

CLOSING THE GAP NT
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2021-22**

Aboriginal Peak Organisations
Northern Territory (APO NT)



Acknowledgements

The Northern Territory Government respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Nations people of this country. We acknowledge the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities, and the evolving cultures of all our First Nations peoples. We pay our deepest respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to their leaders - past, present and emerging.

While this Annual Report uses the term 'Aboriginal', we respectfully acknowledge that Torres Strait Islander peoples are First Nations people living in the Territory. Therefore, strategies, services and outcomes relating to 'Aboriginal' Territorians should be read to include both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Territorians.

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ACRONYMS

ABE	Aboriginal Business Enterprise
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCHO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
ACCO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation
AECDs	Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AEPF	Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework
AGD	Department of the Attorney-General and Justice
AGMP	Aboriginal Governance and Management Program
AHNT	Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory
ALOs	Aboriginal Liaison Officers
AMSANT	Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory
APO NT	Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory
APP	Aboriginal Procurement Policy
CREC	Community Resilience and Engagement Command
CRF	Cultural Responsiveness Framework
CtG	Closing the Gap
DCDD	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
DCMC	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
Dept PMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DFSV	Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
Housing JSC	National Partnership for Remote Housing NT Joint Steering Committee
IP1	Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan 2021-22

IP2	Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan 2022-23
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LDM	Local Decision Making
LEaD	Local Engagement and Decision-making (Department of Education initiative)
LECs	Local Emergency Committees
LRCs	Local Recovery Committees
LGANT	Local Government Association of the Northern Territory
NAAJA	North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
NTECAA	Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NT JPP	Northern Territory Justice Policy Partnership
NTPFES	Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Service
NT PWG	Northern Territory Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group
OAA	Office of Aboriginal Affairs
ORIC	Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RATE	Remote Aboriginal Teacher Program
RECS	Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy
RTA	Residential Tenancies Act 1999
SEIFA	Socio-economic Indexes for Areas
SERT	Security and Emergency Recovery Team
TFHC	Territory Families, Housing and Communities
VFP	Virtual Funding Pool
YBFS	Year Before Fulltime Schooling

MINISTER'S STATEMENTS

Chief Minister

In the spirit of transparency, accountability, and honouring our ongoing commitments to Aboriginal Territorians, I present the combined 2022 Annual Report for Aboriginal Affairs in the Northern Territory (the Annual Report). These substantial reports capture the progress of the Closing the Gap Northern Territory Implementation Plan (the Implementation Plan) and the *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy (the Aboriginal Affairs Strategy).

A year after the development of the Implementation Plan, the Annual Report provides an overview of actions to embed the National Agreement on Closing the Gap's four priority reforms into the way the NT Government works. This includes important structures to share decision-making, like the Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs, and changes to the Cabinet Submission process requiring agencies to demonstrate how policies and legislation align with and support the National Agreement.

Aligning closely with the National Agreement, the NT Government's Aboriginal Affairs Strategy is a whole-of-government framework for measuring progress on Aboriginal Affairs policies and programs. The second year of reporting shows gains in the focus areas of housing, land and sea, and truth and healing. However, data across other areas, particularly for safety and justice, demonstrates a need for continued collaboration to achieve better outcomes.

These reports provide important data to enable the NT Government and our partners to work together to address long-standing inequities faced by Aboriginal people. The Territory's commitment to Closing the Gap is absolute, and we will continue to uphold this commitment as we work towards a more just and equal future for all Aboriginal Territorians.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

As the Northern Territory's Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I acknowledge the substantial work that has taken place over the last year, through complex and challenging times, to implement the National Agreement on Closing the Gap in the Territory. I would also like to re-affirm that we still have extensive work to do, and it may be some time before we see significant improvements in the data.

Nevertheless, sharing the data is crucial in making evidence-based decisions about what is working and what isn't, so that we can generate better outcomes.

As a priority, the newly established Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs, co-chaired by Dr John Paterson, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Peak Organisations of Northern Territory (APO NT), and myself, will oversee the development of new actions for the second iteration of the Implementation Plan, which will particularly focus on addressing the National Agreement's 17 socio-economic targets.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our key partners, APO NT, the National Indigenous Australians Agency, and Local Government Association of the Northern Territory, for their ongoing commitment to implementing these reforms in the Territory.

There is no doubt the National Agreement has strengthened the work already underway, and provided all governments with a mandate to drive the scale of change required to Close the Gap. These reports are important, although still reflect the beginning of a journey that has a long way to go.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW

The Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan (2021-22) was provided to the Joint Council on Closing the Gap in August 2021, as per Clause 111(a) of the National Agreement (the National Agreement). The Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan (2021-22) (Implementation Plan 1) had a deliberate focus on the four priority reform areas of the National Agreement, and identified up to 46 new actions and/or existing actions that were being reformed to align with Closing the Gap, as well as 10 additional actions responding to our reporting obligations. The Closing the Gap NT Partnership Working Group agreed that further work would be required throughout 2021 and 2022 to address the socio-economic targets of the National Agreement at the Territory level in NT Implementation Plans going forward.

Highlights from Implementation Plan 1 include:

- establishing the Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs (NTECAA) and the NT Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group
- amending the Northern Territory Cabinet Submission template to include a Closing the Gap Impact Statement and associated guidelines
- contributing to the development of four national Sector Strengthening Plans for health, early childhood care and development, housing and disability
- allocating the first year of funding from the NT Government's contribution to the national virtual funding pool to build and strengthen the Aboriginal community-controlled sector
- collaborating with community, successfully nominating Maningrida as a national Closing the Gap Place-based Partnership and community data project site
- developing and launching the NT Government Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework
- developing and launching the NT Government Aboriginal Procurement Policy
- developing a Reconciliation Action Plan for the Local Government Association of the NT
- developing an online Closing the Gap training module that is publicly available and accessible on the Office of Aboriginal Affairs website.

SNAPSHOT OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 1 ACTIONS

COMPLETE 20

ONGOING 24

COMMENCED 10

NOT COMMENCED 8

Complete: Work complete

Ongoing: Significantly progressed, often long-term actions over multiple years.

Commenced: Work has been undertaken but has not significantly progressed

Not commenced: Work not yet undertaken, as many of these actions are pending completion of other actions.

Please see Appendix 1 – Implementation Plan Annual Report Summary Table for a summary of Implementation Plan 1 actions.

INTRODUCTION – PARTNER STATEMENTS

Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT) statement:

Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT) formed as an alliance in October 2010 as a direct response to the Northern Territory Emergency Response (also known as the intervention). At that time, five peak Aboriginal bodies in the NT came together to provide strong advocacy for Aboriginal people across the Territory.

In 2022, our members comprise of the Northern, Central and Tiwi land councils, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT, North Australia Aboriginal Justice Agency, Aboriginal Housing NT and Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network, with the Anindilyakwa Land Council as an associate member. APO NT's principal role is to advocate for Aboriginal people to be the leaders and decision makers in their lives, and we work together to provide a united Aboriginal voice to Government.

One of APO NT's key priorities is to work with all levels of government to implement and report on meeting the targets and achieving the outcomes of Closing the Gap.

In this Annual Report, we recognise the progress that has occurred under the National Agreement but know there is still more work to do to embed the reforms of the Closing the Gap here in the NT. Nonetheless, our aim will be to continue to honour the approach and work with our partners for sustained, positive impact.

NT Government statement:

The NT Government has been working to establish the foundations of the National Agreement in the way we work, particularly through embedding the National Agreement's priority reform areas. This work continues, and those actions that have not been finalised will be included in the Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan 2022-23 (IP2), along with further actions to address the National Agreement's socio-economic targets.

It has been another year impacted by COVID-19, with multiple disruptions in our ability to travel to regional areas to share information about Closing the Gap. Information sharing is a priority for the coming year, where we plan to increase our engagement across all regions to not only share data, but to also show organisations how they can incorporate the principles of the National Agreement into the work they do.

The scale and scope of the National Agreement is unprecedented, but it needs to be. To change things requires a significant and ongoing effort from all Closing the Gap partners, working in line with the National Agreement, over a sustained period of time. There is no doubt that there is still a long way to go.

The *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy and its associated Performance and Reporting Framework compliments and aligns with key elements of the National Agreement, which will further support the overall work in the NT, and its regions.

Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) statement:

LGANT is the peak body representing the local government sector in the NT. It is the voice of local government representing 16 municipal and regional councils, 63 local authorities, and 614 homelands with over 100 Aboriginal languages and dialects.

Local government councils look after matters close to our homes including local roads, street signage, lighting, footpaths, parking, cycle ways, parks and playgrounds, sporting fields and swimming pools, pet control, land and coast care programs, libraries, waste management, and community programs such as child and aged care – and in some places, provide services on behalf of Centrelink and Australia Post.

Local government councils make a significant contribution to the NT economy as they collectively employ around 3,000 Territorians. Councils manage and control assets and infrastructure valued at \$2.57 billion, are responsible for over 13,000 kilometres of roads and receive and expend over \$505 million in the Northern Territory annually.

Local government councils are also often the largest employer of Aboriginal people in remote and regional areas. Additionally, 59.87 per cent of all elected members in the NT are Aboriginal and 87.63 per cent of regional elected members are Aboriginal.

The July 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap represents the first time that local government councils became signatories to Closing the Gap and the NT Implementation Plan 1, and is the first-time any local government has been involved at a state or territory level.

In reflecting on the first year of the Implementation Plan, LGANT sees an opportunity to grow local government's role in Closing the Gap and will be working closely with our members councils and the other signatories to demonstrate a genuine commitment to accelerating delivery of the reform areas and meeting the Closing the Gap targets.





NATIONAL CLOSING THE GAP SOCIO-ECONOMIC TARGETS

There is limited data and analysis available for the Closing the Gap socio-economic targets at this stage, with many of the targets only having baseline data available and relying on Census data collection in order to update. The Northern Territory is able to draw limited analysis of this data compilation, at this time.

The following snapshot of how the NT is tracking is provided based on data collected and provided by the Productivity Commission Closing the Gap dashboard¹ and its Annual Data Compilation Report². The Productivity Commission provides an assessment of the data, where available, at the national and jurisdictional levels.

Target	National - on track/ not on track	NT - improving/ worsening
1. Closing the Gap in Life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.	Not on track	Improving (males), worsening (females).
2. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 per cent.	On Track	Improving
3. By 2025, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in Year Before Fulltime Schooling (YBFS) early childhood education to 95 per cent.	On Track	No change
4. 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 (AEDC) to 55 per cent.	Not on Track	Worsening
5. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20-24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 per cent.	No new data	No new data
6. 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 per cent.	No new data	No new data
7. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15-24 years) who are in employment, education or training to 67 per cent.	No new data	No new data

1 PC Dashboard: <https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/dashboard>

2 PC ADCR: <https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/annual-data-report>

Target	National - on track/ not on track	NT - improving/ worsening
8. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-64 who are employed to 62 per cent.	No new data	No new data
9. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88 per cent.	No new data	No new data
10. By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent.	Not on track	Worsening
11. By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) in detention by at least 30 per cent.	On track	No change
12. By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 per cent.	Not on track	Improving
13. A significant and sustained reduction in violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children towards zero.	No new data	No new data
14. Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero.	Not on track	Worsening (males), improving (females)
15a. By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in Australia's landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights and interests.	On track	Improving
15b. By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights and interests in the sea.	Not on track	Improving
16. By 2031, there is a sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.	No new data	No new data
17. By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion.	No new data	No new data

National Closing the Gap Socio-economic targets – a closer look at the data

Target 1 →	Close the Gap in life expectancy
National assessment →	Improving but not on track
NT assessment →	Improving for males, but worsening for females

Females

The most recent NT data from 2015-2017 shows a gap in life expectancy of 12.8 years, an improvement from 14.4 years in 2010-12, however an overall increase from the baseline reporting year (11.6 years in 2005-2007).

Males

After a slight increase in the 2010-12 reporting period, the gap in life expectancy for males in the NT improved in 2015-2017 by 2.9 years, to 11.5 years.

Disaggregation by remoteness

For males and females, life expectancy reduced with remoteness.

Disaggregation by Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD)

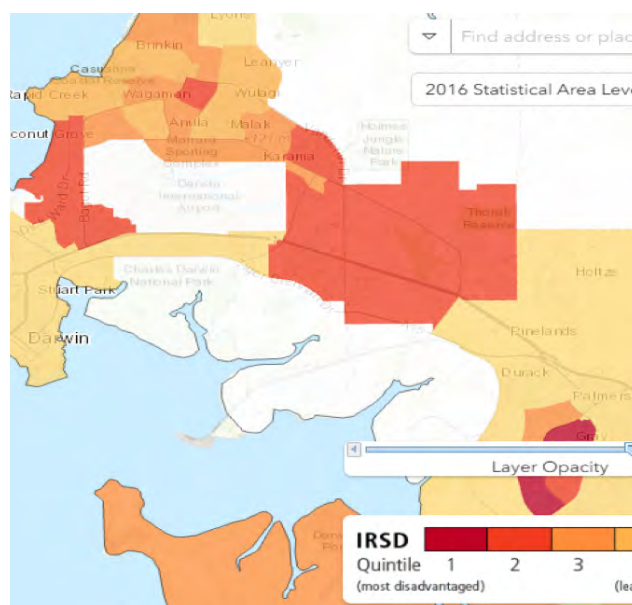
In terms of IRSD, the correlation was not as linear as for remoteness. For both males and females, the most disadvantaged quintile according to the IRSD had the lowest life expectancies, however the middle 20 per cent had slightly lower life expectancies than the second most disadvantaged 20 per cent.

