsibility for case management. Work on options to progressively transfer authority is being discussed with the community, with an initial focus on the delivery of early support and diversion services and capacity building. This includes a commitment to the phased transfer of proportionate funding for ACCO delivery of services to respond to child and family needs.

F. Peak Body

Goal: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations which deliver common services are supported by a peak body.

Early Childhood education and care service delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
F1	Develop a national and state/territory intermediary model to strengthen and represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ECEC community-controlled services.	Sector-led action in collaboration with: National Indigenous Australians Agency Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills, and Employment State and Territory Governments.	Sector Strengthening Joint Funding Pool (pilot establishment and evaluation) to be supplemented by additional investment by other relevant portfolios and philanthropy Australian Government, state and territory Departments of Education	There are currently no ECEC community-controlled services in the ACT. However, the ACT Government will continue to engage the NIAA and the Australian Government to build sector capacity in the ACT.

Child protection and family support service delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
F2	Develop a plan to support and enable community-led development of a peak body in each state and territory.	State and Territory Governments where peaks are not yet established or in development (Western Australia, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.	To be determined by the parties.	<p>Given the small size of the ACT and current absence of ACCOs in many sectors, there is currently no peak for the broader ACCO sector. The current focus is working with current providers of Aboriginal operated services and community stakeholders to support ACCO development and build sustainable ACCO services.</p> <p>Preliminary work is underway and has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completion of a feasibility study for a child protection ACCO in the ACT; • examining models from other jurisdictions and considering applicability for the ACT context; and • seeking the views of local Aboriginal community operated services through forums between ACCOs, the ACT Community Services Directorate and the Minister for Families and Community Services.

F3	Support adequate and sustainable funding for existing peak bodies.	All governments in consultation with sector representatives.	To be determined by the parties.	Given the small size of the ACT and current absence of ACCOs in many sectors, there is currently no peak for the broader ACCO sector. However, the ACT Government would welcome and support the development of a peak body.
F4	Develop a strong evidence base for best practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled service delivery through peak bodies.	All governments and sector representatives	To be determined by the parties.	As above, there is currently no peak for the broader ACCO sector or child and family focused ACCOs. The ACT Government is committed to supporting the growth of ACCOs to deliver strong, evidenced-based practice for children, young people and families.

Action Table Health Sector Strengthening Plan

A. Consistent Funding Model

Outcome: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector is further strengthened through reliable funding streams to provide holistic, evidence-based, and culturally safe services.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A1	Develop a needs-based funding model in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector.	NACCHO Australian Government State and Territory Governments	Nil additional financial cost to develop the model.	The ACT Governments introduction of commissioning of health services provides an opportunity for the ACT Government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector to co-design and plan for future capacity of service needs through a revised need-based funding approach and the development of budget bids.
A2	Re-prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health program funds being directed to mainstream non-government organisations, towards the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector. This includes current and new investments in mental health, drug and alcohol, aged care, and emerging health priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Australian Government State and Territory Governments.	Nil additional financial cost.	<p>Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga) is the only Aboriginal community controlled health care service in the ACT. It provides culturally safe, holistic primary health care services, as well as a range of programs to promote good health and healthy lifestyles and to support vulnerable individuals and families. It is funded by both the Commonwealth and ACT Governments.</p> <p>Significant investment was made in Winnunga's infrastructure through development of a \$20 million purpose-built facility, incorporating rooms for counselling, GP consulting, dental surgery, breakout spaces and staff areas, as well as larger community spaces.</p> <p>The ACT Government funds Winnunga to deliver health care in the Alexander Maconochie Centre (the ACT's adult prison) as an alternative or supplementary service to mainstream Justice Health Services. The Government is also working with Winnunga to establish a new community controlled residential alcohol and drug rehabilitation service, with a site identified and design development underway.</p> <p>Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Organisation supports young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families in the ACT and surrounding region to thrive and succeed.</p>

				<p>Health-related programs and services include drug and alcohol, mental health and nicotine replacement therapy.</p> <p>Through the 2022-23 Budget, more than \$19 million has been committed to the construction of a new facility for Gugan Gulwan on its current site, designed in partnership with Gugan Gulwan, young people and families. This will support the continued expansion of services.</p>
A3	Optimise utilisation of Medicare in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.	<p>Australian Government Department of Health</p> <p>NACCHO</p> <p>Sector Support Organisations</p>	\$8.7 million (estimated)	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.