Socioeconomic status of the locality is classified according to the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), 2016 using Statistical Area 2 as the building block. While this data was provided at the national level, if it were applied in the NT at the Statistical Area 2 level the following areas would fall into the middle quintile: the greater part of Alice Springs; the greater Katherine area; and some of Darwin's Northern suburbs and part of Darwin's rural area.

In comparison, the second lowest IRSD quintile would incorporate only the proportion of the greater Darwin area highlighted in red below, but include at least five town camps.

It is not possible to tell from the dashboard data whether, if disaggregated by jurisdiction, the NT would reflect the same pattern as the national data. However if it did, this may suggest a greater correlation between remoteness and lower life expectancy, than between the socio-economic disadvantage (under the IRSD) and lower life expectancy, however given the relatively small sample size, further research would be required to understand more.



Source: IRSD map

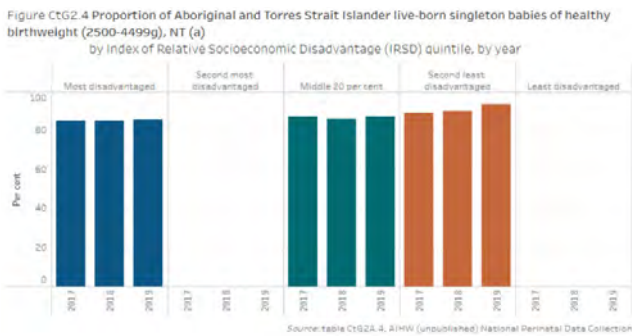
Target 2 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 per cent

National assessment → On track

NT assessment → Improving

Disaggregation by remoteness area

Areas across the NT are classified as either outer regional (Darwin area), remote (Katherine and Alice Springs areas) and very remote (everywhere else). There was a slight increase in the percentage of babies born at a healthy birthweight for remote and very remote areas, while there was a slight decrease in outer regional.



Disaggregation by Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD)

The proportion of Aboriginal babies born at a healthy birthweight increased from 2018-2019 across all quintiles where data was provided. It is highlighted that there was no data provided for the second most disadvantaged quintile and the least disadvantaged quintile (see above). This is likely due to small sample size, but prevents an analysis of data from the population included within this quintile (including town camps mentioned in the analysis of Target 1).

Target 3 → By 2025, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in Year Before Fulltime Schooling early childhood education to 95 per cent

National assessment → On track

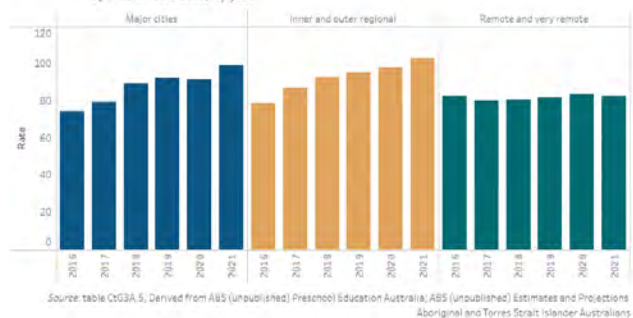
NT assessment → No change

In the NT, there was a decrease of 0.4 per cent in the number of Aboriginal children enrolled in Year Before Fulltime Schooling (YBFS). In comparison, all other jurisdictions were assessed as improving.

Disaggregation by remoteness area

While remoteness area disaggregation by jurisdiction is only available for 2016, this showed in the NT that there was a much lower rate of attendance in remote and very remote areas (75.5 per 100 children) than in outer regional areas (89.3 per 100 children). The data shows similar findings at the national level. Interestingly, the availability of data over time at the national level shows that enrolments of Aboriginal children in YBFS has generally increased in major cities and inner and outer regional areas, however has remained somewhat static in remote and very remote areas.

Figure CtG3.3 Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the state-specific YBFS age cohort who are enrolled in a preschool program, per 100 children aged 4 years in the community, Aust (a) by remoteness area, by year



Contextual information

The number of Aboriginal early childhood care service providers in the NT, has increased to 10 in 2021, from 3 in 2016.

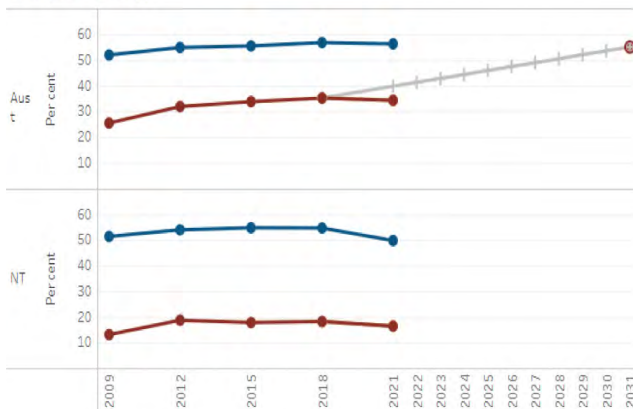
Target 4 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) to 55 per cent

National assessment → Worsening

NT assessment → Worsening

The proportion of Aboriginal children in the NT assessed as developmentally on track has decreased by 1.8 per cent from 2018 to 2021. It should be noted that there was also a reduction of 4.9 per cent of non-Aboriginal children in the NT assessed as on track, however the baseline for Aboriginal children is significantly lower, as shown below.

Figure CtG4.1 Children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census (a)



Source: table CtG4A.1, Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment Australian Early Development Census, Derived from Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment Australian Early Development Census, Joint Council National Agreement on Closing the Gap

(a) Targets and trajectories are only available nationally.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Actual
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Linear regression estimates
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Target
- + Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Trajectory
- Non-Indigenous children, Actual

Disaggregation by sex

An NT disaggregation by sex shows that a lower proportion of males being assessed as developmentally on track, and that the proportion has decreased for both males and female children. From 2018 to 2021, proportions have decreased across all NT-relevant remoteness areas, and proportions decrease as remote increases.

There has been an increase in the percentage of Aboriginal children with special needs or requiring further assessment in their first year of schooling.



Target 5 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20-24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 per cent

There has been no new data for this target since the baseline year of 2016. The data of 2016 showed the proportion of Aboriginal people (aged 20-24) attaining year 12 or equivalent in the NT was 37.5 per cent, compared to 83.8 per cent of non-Aboriginal people in the NT.

Target 6 → 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 per cent

There has been no new data collected by the Productivity Commission for this target since 2016. The NT Government does however collect similar data for its *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy (AAS) reporting, in which it has been assessed as 'not on track' due to a reduction in the number of Aboriginal students, and a slight reduction in the proportion. See details below;

AAS Measure 10.5 - Increase the proportion of Aboriginal Territorians training in higher-level vocational education and training qualifications (e.g. Certificate III and above)

	Northern Territory	Top End	East Arnhem	Big Rivers	Barkly	Central
2019	3 279 28%	1 514 20%	297 48%	330 41%	186 47%	952 42%
2020	2 588 26%	1 256 19%	240 53%	232 38%	154 49%	706 39%
2021	2 423 25%	1 382 20%	68 29%	239 36%	126 40%	608 39%

Source: NT Vocational Educational Training (VET) Data



Target 7 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15-24 years) who are in employment, education or training to 67 per cent

There has been no new data for this target since 2016. In the NT, 40 per cent of Aboriginal youth were in employment, education or training, compared to 81.2 per cent of non-Aboriginal youth.



Target 8 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-64 who are employed to 62 per cent

There has been no new data for this target since 2016. In the NT, 35.4 per cent of Aboriginal people aged 25-64 were employed, compared to 84.8 per cent of non-Aboriginal people. This disparity is significantly larger than that reflected at the national level.

Target 9 → By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88 per cent

There has been no new data collected by the Productivity Commission for this target since 2016. The NT Government does however collect similar data as part of its *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy reporting. The latest data shows a reduction in overcrowding of 2.3 per cent from 2019-20 to 2020-21. See details below.

AAS Measure 5.1 - Increase the proportion of Aboriginal Territorians living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing

Proportion of homes overcrowded and average clients per bedroom

	NT	Top End	East Arnhem	Big Rivers	Barkly	Central
2018-2019	57.0%	48.8%	69.5%	64.6%	48.7%	46.1%
	(total No. of occupied homes 4378)	(total No. of occupied homes 1065)	(total No. of occupied homes 887)	(total No. of occupied homes 1225)	(total No. of occupied homes 261)	(total No. of occupied homes 940)
	1.70 clients per bedroom	1.55 clients per bedroom	2.0 clients per bedroom	1.82 clients per bedroom	1.61 clients per bedroom	1.45 clients per bedroom
2019-2020	56.9%	49.2%	69.5%	62.9%	50.4%	47.1%
	(total No. of occupied homes 4395)	(total No. of occupied homes 1070)	(total No. of occupied homes 918)	(total No. of occupied homes 1234)	(total No. of occupied homes 248)	(total No. of occupied homes 925)
	1.70 clients per bedroom	1.53 clients per bedroom	1.93 clients per bedroom	1.77 clients per bedroom	1.61 clients per bedroom	1.44 clients per bedroom
2020-2021	54.6%	52.1%	67.8%	58.8%	40.2%	54.6%
	(total No. of occupied homes 4527)	(total No. of occupied homes 1498)	(total No. of occupied homes 944)	(total No. of occupied homes 893)	(total No. of occupied homes 259)	(total No. of occupied homes 933)
	1.61 clients per bedroom	1.56 clients per bedroom	1.83 clients per bedroom	1.71 clients per bedroom	1.5 clients per bedroom	1.4 clients per bedroom

Data Source: CBIS0153 Overcrowding Report-generated from an internal database system within TFHC. Notes:

1. Number of occupied homes measures all public housing in remote communities for Aboriginal Territorians.
2. The above table has been calculated using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard. While universally recognised, this does not necessarily accommodate Aboriginal lifestyle and desired living arrangements. Limited data can lead to dual bedroom occupancy of common law spouses being incorrectly recorded as overcrowded. Further, this indicator does not make allowance for underreporting of tenancies. Rent is charged for all registered occupants of a house, providing an incentive to under report actual occupancy.

Target 10 → By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent

National assessment → Worsening

NT assessment → Worsening

Target 11 → By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) in detention by at least 30 per cent

National assessment → On track

NT assessment → No change

Aboriginal adult incarceration rates in the NT increased sharply in 2021, to 2,556.87 per 100,000, while non-Aboriginal incarceration rates decreased slightly over this same period. Nationally, Aboriginal adult incarceration rates also increased.

Disaggregation by sex and age group

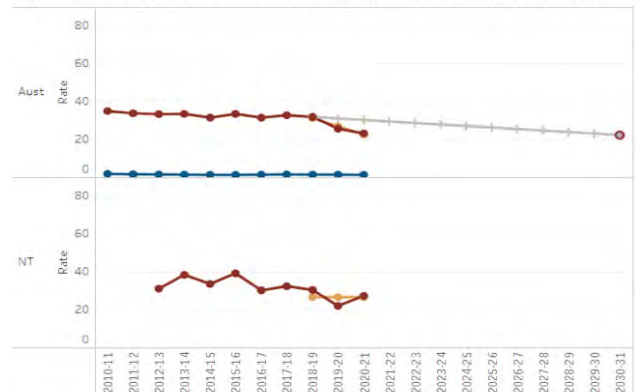
Disaggregation by sex showed an increase in both male and female incarceration, and age group showed that the increase in incarceration was reflected across all age groups except for the 55+ group (see below table).



While the NT has been assessed as having no change for this target, there has been an increase in the rate of young Aboriginal Territorians in detention, from 22 per 10,000 young people to 27.3 per 10,000 young people in 2020-2021.

More recent data is available through the NT Government youth detention census³ which as of July 2022, reflected a slightly higher rate of detention. The NT is the only jurisdiction where data was provided that was assessed as not improving.

Figure CtG11.1 Young people in detention on an average day, Rate per 10 000 young people (a), (b)



Source: table CtG11A.1, Derived from, AIHW Youth justice in Australia; AIHW (unpublished) Youth justice in Australia; ABS National state and territory population - December; ABS Estimates and Projections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Joint Council National Agreement on Closing the Gap
(a) Targets and trajectories are only available nationally. (b) See data table CtG11A.1 for information on non-publication of data on people in detention for individual jurisdictions.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Actual
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Linear regression estimates
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Target
- + Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Trajectory
- Non-Indigenous people, Actual

3 TFHC Youth Detention Census: <https://tfhc.nt.gov.au/youth-justice/youth-detention-centres/youth-detention-census>

Target 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.

National assessment → Not on track

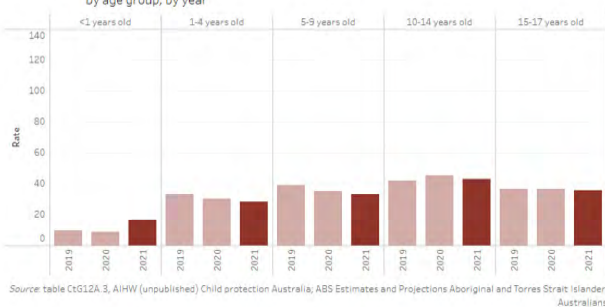
NT assessment → Improving

The NT showed a decrease in the rate of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care from 35.7 per 1,000 children in 2020 to 34.5 per 1,000 children in 2021.

Disaggregation by age

The data shows an increase in the number of Aboriginal children under 1 year old that were placed in out-of-home care, while other age groups had decreased (see below). There was also an increase of 6.5 per cent in the proportion of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care with a disability.

Figure CTG12.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 years in out-of-home care at 30 June, Rate per 1000 children, NT by age group, by year



Target 13 → 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 per cent, as progress towards zero.

There has been no new data collected by the Productivity Commission for this target since 2018-19.

The NT Government collects some domestic violence related data as part of the *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy reporting. This data shows an increase in the number of Aboriginal Territorians who were victims and perpetrators of domestic violence over the last two years, while the proportion decreased slightly. See details below.

AAS Measure 8.1 - Reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence for Aboriginal Territorians

The NT has the highest rate of reported domestic and family violence (DFV) in Australia, with DFV related assaults three times the national average.⁴ The number of DFV related assaults in the NT increased by 34.6 per cent between June 2020 and June 2021.⁵ The domestic homicide rate in the NT is six times higher than the national average.⁶

Aboriginal women and girls in the NT disproportionately experience domestic, family and sexual violence (DFS): 74 per cent of DFV assault survivors and 62 per cent of DFV related sexual assault survivors are Aboriginal women and girls.⁷ Aboriginal women in the NT are eight times more likely to be assaulted than non-Aboriginal women or men, and are over three times more likely to be assaulted than Aboriginal men.⁸ Since the beginning of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been an increase in the prevalence and severity of DFV for women and children, and has increased demand for services.

DFV has a strong intergenerational impact. The high level of exposure of children to DFV in the NT underlies how urgently change is required. Breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma takes concerted and consistent effort over a long period. As more people stand up against violence and the behaviours and attitudes that support it, and as systemic barriers to equality and safety are addressed, and with concerted effort we expect to start to see a decrease in rates of DFV. This requires generational change.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics: Recorded Crime Victims 2019

5 Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities Annual Report 2020-21

6 Australian Institute of Criminology: Homicide in Australia 2017-18

7 https://tfhc.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/942074/risk-assessment-management-framework.pdf

8 Northern Territory Crime Statistics, data through October 2021. Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, December 2021

The NT Government's Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018 - 2028 is the whole of government, whole of community road map to bring about generational change regarding DFSV in the Northern Territory. The Department of Territory Families (TFHC), Housing and Communities leads the implementation of the DFSV Reduction Framework in partnership with the DFSV Cross Agency Working Group. The Framework supports the Closing the Gap Target 13.

No. and proportion of Aboriginal Territorians who were victims of domestic violence in the Northern Territory

	Aboriginal victims of DFV	Total DFV victims
2019	3,296 (78.3% of all victims)	4,211
2020	4,206 (78.7% of all victims)	5,344
2021	4,501 (77.2% of all victims)	5,828

Data Source: NTPFES
Data was extracted on 10/01/2022 and could be different if extracted on a different date. PROMIS is a live system and data is updated as investigations are finalised. Some of the data for 2021 has not been finalised. Only physical assault and sexual assault offences have been counted. A victim is counted every time an offence is committed against them. Hence multiple counts of the same victim.

No. and proportion of reported domestic violence offences committed against Aboriginal Territorians in the Northern Territory

	DFV offences against Aboriginal Territorians	Total DFV offences
2019	3,626 (86.2% of all offences)	4,205
2020	4,631 (85.7% of all offences)	5,402
2021	5,072 (85.2% of all offences)	5,953

Data Source: NTPFES
Data was extracted on 10/01/2022 and could be different if extracted on a different date. PROMIS is a live system and data is updated as investigations are finalised. Some of the data for 2021 has not been finalised. Only physical assault and sexual assault offences have been counted.

No. and proportion of Aboriginal perpetrators of domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory

	Aboriginal perpetrators	All perpetrators
2019	2,792 (84.7% of all perpetrators)	3,297
2020	3,430 (84.2% of all perpetrators)	4,076
2021	3,689 (83.2% of all perpetrators)	4,435

Data Source: NTPFES
Data was extracted on 10/01/2022 and could be different if extracted on a different date. PROMIS is a live system and data is updated as investigations are finalised. Some of the data for 2021 has not been finalised. Only physical assault and sexual assault offences have been counted. This is a head count of perpetrators irrespective of the frequency of offending, e.g. each offender has been counted only once.

Target 14 → Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero

National assessment → Worsening

NT assessment → Worsening for males/
Improving for females

The data for this target is only available as a combined rate for New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. Based on this, the data shows an increase in the suicide age-standardised rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the baseline year, from 25 per 100,000 people in 2018, to 27.9 per 100,000 people in 2020.

Disaggregation by sex and age group

Disaggregated by sex, the rate has steadily increased for males since the baseline year, and for females has decreased since last year but is still higher than the baseline year. By age group, the highest rate is among 18-24 year olds.

Target 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

National assessment → On track

NT assessment → Improving

From 2020 to 2021, the land mass in the NT subject to Aboriginal legal rights or interests increased by 5 per cent, from 947,332 square km to 994,725 square km.

Target 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.

National assessment → Not on track

NT assessment → Improving

From 2020 to 2021, the sea country subject to Aboriginal legal rights or interests in the NT increased by one square km, from 3,249 square km to 3,250 square km.

Please see Focus Area 3 – Land and Sea, of the NT Government's *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy for more information on the NT Government's Aboriginal Land and Sea Action Plan.

Target 16 → By 2031, there is a sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.

There is no new data for this target since the baseline year of 2018-19 and data is not disaggregated by

jurisdiction.

Target 17 → By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion.

There is no new data for this target since the baseline year of 2014-15. The NT Government through its Aboriginal Affairs Strategy reporting does capture the number of Aboriginal communities with access to stable mobile and internet services under Focus Area 5 – Housing and Essential Infrastructure.

New or Varied Targets

The Joint Council on Closing the Gap agreed the inclusion of the following target in December 2021:

Target 9b: By 2031, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households:

- i) within discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities⁹ receive essential services¹⁰ that meet or exceed the relevant jurisdictional standard¹¹;
- ii) in or near to a town receive essential services that meet or exceed the same standard as applies generally within the town (including if the household might be classified for other purposes as a part of a discrete settlement such as a "town camp" or "town based reserve").

Data relating to this target is not yet available. The Productivity Commission are working to develop a baseline for this target, which will be included in future reporting.

An additional target relating to inland waters remains under development at the time of writing this report. This new target will aim to measure progress towards securing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interests in water bodies inland from the zone under state and territory water regimes.


⁹ The definition of a discrete community from ABS 2016 Census dictionary: "A discrete community is a geographic location, bounded by physical or legal boundaries, which is inhabited or intended to be inhabited predominantly (i.e. greater than 50 per cent of usual residents) by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, with housing or infrastructure (power, water, sewerage) that is managed on a community basis. Discrete communities have populations of (but not limited to) 50 or more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

¹⁰ Essential services include: power, water, wastewater and solid waste management only.

¹¹ Relevant jurisdictional standard: Applicable standards may differ between places within a jurisdiction according to population size or other relevant criteria but not on criteria linked to the settlement's status as a discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.



EMBEDDING THE PRIORITY REFORMS IN THE NT



The NT Implementation Plan 1 focused on the four priority reforms of the National Agreement and identified actions agreed and endorsed by the partners of the NT Implementation Plan. The National Agreement sets out 'partnership actions' (to be undertaken by all parties) and 'jurisdictional actions' (to be undertaken by all governments) to implement the priority reform areas.

Each priority reform has a corresponding target and identified jurisdictional and partnership actions.

The following outlines the progress of priority reform actions arising from the first NT Implementation Plan.



PRIORITY REFORM 1 JURISDICTIONAL ACTIONS

Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
JA1.1(1a)	Establishment of NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs	Complete
JA1.1(1b)	NT Justice Policy Partnership	Ongoing
JA1.1(1c)	Education Policy Partnership	Commenced
JA1.1(1d)	Regional Governance Framework	Complete
JA1.1(1e)	Aboriginal Economic Development Consultative Mechanism	Commenced
JA1.1(2)	Housing Partnership	Ongoing
JA1.2	Partnership Review	Ongoing
JA1.2(1)	NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs to determine Terms of Reference for partnership review	Complete
JA1.2(2)	Local Decision Making review after Public Accounts Inquiry	Not Commenced
JA1.3	Annual Reporting Requirements as per Clause 118 and 119 of the National Agreement	Complete

Jurisdictional Action 1.1

1. The Northern Territory will prioritise the establishment of new partnerships through the following actions

- a. The operation of the NTECAA, comprising APO NT, LGANT and NT Government – overarching governance of Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory.

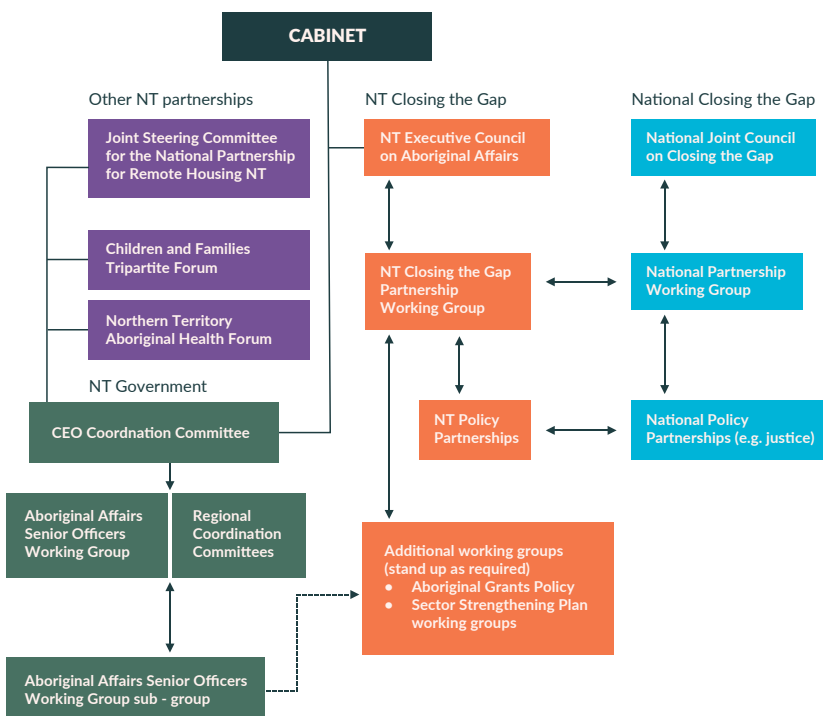
The NTECAA was established as the overarching governing body responsible for the implementation of the National Agreement in the Northern Territory. The NTECAA held its inaugural meeting on 22 November 2021. Its membership includes senior representatives from APO NT, the NT Government, LGANT and the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). The NTECAA meets biannually, in line with national Joint Council meetings, and is co-chaired by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the nominated APO NT CEO. The governance architecture for Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory mirrors the structure at the National level, with an NT Partnership Working Group established to progress actions in the National Agreement and the Northern Territory's Implementation Plan.

APO NT statement

To date, the NTECAA has provided the means by which the high-level NT partnership progresses the National Agreement. Importantly, it must continue to be the primary site where parties can be held accountable across the decade-long life of the Agreement. This is especially true when NTECAA partners have identified areas of opportunities for alignment with other strategies and plans: they must hold true to the priority reforms of the National Agreement.

APO NT continues to promote the Closing the Gap framework through its membership and the communities it serves. We understand that the best way to truly embed the substantial and reform intended by the National Agreement is via promoting and elevating the voices of APO NT members across the Territory.

NT Closing the Gap Governance Structure



- b. Establish an Aboriginal-led NT Justice Policy Partnership, which will build on recommendations of the national Justice Policy Partnership.**

The National Agreement makes provision for the establishment of policy partnerships under Priority Reform 1: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision-Making. Policy partnerships are partnerships created for working jointly on discrete policy areas (Clause 30, National Agreement).

At its meeting on 16 April 2021, the Joint Council agreed to accelerate the establishment of the Justice (adult and youth incarceration) Policy Partnership. The Joint Council did so in recognition of the urgency for a joined up nationally led action and leadership in light of the increasing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in incarceration, and in acknowledgment of the enduring crisis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody.

The NT Government will assist with the establishment of an Aboriginal-led NT Justice Policy Partnership (NT JPP), building on recommendations of the National Justice Policy Partnership and to progress NT specific justice-related recommendations.

The NT JPP will be co-chaired by representatives of an Aboriginal organisation and the NT Government. Members will consist of representatives from the following organisations:

- North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
- Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service
- Four independent Aboriginal representatives
- NT Government representatives to include: Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (AGD), Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services, and Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities.



The NT JPP will build on the recommendations of the National JPP and identify areas for action in the justice space in the NT.