B. Workforce

Outcome: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector achieves its own workforce targets including for recruitment and retention in clinical and non-clinical positions in conjunction with implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A4	Invest in a permanent, highly skilled, and nationally credentialed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health workforce.	<p>NACCHO</p> <p>Sector Support Organisations</p> <p>Australian Government</p> <p>State and Territory Governments</p>	To be determined.	<p>In alignment with the <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031</i> and the <i>ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028</i> the ACT Health Directorate has commenced actions to build a greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the broader ACT health workforce.</p> <p>Specific government workforce actions include plans for Canberra Health Services (developed) and development of an ACT Health Directorate workforce plans. Both plans aim to address specific clinical, operational administration and consumer needs in the ACT.</p> <p>Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) is leading the implementation of the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Academy program in the ACT with the support of ACT Health Directorate, Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), University of Canberra, Canberra Health Services, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, and the ACT Education Directorate.</p> <p>The IAHA program is designed to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students considering a career in health. The program provides a wraparound culturally appropriate, supportive Australian School-based Apprenticeship (ASBA) model. In 2021 the ACT Health Directorate provided a grant of \$50,000.00 to IAHA to deliver teaching resources, student materials and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete their education and training qualifications; • prepare for the workforce, and build employability skills; and • undertake work readiness through an Australian School Based Apprenticeship.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A5	Build community-controlled RTO capacity and improve the quality of RTO training within or linked to community-controlled health organisations.	Australian Government State and Territory Governments	To be determined.	<p>This action is supported through the <i>ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028</i> and the development of ACT Government approaches to build a greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the broader ACT health workforce.</p> <p>The Yurauna Centre is Canberra Institute of Technology's (CIT) dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Centre of Excellence. It provides tailored Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander courses, study support and cultural advice. Courses include Certificates in Alcohol and Other Drugs, Community Services, Mental Health, Cultural Safety, and Community Development.</p>
A6	Convene a Clinical Workforce Taskforce to analyse and systemically address the full range of pertinent industrial, professional, socio-economic and employment impediments affecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector.	Australian Government Department of Health NACCHO Sector Support Organisations Workforce peak bodies	To be determined.	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.

A7	Resource permanent health care pathways co-designed in jurisdictions through partnerships between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector, its Sector Support Organisation, relevant national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce peak bodies, governments, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, and vocational training/tertiary institutions.	<p>Australian Government</p> <p>State and Territory Governments</p> <p>NACCHO</p> <p>Sector Support Organisations</p> <p>Member services and partners as negotiated.</p>	To be determined.	<p>Through the Indigenous Allied Health Australia Academy Implementation Working Group, the ACT Government is working to formally resource permanent health care pathways in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector. Membership of the Working Group includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Allied Health Officer, ACT Health Directorate; • Skills Canberra Grants and Programs, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate; • Vocational Education in Secondary Schools, Education Directorate; • Associate Professor Nutrition and Dietetics, University of Canberra; and • Yurauna Centre, Canberra Institute of Technology. <p>Students undertake a Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance, leading up to a supported community-based placement. Canberra Health Services has established tutorials for students with placement supervisors completing cultural responsiveness training.</p> <p>During 2021-22 the ACT Government approved and funded a new culturally appropriate integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention and Aftercare Service for the ACT, the first of its kind in Australia., This unique new service has commenced and provides a pathway of appropriate care and support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on close consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.</p>
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C. Capital Infrastructure