All members are jointly responsible for:

- developing a joined-up approach to the justice policy area including:
 - a. identifying opportunities to work more effectively across government
 - b. reducing gaps and duplication
 - c. improving adult and youth incarceration and related outcomes.
- agreeing the priorities and Forward Work Plan for the NT JPP
- developing recommendations for action and reporting on progress.

Currently, the NT JPP is finalising its nominated representatives, with a first meeting anticipated in the second half of 2022, and in line with the national JPP meeting.

- c. Establish policy partnership arrangements for the education sector that is Aboriginal-led.

In 2022, APO NT met with the Department of Education to begin work on developing a proposal to establish an interim steering committee of Aboriginal educators to oversee the development of an action plan for the formation of an Aboriginal Education Policy Partnership and Peak Body.

APO NT statement

APO NT recognises the vital need for a strong Aboriginal voice in education in the NT. For too long we have seen low attendance rates and poor engagement between schools and the families in their communities and given the importance of education in improving outcomes for Aboriginal people, there must be a renewed focus on Aboriginal experiences and leadership in this sector. The main objective of this action is to establish a formal Aboriginal expertise and leadership body, one that enables critical input and priority setting in education-related policy and project design, with the ultimate goal of achieving the best outcomes in education for Aboriginal people.

In the NT there is a wealth of Aboriginal educational expertise and knowledge. This action strives to ensure that Aboriginal people with such significant experience in the education sector are leading the co-design process, and are able to enact community-led representation, participation and decision making.

Recent funding committed by the NT Government for the strengthening of the Aboriginal community-controlled sector will enable APO NT to progress coordination of the establishment of an NT Aboriginal education expert group to participate in the development of this action.

- d. Develop a regional governance framework to provide clear and well-integrated governance and engagement arrangements across agencies, stakeholders, business, Traditional Owners and communities to provide a clear regional voice to government.

The NT Government's Regional Development Framework (the Framework) has been developed and was endorsed by NT Cabinet in March 2022. The Framework guides the way regional development will be communicated, coordinated and delivered. In addition, the Framework provides for the development of Regional Economic Growth Plans. These plans are developed by the Regional Reconstruction Committees. The Regional Economic Growth plans will:

- identify regional priorities for economic growth and the implementation pathways and actions required to deliver them
- support government decision making and private sector investment decisions
- define the region's connection and contribution to the Territory's overall growth strategy and the regional implementation of identified priorities
- set goals and actions that allow a region to prioritise what is most important and how they can be implemented to locally agreed timeline and delivery methods.

The Framework is available at <https://cmc.nt.gov.au/strengthening-regions>



- Establish a consultative mechanism for engagement on Aboriginal Economic Development.

The Aboriginal Economic Leadership Group has been established to identify and facilitate key land council projects and provide NT Government advice on development and implementation of government policies/initiatives aimed at promoting Aboriginal economic development. The Group's membership includes CEOs from the four NT Land Councils, the two co-chairs from the former Team Territory (a key reference group in the NT's economic response to COVID-19), and a senior official from the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet.

The Aboriginal economic agenda will build off this group as other developments occur and other bodies are established (i.e. the NT Aboriginal Investment Corporation to be established in late 2022 out of the reforms to the administration of the Aboriginal Benefits Account).

The development of a consultative mechanism will follow the progression of this work.

- 2. The Northern Territory will prioritise the strengthening of partnerships.

The Housing Partnership, and its priorities and membership, will be reviewed by an Aboriginal-led process and look at establishing potential pilot arrangements¹² for community controlled housing in remote areas, with appropriate resourcing.

The National Partnership for Remote Housing NT Joint Steering Committee (Housing JSC), is a partnership between the four NT Land Councils and the NT and Commonwealth governments. The Housing JSC is undertaking a review of the remote housing and service delivery models (including for homelands) with a focus on returning to community-controlled housing alternatives and future housing leasing arrangements in the NT.

The NT Government has committed under the NT Community Housing Growth Strategy's Remote Growth Stream and through the Housing JSC Subcommittee review process, to support the establishment of remote community housing trials, which will be informed by the findings of the Housing JSC review. The trials will contribute mentoring, resources and support to enable Aboriginal community-controlled housing organisations to participate and will generate data needed to inform a safe and sustainable process of transition from public housing to Aboriginal community-controlled housing. This will include bringing current housing stock up to *Residential Tenancies Act 1999* standards and provide assessments of ongoing funding commitments from governments to Aboriginal organisations across the NT.

The Housing JSC will continue to seek funding opportunities from the NT and Commonwealth governments to support this work.

¹² Pilots have been named 'Community Housing trials sites' and will be referred to as such in IP2.

Jurisdictional Action 1.2

Review existing partnership arrangements to assess how they meet the partnership elements at Clauses 32 and 33 of the National Agreement.

- a. By 2022, undertake a review of existing partnership arrangements and provide a report to the Joint Council.
- b. By 2023, review and strengthen existing partnerships to meet the strong partnership elements.
- c. Provide a report on this review, including the number of partnerships, changes made to existing partnerships, and which strong partnership elements are met and unmet for all partnerships to be considered by Joint Council.

1. The NTECAA will determine the terms of reference for the review, noting it will be an Aboriginal-led review consistent with the National Agreement.

The review of existing partnership arrangements will inform how to strengthen existing partnerships and advise whether new partnerships are required.

The report will also be provided to Joint Council and made public on the Office of Aboriginal Affairs website.

A proposed approach to the partnership review, using the partnership review undertaken at the national level as a guide, is being considered by NTECAA and progressed by the NT Partnership Working Group. The final Terms of Reference will be approved by the NTECAA.

2. The NTECAA will take into account the Public Accounts Committee's Inquiry and report on the implementation and future of the Local Decision Making (LDM) Framework.

Following NTECAA consideration of the report, NT Government will work with APO NT to review LDM in line with the strong partnership elements in Priority Reform 1 and all other priority reform areas.

Due to restricted travel associated with COVID-19, the Public Accounts Committee deferred the LDM Inquiry in 2021. This recommenced in 2022. The final report, once tabled, will inform a review of LDM.

APO NT statement

APO NT recognises that the main strength of the LDM model is its support for Aboriginal people's aspirations to be in the driver's seat on matters that affect them, their families, communities, and regions. Any move towards absolute Aboriginal self-determination is welcome and necessary to progress the intent of the Closing the Gap reforms at the local level.

However, APO NT has expressed their concerns with the current implementation of LDM. The review should consider the imperative for the NT Government to transform the way it works, and to align LDM principles and practices with related Government initiatives, including progress on the path to Treaty/Treaties.

Jurisdictional Action 1.3

Government Parties will include in their annual reports (Clauses 118 and 119) information on partnerships, including the number of partnerships, those that have been reviewed, for each partnership which strong partnership elements are met and unmet, and what has been achieved through the partnerships.

1. Guided by the NTECAA, annual reporting will include reporting on all priority reform areas (and Clauses 118 and 119) under Priority Reform 1 and all other priority reform areas. Annual Progress Reports will be made publicly available and tabled in the NT Parliament.



PRIORITY REFORM 1 PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
PA1.1 (1)	Establish an NT Justice Policy Partnership	Ongoing
PA1.1 (2)	Establish an NT Education Policy Partnership, with a long term goal of establishing an NT Aboriginal Education Peak Body	Commenced
PA1.2 (1)	Identify and propose a site in the NT for a place-based partnership	Complete
PA1.3 (1)	Develop further proposals to progress Priority Reform 1	Not Commenced (due 2025)

Partnership Action 1.1

By 2022, the Joint Council will establish a joint approach to five policy priority areas, between the Commonwealth, states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. These will identify opportunities to work more effectively across governments, reduce gaps and duplication, and improve outcomes under Closing the Gap. These areas respond to the engagements and are:

- a. justice (adult and youth incarceration)
- b. social and emotional wellbeing (mental health)
- c. housing
- d. early childhood care and development
- e. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

1. Justice has been identified as the first of the policy partnerships to be progressed. Action JA1.1(b) to establish an NT policy partnership will support representatives at the Partnership Working Group level, and ensure that APO NT members and relevant Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations are included in decisions on policy partnerships. The NT will adopt this model for the remaining policy areas as they are established.

Please see **Jurisdictional Action 1.1(1b) - NT Justice Policy Partnership.**

2. As per Action JA1.1(c), education has been identified by the NT Closing The Gap Partnership Working Group as a priority policy partnership to be progressed outside of the five policy areas identified under the National Agreement.

Please see **Jurisdictional Action 1.1(1c) - NT Education Policy Partnership.**

Partnership Action 1.2

By 2024, six new place-based partnerships will be established across Australia under Jurisdictional Implementation Plans. These place-based partnerships will be between the Commonwealth, relevant states or territories, local government and agreed communities. They will be consistent with the agreed partnership elements and build on existing place based approaches. Locations will be considered by Joint Council within 12 months of the commencement of this Agreement.

1. The NT Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group will identify potential sites for a new place-based partnership. Proposals will be presented to the NTECAA for final decision, and proposal to Joint Council.

In November 2021, the NTECAA endorsed Maningrida as the NT's nomination for a place-based partnership and community data site location site, and at its December 2021 meeting, the Joint Council endorsed Maningrida as one of the six place-based partnership sites across Australia. The initial phase of consultation was delayed slightly due to COVID-19, however commenced in February 2022.

Place-based partnerships are a formal partnership between the community, NT Government, the Commonwealth Government and the local government. The Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet Regional Director, located at Maningrida, has been instrumental in providing on-the-ground support to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and APO NT representatives to share information and coordinate community engagement.

In May 2022, APO NT staff travelled to Maningrida to liaise with community members and organisations on Maningrida becoming a place-based partnership site. It was an opportunity to talk about the history of APO NT, its membership, and the partnership between APO NT, NT Government, Commonwealth Government and local governments to progress Closing the Gap for Aboriginal people across the Northern Territory. During this engagement key priorities highlighted by the community included:

- homelands
- accountability in governance
- housing
- contracting and funding

- jobs
- education
- law and justice
- women's/men's empowerment
- youth and families

Following this consultation, the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, APO NT, NIAA and local government were invited to further engage with Maningrida and the homelands during the week commencing 27 June to the 30 June 2022. This was an opportunity to determine next steps, define roles and responsibilities and lay the foundations for the establishment of governance structures.

The week comprised of a mix of meetings, forums and a homeland visit to Ji-Bena. The meetings and forums included meetings with the Mayor of West Arnhem Regional Council, Traditional Owners, local Aboriginal Interpreters, Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, Northern Land Council Executive Member, and ladies from the Mala'la Family and Community Wellness Program.

On 30 June 2022, separate men's and women's forums were held to talk about the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and how the place-based partnership site could be progressed and considered by the community and homelands. Both groups then came together to further discuss their needs, aspirations and priorities moving forward in relation to the National Agreement's objectives and socio-economic targets.

The NT Government in its 2022-23 Budget committed \$250,000 to support the establishment of the Place-Based Partnership and Community Data Project in Maningrida.

APO NT Statement

APO NT recognises the real potential of establishing the place-based partnership and will support the community of Maningrida and its region to implement the approach as it determines.

APO NT will continue to advocate for culturally inclusive and participatory governance, knowing that it is this foundation from which real action and improved outcomes can occur. APO NT also commits to engaging its members to provide support to our place-based partnership partners, as necessary, knowing that Maningrida is willing and able to enact innovative, culturally-sound solutions for its community.



PRIORITY REFORM 2 – JURISDICTIONAL ACTIONS

Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
JA2.1 (1a)	Establish an NT Education Policy Partnership and Peak Body	Commenced
JA2.1 (1b)	Establish an NT Aboriginal Justice Peak Body	Not commenced
JA2.1 (1c)	Strengthen the Aboriginal Housing Sector	Ongoing
JA2.1(2a)	Work with Commonwealth to support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations through AGMP (APO NT)	Commenced
JA2.1(2b)	Prioritisation of funding to ACCOs for Community Led Family Support Services	Complete
JA2.1(2c)	Develop a Northern Territory Disability Strategy	Complete
JA2.1(2d)	Noting the review process, with the exception of community-controlled health services, LDM will continue to be the vehicle to hand back control of government services to Aboriginal organisations	Ongoing
JA2.2(1a)	Outline actions in Aboriginal Affairs Strategy and Closing the Gap reporting	Complete

Jurisdictional Action 2.1

Building strong Aboriginal community-controlled sectors and organisations in line with the strong sector elements at Clause 45 to deliver Closing the Gap services and programs, in partnership with Aboriginal representatives.

1. The Northern Territory will prioritise the establishment and strengthening of Aboriginal peak bodies in the NT for the following:

a. Education - the NT Government and APO NT will jointly establish a peak Aboriginal education body.

See **Jurisdictional Action 1.1(1c) - Education Policy Partnership.**

b. Justice – the NT Government and APO NT will jointly establish a peak Aboriginal justice body (building on the Criminal Justice Forum and Aboriginal Justice Agreement Governance Committee).

The NT Justice Policy Partnership (see Jurisdictional Action 1.1(1b)) is being established to support the national Justice Policy Partnership and will progress work towards the establishment of an Aboriginal Justice Peak Body.

c. Housing - the NT Government and APO NT will jointly work to strengthen the Aboriginal housing sector, including establishing trial sites for community controlled housing in remote areas, with appropriate resourcing.

See **Jurisdictional Action 1.1(2) - Housing Partnership.**

2. The Northern Territory will also support and strengthen the Aboriginal community controlled sector through the following actions:

a. Work with the Government to resource the provision of efficient, coordinated governance support for Aboriginal community controlled organisations through the Aboriginal Governance and Management Program (APO NT).

The NT Government recognises the important role of the AGMP in supporting the governance capacity of Aboriginal organisations and in supporting that recognition, the NT Government provided funding to assist the AGMP to develop a 'Governance Toolkit' and an associated implementation plan, to support capacity building and good governance for Aboriginal board members of the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) member organisations in the first instance. This service will then be extended to other Aboriginal corporations wanting to build their leadership and capacity in the sector.

b. Prioritisation of funding to Aboriginal Community-controlled organisations to provide place-based community led Family Support Services that support the prevention of Aboriginal children's entry into out-of-home-care and the return of Aboriginal children to their family.

In 2021-22, the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities invested \$5.7 million to expand regional Family Support Services, which is the first stage of a five year program. Services are primarily delivered by Aboriginal organisations or partnerships, and focus on:

- connecting families to specialist services
- providing practical support in the home and building parenting skills
- working with pregnant mothers
- helping parents reunify with children who may have been brought into care.

c. Develop a Northern Territory Disability Strategy to complement the National Disability Strategy with an included focus on supporting Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to deliver services to Aboriginal Territorians with a disability.

The NT Disability Strategy 2022-2032 and its first Action Plan 2022-25, have been developed and were launched in August 2022.

The NT Disability Strategy sets out actions to ensure an inclusive Territory where people with disability are valued, respected and can contribute to community life, no matter where they live.

The NT Disability Strategy and Action Plan align with the Closing the Gap National Agreement and the Closing the Gap National Disability Sector Strengthening Plan.

It includes actions to:

- establish an Aboriginal Disability Peak or Agency for the NT
- build the capacity across the Aboriginal community-controlled sectors to support access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and deliver a full range of culturally responsive disability support services, to achieve greater social and economic participation of Aboriginal people with disabilities
- grow the Aboriginal disability workforce and improving training and professional development for workers.

d. Noting the review process and subject to consistency with the Priority Reforms and with the exception of transition of community-controlled health services, LDM will continue to be the vehicle used to hand back control of government services to Aboriginal organisations.

The LDM Policy was endorsed by the NT Government in August 2018. The LDM Policy is a ten year plan that sets out a pathway for communities to gain control over service delivery and programs. The LDM Policy's guiding principles are; self-determination, place-based, flexible, co-design and community control.

Implementation of the LDM Policy is progressed at community pace and key achievements include:

- ten signed LDM Agreements currently at various stages of implementation:
 - Groote Archipelago Agreement – Anindilyakwa Land Council
 - Alice Springs Town Camps – Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation
 - Yugul Mangi Development Corporation - LDM Multi-agency Partnership 2021-2023 Implementation Plan signed 25 August 2021



Jurisdictional Action 2.2

Include in government annual reports, information on action taken to strengthen the community-controlled sector based on the elements of a strong sector as outlined in the agreement.

1. The NT Government will demonstrate actions to strengthen the community-controlled sector:
 - a. Actions will be outlined in annual Aboriginal Affairs Strategy and Closing the Gap reporting

As well as the actions outlined under this priority reform area, the NT has undertaken the following actions under Clause 47 and Clause 118 to strengthen the ACCO sector.

- i) 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 Clause 118 and 119.”

Clause 118d – “The Parties agree to make public information on their progress on the Agreement and their Implementation Plans through annual public reports. The annual public reports will list the number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and other Aboriginal organisations that have been allocated funding for the purposes of Clause 24, 55a and 55b, and 135 of the National Agreement; and subject to confidentiality requirement, also list the names of the organisations and the amount allocated.”

Clause 24 – “Aboriginal media, in particular community-controlled media, have a central role in communicating activities under this Agreement to allow culturally relevant messages to be developed and shared by Aboriginal organisations and communities for Aboriginal people and Clause 135: The joint communications strategy will include a central role for Aboriginal media, in particular community-controlled media, including the promotion and distribution of material and information across a range of mediums to Aboriginal people, as well as to other Australians.”

- Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation - LDM Multi-agency Partnership 2021 – 2023 Implementation Plan signed 4 October 2021
- Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation - LDM Multi-agency Partnership 2021 – 2023 Implementation Plan signed 2 November 2021
- Werenbun Homeland – LDM Agreement
- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation – LDM agreement signed 16 March 2022
- Green River Aboriginal Corporation – LDM Agreement signed on 26 July 2022
- Djalkiripuyngu (Blue Mud Bay) - LDM Agreement signed on 30 July 2022
- Mulyung Aboriginal Corporation (Emu Point) – LDM Agreement signed on 4 August 2022

In recognition of the importance of engaging Aboriginal media to deliver information about Closing the Gap to Aboriginal Territorians, and in line with the national joint communication strategy, the NT Government in its 2022-23 budget has committed \$250,000 to support the NT Implementation Plan Communication and Engagement Approach. This will include translation of information resources into a range of NT Aboriginal languages, and commence in the first quarter of the 2022-23 financial year.

ii) *Clause 55 – “Government Parties agree to implement measures to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations by:*

a. *implementing funding prioritisation policies across all Closing the Gap outcomes that require decisions about the provision of services to Aboriginal people and communities to preference Aboriginal communities-controlled organisations and other Aboriginal organisations.”*

The Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework

The Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework (AEPF) was launched on 31 May 2022, and is a whole-of-government approach to maximising opportunities for participation of Aboriginal Territorians in the Territory economy through new and existing initiatives including government procurement and grants.

It is designed to increase Aboriginal employment, encourage Aboriginal businesses, better target skills development, strengthen our regions and grow our economy.

The four objectives underpinning the framework are:

1. activate NT Government procurement (through the development of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy) and grants (through amending the NT Government grants policy) to increase Aboriginal economic participation
2. secure private sector commitments to Aboriginal economic participation on NT Government supported projects

3. strengthen Aboriginal business and community controlled organisations

4. realise the potential of the Aboriginal workforce.

In July 2021, the NT Government became the first (and currently remains the only) jurisdiction to define an Aboriginal Business Enterprise (ABE) as being majority Aboriginal-owned. This means that to be an eligible ABE, an organisation must be at least 51 per cent owned and controlled by Aboriginal people.

As part of the AEPF, the NT Government has also defined an ACCO, adapted from the National Agreement, as follows;

“An Aboriginal community-controlled organisation delivers services, including land and resource management, builds capability and empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people, and:

- *Is incorporated under relevant legislation, and is registered and operates as a not-for-profit organisation*
- *Is constituted and operated by members who are recognised in their community as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people*
- *Originated from, or has a material and ongoing connection to and/or with the community, or communities, in which the services are delivered*
- *Is governed by a body constituted in the majority by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people*
- *Is independent from and is not controlled to any extent by any sphere of government (except to the extent that an organisation receives funding, and under a formal agreement is accountable to such governmental body for the receipt and expenditure of the funding).”*

The Aboriginal Grants Policy

The NT Government is working to amend its internal NT Government Grants Policy to align with the National Agreement, with an aim to increase the proportion of grants funding awarded to ACCOs through the preferencing of ACCOs where the primary beneficiaries of that grant are Aboriginal people.

National Virtual Funding Pool (VFP) for sector strengthening

The NT Government has committed to \$2 million to the national VFP over 4 years to support *Priority Reform 2: building the Aboriginal community-controlled sector*. This \$2 million is committed entirely for use in the NT and was re-purposed from a previous grant program. The NT Government and APO NT are in discussion to finalise an option to allocate the funding in the future, however in the first year (2021-22), the following funding has been dispersed:

- Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory (AHNT), \$200,000 to support AHNT to deliver a Grant type program which supports ACCOs to provide housing management and tenancy support services in remote communities, homelands and town camps across the NT.
- APO NT (auspiced by NAJAA), \$150,000 to support the establishment of a NT Aboriginal Expert Education Body.
- APO NT Aboriginal Governance and Management Program (auspiced by AMSANT), \$100,000 to develop a health-sector specific governance toolkit and implementation plan to support capacity building and good governance for Aboriginal Board members of AMSANT member organisations, and broader Aboriginal corporations wanting to build their leadership and capacity in the sector.

b). Where new funding initiatives are decided by government which are intended to service the broader population across socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement, that a meaningful proportion is allocated to Aboriginal organisations with relevant expertise, particularly community-controlled organisations. A meaningful proportion is an amount which takes into account the number and capacity of Aboriginal organisations, particularly the existing community-controlled sectors and the service demands of Aboriginal people, including through the views of Aboriginal community-controlled peak organisations in the relevant jurisdiction.

Where appropriate and where capacity exists ACCO's are meaningfully allocated funding and service provision responsibilities. The transition of primary health care from mainstream service providers to ACCOs is evidence of this. Further, the LDM Policy ensures that NT Government remains committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal organisations and communities to identify opportunities to transition service provision to Aboriginal organisations.

Progress under the AEPF will be reported annually and incorporated into Closing the Gap reporting going forward.

NT Government agencies will be required to set and report on ambitious agency specific targets for each of the AEPF measures each year which will support achieving this action.

PRIORITY REFORM 2 PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
PA2.1(1)	Contribute to national sector strengthening plans, led by the Coalition of Peaks	Complete
PA2.1(2)	Allocation of funding through the Virtual Funding Pool, as agreed by the Northern Territory Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group (NT PWG)	Ongoing
PA2.2(1a)	Develop an Aboriginal Grants Policy	Ongoing
PA2.2(1b)	Establish an Aboriginal Procurement Policy	Complete
PA2.2(1c)	Agree additional steps to ensure the full implementation of Clause 55a and 55b	Not commenced
PA2.2(1d)	Report on implementation approaches used	Ongoing
PA2.2(2)	Review LGANT procurement practices	Commenced
PA2.3(1a)	As per Clause 57 of the National Agreement, Parties to develop additional actions to support Priority Reform 2, if required, by 2025	Not Commenced
PA2.3(1b)	Review and identify current spending on Aboriginal programs and services	Ongoing
PA2.3(1c)	List the number and types of Aboriginal organisations that have been allocated funding for the purposes of Clause 118d of the National Agreement	Complete

Partnership Action 2.1

The Parties agree to identify sectors for joint national strengthening effort every three years through Sector Strengthening Plans which will identify actions against the strong sector elements at Clause 45.

The initial sectors are:

- a. Early childhood care and development
- b. Housing
- c. Health
- d. Disability

1. The Coalition of Peaks is leading the development of Sector Strengthening Plans. The NT Government is represented through the sector strengthening plan working groups and will continue to contribute to the plans.

A partnership arrangement will be established in the NT for each of these priority sectors, so they can inform the Northern Territory's contribution to each of these sector strengthening plan working groups (note the additional sectors being prioritised in the NT: justice and education).

The NT Government and relevant Aboriginal organisations actively contributed to the development of each of the four sector strengthening plans. The NT would like to acknowledge the Coalition of Peaks for leading this work, which will inform how to best support each respective sector in the NT.

Clause 47 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap requires government parties to include in their implementation plan annual reports, action taken to strengthen the community-controlled sector based on the elements of a strong sector, as outlined in Clauses 118 and 119 of the National Agreement. 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.



As Sector Strengthening Plans were developed after the development of the first NT Implementation Plan, we have included in this annual report existing actions that align with the plans. Future implementation plans will include new actions that support sector strengthening. A list of actions relevant to the two Joint Council approved sector strengthening plans of Health and Early Childhood Care and Development are provided at Appendix 2.

2. All jurisdictions have committed funding towards a funding pool, and agreed on investment priorities, to build the ACCO sector. The NT Closing the Gap Partnership Working Group will decide on the allocation of NT Government funding contribution in line with these investment priorities primarily to strengthen governance and support coordination of funding towards joined up and sustainable sectors in these areas.

The NT Government and APO NT are continuing work to agree on a process for the future allocation of the Virtual Funding Pool for sector strengthening through the NT PWG.

Partnership Action 2.2

Government Parties agree to implement measures to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, by implementing funding prioritisation policies.

1. Under Clause 55a and 55b of the National Agreement, the NT Government will:

- a. Work with APO NT to develop an NT Government Aboriginal Grants policy to increase the proportion of grant funding awarded to the Aboriginal community-controlled sector (Clause 55a and 55b).

The NT Partnership Working Group established a sub-working group of NT Government and APO NT members to share ideas about key principles to underpin the function of the NT Government Aboriginal Grants Policy. This included a preferencing system to prioritise Aboriginal community-controlled organisations over non-Aboriginal organisations where the program or initiative being funded is primarily for Aboriginal people.

Preliminary work has begun on updating NT Government reporting systems to support data reporting for this action.

- b. Establish an Aboriginal Procurement Policy to increase the proportion of all government funding delivered through Aboriginal organisations, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

The NT Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy (APP) came into effect from 1 July 2022, and is a targeted approach to increase the opportunities for ABEs, community controlled organisations and Aboriginal Territorians to participate in government procurement activities.

Designed to increase equitable access to procurement activities, the APP will apply to NT Government contracts with an estimated value of \$15,000 or greater.

It will provide new opportunities for established and emerging Aboriginal businesses, in new areas of government spend such as graphic design, consultancies and training, catering and security as well as the traditional trades.