Outcome: Provision of health care by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services occurs in modern, accredited physical facilities equipped to offer telehealth and other digitally enabled services irrespective of location or socioeconomic status of the community.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A8	Fund major and medium-size capital and physical infrastructure including permanent clinic builds and large-scale renovations, mobile clinics, maintenance, repairs, and extensions to ensure facilities meet building codes and accreditation standards.	Australian Government State and Territory Governments	\$254.4 million over four years (as announced)	<p>The ACT Government has invested in community major and medium-size capital and physical infrastructure through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Deed of Grant with Winnunga Nimmityjah Health and Community Services to progress the design and construction of a community controlled alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation facility; • delivery of a purpose-built facility with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation to deliver youth and family services for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community; and • the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm (NBHF) Farm Master plan, developed in 2021 with the NBHF Board and United Ngunnawal Elders Council members, which identifies infrastructure requirements and the necessary investment to support the NBHF residential model and transition to a community run service.

A9	Fund staff accommodation required to ensure regional and remote communities have the stable health workforce they require with equitable access to staff accommodation for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce.	Australian Government Department of Health WA Government	\$254.4 million over four years includes funds for clinical staff accommodation only (see A8). Non-clinical staff – to be determined.	The ACT has no regional or remote communities.
A10	Fund reliable IT capacity and connectivity for electronic clinical information systems, telehealth, community engagement, and client connection with their community-controlled health services in every region (urban, regional, and remote) and equitable access to other technological and digital innovations to improve culturally safe, cost-effective service deliver.	Australian Government Department of Health	\$254.5 million over four years (see A8).	The ACT has no regional or remote communities.

D. Service Delivery

Outcome: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector continues to lead, innovate, expand, and excel in delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A11	Rectify overburden of activity reporting to governments to allow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector to focus on outcomes while maintaining accountability.	All jurisdictions	Nil additional financial costs (and release of resources currently diverted to unnecessary reporting).	Under existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector contracts and the introduction of a Commissioning for Outcomes framework, the ACT Health Directorate in partnership with service providers has streamlined reporting frequency to reduce administration burden and replication. This approach allows the sector to focus on organisational performance and outcomes while remaining compliant with data and reporting requirements.
A12	Develop a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research agenda led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to secure funding for evidence generation the sector has prioritised.	NACCHO Sector Support Organisations	To be determined.	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.

A13	Leverage buying power and economies of scale in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector nationally with minimum procurement targets to increase purchases /contracts from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and enterprises which train and employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	NACCO Sector Support Organisations	To be determined.	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.
A14	Fund health workforce leadership development programs and initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working in or aspiring to work in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector to maximize service impact and health outcomes.	NACCHO	To be determined.	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.

E. Governance

Outcome: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector meets the highest standards of corporate, fiduciary and clinical governance.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A15	Transition government-managed primary health clinics in Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia to community-controlled comprehensive primary health care services and identify locations in all jurisdictions where new community-controlled primary health care services are required to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Australian Government Department of Health NACCHO Sector Support Organisations	To be determined.	Not applicable to the ACT.
A16	Fund Board corporate governance programs including needs assessment, capability development and support including independent expertise where required for CEO recruitment and essential criteria for CEOs across the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health sector.	NACCHO Sector Support Organisations	To be determined.	This is a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector.

F. Peak Body

Outcome: Increased representation and shared decision-making through structural reform to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies function as equal partners with governments to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
A17	Expand independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on government and non-government bodies and other decision-making entities whose decisions affect the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Australian Government Department of Health NACCHO Sector Support Organisations	To be determined.	This is primarily a Commonwealth-led action for the Australian Government and sector. Canberra Health Services – the largest public healthcare provider in the ACT – established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group in 2020 and worked with the group to co-design <i>Together, Forward</i> , a plan to deliver better health and access to health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Canberra region. The Consumer Reference Group continues to provide important feedback and is listened to by senior leaders.