Existing Aboriginal enterprises can apply to be recognised as an ABE under a transitioning agreement for a period of up to 18 months, providing a step change in the advancement of Aboriginal employment and business opportunities through government contracting activities.

Following the 18 month transitional period, businesses with an Aboriginal ownership of 51 per cent or more – and who can demonstrate daily Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in their workforce - will be classified as an ABE. The NT Government has set a target to award 5 per cent of all Government contracts to ABEs in 2022-23.

Definition of an Aboriginal Business Enterprise

An ABE is defined as a business or community organisation that meets all of the following criteria:

- 51 per cent or more Aboriginal owned
- Is operating as a business, including companies, incorporated associations, sole traders, partnerships, trusts and social enterprises or registered charities if they are operating as a business
- Can demonstrate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are involved in the daily operation of the enterprise and have effective control at least equal to the degree of ownership
- Is registered with a certifying authority as meeting the definition.

- c.** Agree additional steps to ensure the full implementation of Clause 55a and 55b of the National Agreement, and update the Implementation Plan setting out the agreed initiatives and timeframes for completion. This will include reviewing the APO NT partnership principles and how they can be applied to progressively build the capacity of the community-controlled sector to take on additional service delivery responsibilities over time.

Any additional actions will be considered once all Grants and Procurement policies have been established.

- d.** Once agreed, report on the implementation approaches used, and proportions awarded, under Clause 55b.

This action is ongoing and will be reported against in future annual reports.

2. The Local Government Association of the Northern Territory will demonstrate actions to strengthen the community-controlled sector:

- a.** Review its procurement practices with the objective of encouraging greater Aboriginal Business involvement. It will encourage its member councils to conduct similar reviews.

The Local Government Association of the NT is working with its procurement provider to update clauses and wording to encourage greater Aboriginal business involvement.

Partnership Action 2.3

1. The NT will undertake the following additional actions under Priority Reform 2:

- a.** The NTECAA will consider progress on Priority Reform 2 and make additional partnership actions if needed (by 2025)

No update on this action is required for this reporting period.

- b.** The NT Government will review and identify current spending on Aboriginal programs and services to identify reprioritisation opportunities to Aboriginal organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations (Clause 113) in line with APO NT partnership principles. A report by region will be provided to Joint Council for consideration (Clause 114).

An expenditure report is currently underway, to identify current spending on Aboriginal programs and services to determine reprioritisation opportunities to Aboriginal community controlled organisations. This report will be provided to Joint Council in the second half of 2022, where consideration will be given to whether additional joint budget work is needed to meet our commitments under the National Agreement.

- c.** The NT Closing the Gap Annual Report will list the number and types of Aboriginal organisations that have been allocated funding for the purposes of Clause 118d of the National Agreement.

This action is ongoing and will be reported against in future annual reports.



PRIORITY REFORM 3 JURISDICTIONAL ACTIONS

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Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
JA3.1 & 3.2 (1a)	Develop a whole-of-government cultural responsiveness framework and anti-racism strategy	Commenced
JA3.1 & 3.2 (1b)	Increase Aboriginal representation on NT Government Boards and Committees	Ongoing
JA3.1 & 3.2 (1c)	Implementation of the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy	Complete
JA3.1 & 3.2 (1d)	Additional support and resources for the Anti-Discrimination Commission	Commenced
JA3.1 & 3.2(2a)	LGANT employment policies review	Ongoing
JA3.1 & 3.2(2b)	LGANT Reconciliation Action Plan	Complete
JA3.3(1a)	Closing the Gap Impact Statement in Cabinet process	Complete
JA3.3(1b)	Aboriginal Engagement Model	Ongoing
JA3.4(1a)	Publish engagement approaches to transformation elements (Clauses 59, 65)	Commenced



Number	Action	Status
JA3.4(1b)	Establish Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs	Complete
JA3.5(1a)	Improve NTPFES engagement with Aboriginal people around emergencies	Ongoing
JA3.5(1b)	Improve engagement with Aboriginal people during the recovery phase	Ongoing
JA3.5(1c)	Establish roles for Aboriginal representation on Local Emergency Committees	Ongoing
JA3.5(1d)	Establish a similar arrangement to the Regional and Remote Taskforce that was stood up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic	Complete
JA3.6	Reporting on Priority Reforms 3 actions, guided by NTECAA	Ongoing
JA3.7(1)	ACCOs are supported wherever possible, consistent with Priority Reform 2 and APO NT partnership principles, and will not invest in mainstream agencies at their expense	Ongoing

Jurisdictional Action 3.1

In partnership with Aboriginal Territorians, commit to systemic and structural transformation to ensure government mainstream institutions and agencies are free of institutionalised racism and promote cultural safety in line with transformation elements in the agreement.

Jurisdictional Action 3.2

Commit to challenge unconscious biases that result in decisions based on stereotypes.

1. The NT Government commits to the following whole-of-government actions to implement systemic and structural transformation:

- a. Work with APO NT to develop and implement a whole-of-government overarching Cultural Responsiveness Framework (CRF) to improve and strengthen the cultural security of the NT Public Service (will include an Anti-Racism Strategy). As part of the broader CRF and NTG anti-racism strategy, the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice will develop a specific justice-related anti-racism strategy.

The development of a whole-of-government CRF is an existing commitment of the NT Government under its *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy. The NT Government will develop the CRF in partnership with APO NT through a co-design process. In its 2022-23 budget, the NT Government committed \$450,000 to the development of the principal framework. A procurement process is currently underway for its development.

- b. Increase the Aboriginal representation on NT Government boards and committees to align with its gender balance approach.

The NT is one of the most culturally diverse places in Australia and the membership of NT Government boards and committees needs to reflect this to fully serve the Territory community.

Increasing the representation of Aboriginal Territorians means a greater diversity of skills, experiences, opinions and strategies, resulting in better governance, and leading to better community services for Territorians.

The NT Government has created culturally sensitive and accessible processes to help Aboriginal Territorians express interest in becoming a member of an NT Government board or committee, and further plans to update the boards and committees website to support this.

As at May 2022, the percentage of Aboriginal members on NT Government boards and committees was 22.2 per cent, an increase from 19.6 per cent in August 2021.

- c. Implement the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy seeking to maximise Aboriginal employment and support Aboriginal employees in the NT Public Service (NTPS).

The current NT Public Service Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy 2021-2025 (the AECDS) was launched in June 2021 by the Minister for Public Employment and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Over the lifetime of the previous strategy (2015-2020), Aboriginal employment increased from 8.7 per cent in June 2014 to 10.6 per cent in December 2020. Aboriginal employees in senior positions also increased from 3.2 per cent in June 2015 to 4.3 per cent in December 2020. As at December 2021, the percentage of Aboriginal representation in the workforce was 10.3 per cent, with 4.8 per cent in senior positions.

The AECDS aims to build on this success by continuing to grow and develop a strong, highly skilled and capable Aboriginal workforce across the NTPS. It will continue to work towards the global target of 16 per cent Aboriginal employment, and 10 per cent representation in senior positions. Six key focus areas have been identified to attract and retain Aboriginal people in the NTPS with a strong focus on leadership, career development and creating culturally safe workplaces.

- d. Additional support and resources for the Anti-Discrimination Commission to expand their presence and services in remote and regional locations.

DCMC will continue to work with the Department of the Attorney General and Justice to identify opportunities to support the Anti-Discrimination Commission to expand their services.

2. LGANT commits to actions to implement systemic and structural transformation:

- a. LGANT will review its employment policies to remove any barriers to the employment of Aboriginal people, and encourage its member councils to conduct similar reviews. Local government councils make a significant contribution to the NT economy as they collectively employ around 3,000 Territorians. Local government councils are also often the largest employer of Aboriginal people in remote and regional areas.

59.87 per cent of all local government elected members in the NT are Aboriginal and 87.63 per cent of regional elected members are Aboriginal.

- b. LGANT will prepare and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and encourage those councils that have not already done so to implement their own RAPs.

LGANT has developed a RAP for its executive and secretariat services. This RAP is not applicable across the local government sector in the Northern Territory as whole.



LGANT has received conditional approval of its 'REFLECT RAP', and once formally approved and graphic design completed will promote through its website, newsletter and conference. LGANT intends to progress to a higher level of RAP in coming years.

It is hoped the LGANT RAP implementation will encourage the local councils that have not already done so, to implement their own RAPs.

Local Councils who have adopted RAPs:

- City of Darwin —————> • Innovate
- Barkly Regional Council ———> • Reflect

Councils who have started the journey to developing a RAP:

- Katherine Town Council
- Roper Gulf Regional Council
- West Arnhem Regional Council

Jurisdictional Action 3.3

Change, design or deliver government policies that impact on the outcomes of the agreement, in line with the agreement.

1. The NT Government will ensure that all agencies consider the impacts of their policies by:
 - a. Amending the NT Cabinet process to include a Closing the Gap impact statement requiring agencies through the Cabinet process, to demonstrate how the submission aligns or does not align with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The NT Government Cabinet process has been amended to include a Closing the Gap impact statement, which requires all cabinet submissions to demonstrate how all proposals align with and support the National Agreement, as well as how agencies have engaged with Aboriginal people during the development of the proposal.

The Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet has developed an associated guide and provided training to agency secretariats to support understanding of the new requirements, with further education about the new process and reasons to occur across agencies.

The NT Government will evaluate progress against this measure at regular milestones.

- b. Developing a model to engage with Aboriginal people on new policies and legislation at the policy-design phase through to finalisation. The model will be consistent with the engagement principles in the National Agreement. The next steps on the National Partnership on Remote Aboriginal Investment and underpinned by the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act* will also be considered under this model.

The NT Government's Office of Aboriginal Affairs continues to work with APO NT representatives

on the development of an Aboriginal Engagement Model, which will complement the existing NT Government Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy. A draft model was progressed by a sub-working group of the NT Partnership Working Group. APO NT have requested the model is delayed until the outcomes of the review into the LDM Policy may be incorporated where appropriate.

The Commonwealth Government funded APO NT to work in partnership with the NIAA and DCMC to engage with Aboriginal people and communities to design and develop options for the future seven year remote Aboriginal investment package in 2022. This will consider the model to engage Aboriginal people to inform the project options.

Jurisdictional Action 3.4

Commit to share and publish engagement approaches that give effect to the transformation elements on engagements outlined in the Agreement (clauses 59, 65).

1. The NT Government will ensure transparency around its approaches by:
 - a. reporting annually against the transformation elements under Clause 59 of the National Agreement.

The NT Government is committed to implementing the transformation elements of the National Agreement within government mainstream institutions and agencies:

Identify and eliminate racism – Clause 59a, National Agreement

Addressing institutional racism, discrimination and unconscious bias

As part of its Aboriginal Justice Agreement, the NT Government is undertaking a review of various pieces of legislation to resolve areas within them that are found to be unfair, bias, discriminatory or have an imbalanced detrimental effect on, in particular, Aboriginal people.

System-focussed efforts to address disproportionate outcomes and overrepresentation of Aboriginal people

A Closing the Gap Impact Statement has been incorporated into the Cabinet submission process requiring all policies and legislation to articulate how the submission align with the National Agreement's four priority reform areas and 17 socio-economic targets, and to outline how agencies have engaged with Aboriginal organisations during their development. This will be further bolstered by the Aboriginal Engagement Model, which is currently being developed by the NT Government and APO NT.

The establishment of the NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs, and the NT PWG, as the jurisdictional equivalents of Joint Council and the national Partnership Working Group, ensure Aboriginal people and organisations are represented and are able to participate in shared decision-making at the highest possible level of government.

Clause 67 of the National Agreement calls for an independent mechanism to support, monitor and report on the transformation of mainstream agencies and institutions. An options paper has been developed and, based on feedback, the NT PWG will explore further opportunities that emerge as a result of the Treaty Report.

Increasing employment of Aboriginal people in mainstream institutions and agencies

The Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy contains 5 focus areas that aim to increase Aboriginal employment across the NTPS and in leadership positions, and increase the overall cultural responsiveness of the NTPS.

1. Targets have been set at 16 per cent Aboriginal employment across the NTPS, and 10 per cent Aboriginal representation in senior positions.
2. Attraction through the Special Measures Policy, which is a recruitment tool that identifies designated Aboriginal positions; or grants suitable applicants priority consideration in selection, as well as early career programs such as the Aboriginal Employment Program, Aboriginal Students Career Aspirations Program and traineeships.
3. Retention is supported by programs such as the Aboriginal Employee Mentor Program and Aboriginal Employee Forums, and the NTPS Aboriginal Employee Stay Survey – a confidential survey collected by the Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Advice Team, that seeks to improve employee retention rates, address any issues of concern and look for opportunities to improve.
4. Leadership development, including:
 - the Kigaruk and Lookrukin Aboriginal Leadership Development Programs which develop Aboriginal leaders into senior managers across the NTPS
 - the establishment of the Senior Aboriginal Reference Group supports Aboriginal Employees by;
 - providing advice, support and guidance to the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
 - contributing to developing culturally appropriate programs and initiatives.
5. Improving workplace culture by ensuring a culturally appropriate NTPS induction program for all employees.

To increase Aboriginal representation on NT Government boards and committees, the NT Government has revised its application system and communications plan to be more culturally appropriate. Implementation for the communications plan is currently under way.

For further information please see Jurisdictional Action 3.1 & 3.2 (1b) - Increasing Aboriginal Representation on NT Government Boards and Committees.

Embed and practice meaningful cultural safety – Clause 59b, National Agreement

Cultural Responsiveness Framework

Please refer to Jurisdictional Action 3.1 & 3.2(1a)

- Development of a Cultural Responsiveness Framework and Anti-Racism Strategy.

Closing the Gap online training tool

An online training module has been developed and is publicly available through the Office of Aboriginal Affairs website. This module will be incorporated into the NT Government employee training portal as a essential requirement, which will also enable data collection on its use by NTPS employees.

Deliver services in partnership with Aboriginal organisations, communities and people – Clause 59c, National Agreement

Through its LDM Policy, NT Government agencies are partnering with Aboriginal communities to assist the transition of services and programs to community control, based on community aspirations.

There are 10 signed LDM Agreements that are in various stages of implementation. Please refer to Jurisdictional Action 2.1(2d) for a list of signed agreements.

In addition to the formal LDM Agreements, the concept and principles of local decision making is being embedded into how government agencies work in order for them to support communities wanting to transition services to community control.

NT Government agencies working in line with the LDM Principles in delivery of government services where there is not an LDM Agreement include:

- AGD – through the implementation of the Northern Territory Aboriginal Justice Agreement
- DCMC - Local Government and Regional Development's \$5.4 million grant funding provided to the local government sector to support local authority projects
- Department of Health - through the Transfer of primary health services to Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations

- Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics - through select tenders such as the single select tender awarded to Murin Association for Wadeye road maintenance from Wadeye to Emu Point for a period of 36 months for an estimated value of \$933,000; the maintenance contract awarded to Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation for West Arnhem region roads for a period of 36 months for an estimated value of \$2.375 million.
- Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade - through its review of the Fisheries ranger support programs which were undertaken in February 2021. Some 40 participants, representing 14 ranger groups from across the Territory attended and provided valuable feedback. The report will inform further enhancements to the program.
- Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities - \$675,000 from the Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children Grant was provided to Yalu Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwinku; and
- The Reform Management Office in partnership with the DCMC Regional Network is engaging with communities, ACCOs and their elected boards in sites across the Northern Territory to establish the 11 new Aboriginal-controlled Child and Family Centres.

Increase accountability through transparent funding allocations – Clause 59d, National Agreement

As part of the Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework, the NT Government will report annually on the proportion of funding awarded to ACCOs and ABEs through grants and procurement. Please see PA2.2(1a) Develop an Aboriginal Grants Policy and PA2.2(1b) Establish an Aboriginal Procurement Policy and data provided under Clauses 113 and 118d.

Support Aboriginal cultures – Clause 59e, National Agreement

The NT Government's *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy annual progress report collates data from agencies on the following measures that support Aboriginal languages and cultures:

- **Measure 1.5 - Increase recognition and celebration of Aboriginal culturally significant dates and events.** There has been a significant increase in agencies' reporting participation and promotion of Aboriginal cultural events
- **Measure 2.2 - Increase the number of NT public schools delivering the Language and Culture curriculum.** In 2021, 49 out of 153 schools were delivering the Language and Culture curriculum, an increase of 4 schools from the previous year.
- **Measure 2.3 - Increase the participation in Learning on Country education programs.**
The Learning on Country education program is a Commonwealth funded initiative delivered by the Northern Land Council. In 2021, 1664 students participated in the program across the Top End, East Arnhem and Big Rivers regions. This was a reduction of 146 students from the year before, but an increase of 473 from 2019.
- **Measure 2.4 - Increase the number of Aboriginal place names for public spaces.** 8 Aboriginal place names were officially registered during 2021, including Bundilla Creek and Bundilla Beach, formerly known as Vestey's Beach.
- **Measure 2.5 - Increase the number of qualified Aboriginal interpreters employed on a full-time equivalent basis.** The number of qualified Aboriginal interpreters employed by the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) increased from 96 to 105 from 2020 to 2021.
- **Measure 2.6 - The number of times agencies have accessed the Aboriginal Interpreter Service per year.** The number of times agencies accessed the AIS decreased from 13,376 in 2020 to 12,390 in 2021.

- **Measure 2.7 - Increase the work undertaken to support the preservation and celebration of Aboriginal cultures.** Key projects to support this work include:

- the Territory's Arts Trail Gallery Extension Program investing \$30 million in upgrades to Aboriginal owned arts and culture centres in Katherine, Tennant Creek and Arnhem Land.
- the annual Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program delivering \$430,000 during 2020-21.
- dedicated marketing campaigns representing and showcasing the diverse Aboriginal cultures of the NT through events, art centres and galleries, experiences and attractions.

For further information please see the *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy Progress Report 2022.

Improve engagement with Aboriginal people – Clause 59f, National Agreement

Please see Jurisdictional Action 3.3(1b) - Develop an Aboriginal Engagement Model, which is the agreed action to bridge the gap in engagement practices.

The NT Government's Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy (RECS) is in place to guide place-based engagement in regional and remote communities. However the NTG does not have a coordinated approach to engaging with Aboriginal organisations for broader policy development. Subsequently the Aboriginal Engagement Model will outline the principles and approach to policy-based engagement, and reiterates the importance of utilising the RECS where place-based engagement is required.

- b.** Establishing transparent partnership arrangements through the NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs.

The NTECAA is co-chaired by the NT Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and a representative nominated by APO NT. Membership consists of the following representatives:

- DCMC – two senior officials
- NT Government – one additional senior official (another departmental CEO, rotating through departments)
- NIAA – Deputy Secretary or senior official
- APO NT and other Aboriginal partners – five members (not including Co-Chair)
- LGANT - CEO

Under its Terms of Reference, the NTECAA meets twice a year, timed in the lead-up to Joint Council meetings. With agreement of the Co-Chairs, further work can be conducted through additional meetings or out-of-session. Decisions are made by consensus and are made public following each meeting through an agreed meeting communiqué. The NTECAA endorses the NT Partnership Working Group's forward work plan and have oversight of annual reporting and new implementation plans.

Jurisdictional Action 3.5

Commit to engaging with Aboriginal Territorians before, during and after emergencies such as natural disasters and pandemics to ensure that:

- a.** decisions take account of the impact on Aboriginal Territorians
- b.** Aboriginal Territorians are not disproportionately affected and can recover as quickly as other Territorians from social and economic impacts.

- 1.** The NT Government will, in consultation with Aboriginal community representatives, improve engagement with Aboriginal Territorians before, during and after emergencies:

- a.** Through a newly established Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Service (NTPFES) Community Resilience and Engagement Command, improve the way the NTPFES engages with Aboriginal Territorians, and put policies in place related to engagement around emergencies.

The Community Resilience and Engagement Command

The Community Resilience and Engagement Command (CREC) has progressed a number of actions to improve the cultural responsiveness of the NTPFES, including:

- developing an Aboriginal mentoring program developed in recognition of the unique frontline and daily work experienced by members of the NTPFES, both sworn and civilian. A working group of a large cross section of the workforce has been established to provide oversight of the program, and to ensure that both mentors and mentees are supported through the process.
- embedding cultural awareness training for new recruits at the NTPFES College, through a three day program providing a broad understanding of Aboriginal culture, history, engagement and working and living in a remote community, and an introduction to Aboriginal languages and working with Aboriginal interpreters. The program requires that the new recruits undertake a group project to research the languages of one of the classrooms, and to undertake a deeper dive into the geographic and social makeup of that particular language group presented back. External stakeholders are a part of the program with the Northern Land Council partnering with the College on the activities across the program.



- working with the community to translate the NTPFES Project 2030 Strategic Priorities into Yolju Matha, and develop into a poster for presentation by community members to Galiwin'ku station in a cultural ceremony. This process is now being replicated in other communities
- NTPFES College has renamed all classrooms with Aboriginal language names, with their own plaques and QR codes that, when scanned, read the name to guide listeners with correct pronunciation.
- increasing the recognition and celebration of Aboriginal culturally significant dates and events.

Emergencies and engagement

Work is progressing with policies and tools currently being developed, led by the Community Resilience and Engagement Command (CREC) and in collaboration with the Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Police both within the regional and urban centres and remote communities across the Northern Territory.

This work will initially focus on a Pilot Program for one Northern and one Southern community and will involve consultation and engagement with Elders, Traditional Owners and community representatives.

There is also a future focus on a learning and development program for those Aboriginal Liaison Officers who are currently employed within NTPFES to provide training and support in relation to emergency management practice for their community in partnership with the Remote Police Officer in Charge, the CREC, the NTPFES College and the Northern Territory Emergency Services.

- b. Through DCMC, improve engagement with Aboriginal representatives during the recovery phase
- c. Establish roles for Aboriginal representation on Local Emergency Committees.

Emergency recovery arrangements are set out in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and the Territory Emergency Plan. Governance arrangements in response to, and recovery from, emergency events is shared between NTPFES (response) and the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (recovery).

The Northern Territory is divided into two emergency management regions – the Northern region and the Southern region; each divided further into a number of localities with distinct Local Emergency Committees (LECs). The membership of LECs is established under s83 of the Act, and are led by a Local Emergency Controller. When an emergency formally transitions into the recovery phase, LECs become Local Recovery Committees (LRCs), with leadership transferred to a Local Recovery Coordinator. Typically, this is the relevant Regional Executive Director (RED) or team member from the DCMC. LECs and LRCs feed into regional or Territory level emergency control structures to maximise response and recovery efforts being driven from the local level.

REDs engage regularly with Aboriginal leaders in communities on a 'business as usual' basis throughout the normal course of their work. Consequently, there is a keen awareness of who needs to be consulted when the need arises during emergency recovery. Additionally, the DCMC Security and Emergency Recovery Team (SERT) has commenced a project to enhance recovery capability for local recovery coordinators through improvements to training and doctrine, supported by exercising. Engagement with Aboriginal representatives throughout the recovery coordination process will be a component of this enhancement.

NTPFES, REDs and SERT will continue to collaborate to maximise Aboriginal representation throughout the emergency and recovery phases.



d. Establish a similar arrangement to the Regional and Remote Taskforce that was stood up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Regional and Remote Taskforce was established in 2020, to ensure transparent communication and authentic engagement regarding COVID-19, and to improve the coordination of local COVID-19-related services. At the time, it was a key mechanism which NT Government sought feedback from stakeholders on a range of COVID-19 policies and plans. Membership included Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, Land Councils, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, NT Government agencies, the Commonwealth and various peak, non-government and representative bodies. It operated autonomously and promoted a robust partnership arrangements with multiple service providers and trusted non-government organisations.

Taskforce meetings were co-chaired by the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT.

On 6 June 2022, in light of the changing COVID-19 situation in the NT, the Taskforce was stood down with the option of being reconvened in the future if the COVID-19 situation changes.

The Taskforce strengthened and complimented emergency management arrangements and provided a direct link between Aboriginal community-controlled health services, the Chief Health Officer and the Emergency Operations Centre. Lessons learnt from the Taskforce will inform any future COVID, or other pandemic-related, response.

Jurisdictional Action 3.6

Include in NT annual reports information on how we are undertaking and meeting the transformational elements.

1. The NT Government will work with APO NT through the Joint Council to ensure evaluation and reporting on the Cultural Responsiveness Framework and actions outlined above are included in annual reporting processes.

Please refer to Jurisdictional Action 3.1 & 3.2(1a) - Development of a Cultural Responsiveness Framework and Anti-Racism Strategy.

Jurisdictional Action 3.7

Ensuring the investment in mainstream institutions and agencies does not come at the expense of investment in Aboriginal community-controlled services.

1. The NT Government agrees to work to ensure Aboriginal community-controlled organisations are supported wherever possible, consistent with Priority Reform 2 and APO NT partnership principles, and will not invest in mainstream agencies at their expense.

The NT Government will continue to advocate for support for ACCOs in line with Priority Reform 2, wherever possible.

PRIORITY REFORM 3 PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
PA3.1(1a)	Identify a range of options for an independent mechanism to support, monitor and report on Priority Reform 3	Complete
PA3.2(1a)	As per Clause 68 of the National Agreement, Parties to develop additional actions to support Priority Reform 3, if required, by 2025	Not Commenced (due 2025)

Partnership Action 3.1

By 2023, Government Parties agree to identify, develop or strengthen an independent mechanism, or mechanisms, that will support, monitor, and report on the transformation of mainstream agencies and institutions.

1. To increase accountability, the NT Government commits to:
 - a. identifying through the NT PWG a range of options for an independent mechanism for consideration by the NTECAA.

An options paper for a proposed independent mechanism has been developed and shared through the NT PWG. A proposal will be developed based on feedback to the paper for further consideration, for the establishment of an independent mechanism by 2023.

Partnership Action 3.2

In 2025, the Parties to the Agreement will meet and consider progress in Priority Reform 3 and make additional partnership actions if needed and the Agreement will be updated accordingly.

1. The NT Government will:
 - a. work with APO NT to consider progress and whether further actions are required (by 2025)

No action required yet.



PRIORITY REFORM 4 JURISDICTIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

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Snapshot – Progress of Actions

Number	Action	Status
JA4.1(1)	Engage Aboriginal media to share Closing the Gap data	Ongoing
JA4.2(1)	Regional data portals and economic growth plans	Ongoing
JA4.3(1)	Develop additional options to share cultural and regional data	Not Commenced
JA4.4(1)	Digital inclusion strategy	Not Commenced
JA4.4(2)	Data sharing agreement between Commonwealth, NT Government and APO NT/AGMP	Commenced
JA4.5(1)	Annual reporting to include information on all actions taken to support Priority Reform 4	Ongoing
PA4.1	Identify and nominate a data project site	Complete

Jurisdictional Action 4.1

Share the available, disaggregated regional data and information with Aboriginal organisations on Closing the Gap, subject to privacy requirements.

1. Engage Aboriginal media to inform the public on information and data relating to Closing the Gap, and how to access it.

The NT Government in its 2022-2023 budget has committed funding to support the NT Implementation Plan Communication and Engagement Approach. This will enable a media campaign in the 2022-2023 financial year. This will involve working with the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service to interpret material into Aboriginal languages through a variety of mediums.

Jurisdictional Action 4.2

Establish partnerships between Aboriginal Territorians and government agencies to improve collection, access.

1. Develop regional data portals and economic growths plans to enable Aboriginal organisations and communities better access to disaggregated data and a supported approach to increasing Aboriginal economic development.

The regional data portal will assist regional decision makers, investors and governments to improve evidence based decision making, prioritisation and performance reporting.

The portals will have the latest information on regional datasets and will consolidate data previously distributed by multiple sources, websites and organisations. Consolidating this data and analysis in one portal will allow more regional stakeholders to access information, contribute to innovation and develop local solutions.

The NT PWG was provided with a presentation on a pilot portal in March 2022 and invited to contribute ideas for incorporating social and cultural data, such as Closing the Gap information, into the portals, which the group will continue to consider going forward.

Jurisdictional Action 4.3

Make our data more transparent by telling Aboriginal Territorians what data they have and how it can be accessed.

1. Develop additional options to also share social and cultural regional data.

As regional data portals are developed, the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet will work with regions and through the NT PWG to determine additional options for social and cultural data.

Jurisdictional Action 4.4

Build the capacity of Aboriginal organisations and communities to collect and use data.

- 1. Develop a digital inclusion strategy to:**
 - a.** increase awareness of data available and how to access it
 - b.** improve how data is presented to make it more accessible to Aboriginal communities and organisations
 - c.** build the capacity for Aboriginal communities and organisations to use and collect their own data
 - d.** work with the Commonwealth to develop a strategy to increase investment in communications infrastructure.

The NT Government continues to invest in telecommunications connecting regional and remote communities. The Department of Corporate and Digital Development (DCDD) engages with telecommunications providers and the Commonwealth Government, advocating for increased telecommunications infrastructure across the Territory. DCMC have developed a discussion paper regarding digital inclusion, and will continue to attempt to engage DCDD in progressing this work.

- 2. Establish a data sharing agreement between ORIC, NT Government and APO NT Aboriginal Governance and Management Program (AGAMP) to have access to information about ACCOs and NT Associations to better inform timely provision of support.**

While there has been an initial meeting between ORIC, AGMP and the NT Government, no formal agreement has been entered between the parties. The NT Government will work with AGMP to progress this action further in the next year.

Jurisdictional Action 4.5

Include in our annual reports information on action taken to improve access to data and information by Aboriginal people and organisations.

- 1. The Northern Territory will report annually on information under Priority Reform 4, Target 17 and measures related to digital infrastructure and inclusion under focus area 5 in the Aboriginal Affairs Strategy.**

All reporting included in this document, and the 2022 *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy.

Partnership Action 4.1

By 2023, the Parties will establish data projects in up to six locations across Australia to enable Aboriginal communities and organisations to access and use location specific data on the Closing the Gap outcome areas.

- 1. The NT Government and APO NT will work together to identify and nominate a site for consideration in the next tranche of projects.**

The Northern Territory has nominated the community of Maningrida as a community data project site. This work will support the work of the place-based partnership in Maningrida, and be developed based on community aspirations. Consultations with Maningrida and its homelands are underway.



COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The NT Government has developed an online, interactive training tool on the National Agreement and Closing the Gap, available on the Office of Aboriginal Affairs website <https://aboriginalaffairs.nt.gov.au/our-priorities/closing-the-gap/training-modules> for public use. The Northern Territory would like to acknowledge the Coalition of Peaks for allowing the use of many of their Closing the Gap resources throughout the training tool. This tool will also be incorporated into induction processes for NTPS staff, and incorporated into the NT Government training platform eLearning, to enable data collection on its use.

Additional budget was committed by the NT Government to support delivery of information about Closing the Gap. Subsequently, the following actions will be undertaken in the 2022/23 financial year:

- Engage Aboriginal media to share information about Closing the Gap
- Regional roadshows to travel to major and minor regional and remote communities.

Social media

Type of social media	Information	Status
Media	Engage Aboriginal media	Ongoing
Face-to-face engagements/events	Regional roadshow	Ongoing
Social Media	Share on social media	Ongoing
Websites	Publish on website	Complete
Government	Online training tool	Complete

NEXT STEPS

1. The NT will focus its attention on developing new actions for the second Closing the Gap NT Implementation Plan (2022-2024). It is intended that ongoing actions from the first implementation plan are rolled over to the second NT Implementation Plan and that it contains new actions, related to addressing the National Agreement's 17 socio-economic targets.
2. Further work to deliver a joint Closing the Gap Roadshow throughout the NT to raise awareness and encourage regional and community participation and contribution to the NT Implementation Plan.
3. Finalise and implement the NT Governments Cultural Responsiveness Framework.
4. Progress key commitments in the National Agreement, including progressing actions of the national Sector Strengthening Plans in the Northern Territory.

APPENDICES



Appendix 1 Implementation Plan Annual Report Summary Table

Number	Action	Status
Priority reform 1 – jurisdictional actions		
JA1.1(1a)	Establishment of NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs	Complete
JA1.1(1b)	NT Justice Policy Partnership	Ongoing
JA1.1(1c)	Education Policy Partnership	Commenced
JA1.1(1d)	Regional Governance Framework	Complete
JA1.1(1e)	Aboriginal Economic Development Consultative Mechanism	Commenced
JA1.1(2)	Housing Partnership	Ongoing
JA1.2	Partnership Review	Ongoing
JA1.2(1)	NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs to determine ToR for Partnership Review	Complete
JA1.2(2)	Local Decision Making review after Public Accounts Inquiry	Not Commenced
JA1.3	Annual Reporting Requirements as per Clause 118 and 119 of the National Agreement	Complete
Priority reform 1 – partnership actions		
PA1.1 (1)	Establish an NT Justice Policy Partnership	Ongoing
PA1.1 (2)	Establish an NT Education Policy Partnership, with a long term goal of establishing an NT Aboriginal Education Peak Body	Commenced
PA1.2 (1)	Identify and propose a site in the NT for a place-based partnership	Complete
PA1.3 (1)	Develop further proposals to progress priority reform 1	Not Commenced (due 2025)

Number	Action	Status
Priority reform 2 – jurisdictional actions		
JA2.1 (1a)	Establish an NT Education Peak Body	Commenced
JA2.1 (1b)	Establish an NT Aboriginal Justice Peak Body	Not commenced

Number	Action	Status
JA2.1(1c)	Strengthen the Aboriginal Housing Sector	Ongoing
JA2.1(2a)	Work with Commonwealth to support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations through AGMP (APO NT)	Commenced
JA2.1(2b)	Prioritisation of funding to ACCOs for community led Family Support Services	Complete
JA2.1(2c)	Develop a Northern Territory Disability Strategy	Complete
JA2.1(2d)	Noting the review process, with the exception of community-controlled health services, LDM will continue to be the vehicle to hand back control of government services to Aboriginal organisations	Ongoing
JA2.2(1a)	Outline actions in Aboriginal Affairs Strategy and Closing the Gap reporting	Complete
Priority reform 2 – partnership actions		
PA2.1(1)	Contribute to national Sector Strengthening Plans, led by the Coalition of Peaks	Complete
PA2.1(2)	Allocation of funding through the Virtual Funding Pool, as agreed by the NT PWG	Ongoing
PA2.2(1a)	Develop an Aboriginal Grants Policy	Ongoing
PA2.2(1b)	Establish an Aboriginal Procurement Policy	Complete
PA2.2(1c)	Agree additional steps to ensure the full implementation of Clause 55a and 55b	Not commenced
PA2.2(1d)	Report on implementation approaches used	Ongoing
PA2.2(2)	Review LGANT Procurement Practices	Commenced
PA2.3(1a)	As per Clause 57 of the National Agreement, Parties to develop additional actions to support priority reform 2, if required, by 2025	Not Commenced (due 2025)
PA2.3(1b)	Review and identify current spending on Aboriginal Programs and Services	Ongoing
PA2.3(1c)	List the number and types of Aboriginal organisations that have been allocated funding for the purposes of Clause 118d of the National Agreement	Complete

Number	Action	Status
Priority reform 3 – jurisdictional actions		
JA3.1 & 3.2(1a)	Develop a Whole of Government Cultural Responsiveness Framework and Anti-Racism Strategy	Commenced
JA3.1 & 3.2(1b)	Increase Aboriginal representation on NT Government Boards and Committees	Ongoing
JA3.1 & 3.2(1c)	Implementation of the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy	Complete
JA3.1 & 3.2(1d)	Additional support and resources for the Anti-Discrimination Commission	Commenced
JA3.1 & 3.2(2a)	LGANT employment policies review	Ongoing
JA3.1 & 3.2(2b)	LGANT Reconciliation Action Plan	Complete
JA3.3(1a)	Closing the Gap Impact Statement in Cabinet process	Complete
JA3.3(1b)	Aboriginal Engagement Model	Ongoing
JA3.4(1a)	Publish engagement approaches to transformation elements (Clauses 59, 65)	Commenced
JA3.4(1b)	Establish NTECAA	Complete
JA3.5(1a)	Improve NTPFES engagement with Aboriginal people around emergencies	Ongoing
JA3.5(1b)	Improve engagement with Aboriginal people during the recovery phase	Ongoing
JA3.5(1c)	Establish roles for Aboriginal representation on Local Emergency Committees	Ongoing
JA3.5(1d)	Establish a similar arrangement to the Regional and Remote Taskforce that was stood up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic	Complete
JA3.6	Reporting on Priority Reform 3 actions, guided by NTECAA	Ongoing
JA3.7(1)	Aboriginal community-controlled organisations are supported wherever possible, consistent with Priority Reform Two and APO NT partnership principles, and will not invest in mainstream agencies at their expense	Ongoing

Number	Action	Status
Priority reform 3 – partnership actions		
PA3.1(1a)	Identify a range of options for an independent mechanism to support, monitor and report on PR3	Complete
PA3.2(1a)	As per Clause 68 of the National Agreement, Parties to develop additional actions to support priority reform 3, if required, by 2025	Not Commenced (due 2025)

Number	Action	Status
Priority reform 4 – jurisdictional actions		
JA4.1(1)	Engage Aboriginal media to share Closing the Gap data	Ongoing
JA4.2(1)	Regional data portals and economic growth plans	Ongoing
JA4.3(1)	Develop additional options to share cultural and regional data	Not Commenced
JA4.4(1)	Digital Inclusion Strategy	Not Commenced
JA4.4(2)	Data sharing agreement between Commonwealth, NT Government and APO NT/AGMP	Commenced
JA4.5(1)	Annual reporting to include information on all actions taken to support priority reform 4	Ongoing
Priority reform 4 – partnership actions		
PA4.1	Identify and nominate a data project site	Complete

Communication and Engagement Actions

Media	Engage Aboriginal media	Ongoing
Face-to-face engagements/events	Regional roadshow	Ongoing
Social Media	Share on social media	Ongoing
Websites	Publish on website	Complete
Government	Online training tool	Complete

Appendix 2 – Existing NTG Actions Aligning to the Health and Early Childhood Care and Development national Sector Strengthening Plans

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

a. Workforce

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	The Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (RATE)	NT Government (Department of Education)		187 Aboriginal assistant teachers and Aboriginal classroom workers across 46 NT Government remote schools supported to undertake accredited study in 2021 across a range of VET and higher education courses.
AAS	Teaching – Growing our future – Aboriginal Teacher Education Scholarships	NT Government (Department of Education)		Provides financial support for Aboriginal Territorians studying education qualifications

b. Service Delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	Establishing new Families as First Teachers Stay Play Learn sites	NT Government (Department of Education)	\$6.7 million	
AAS	Pathways to Community Control Framework	NT Government (Department of Health)		15 ACCHOs deliver 133 Aboriginal health clinics/services across the Northern Territory. This is an increase of one health service (Manayingkarirra Primary Health Centre in Maningrida to Mala'la Aboriginal health Service Aboriginal Corporation in 2021 as part of the NT Government's Local Decision Making policy).
AAS	Aboriginal Carers Growing Up Aboriginal Children Grants	NT Government (Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities)	\$1.25 million	6 Aboriginal organisations funded to recruit and support Aboriginal foster and kinship carers.

c. Governance

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	Community-Led schools	NT Government (Department of Education)		10 schools continue to be supported on their Community-Led Schools journey and 41 remote and very remote communities have established Local Engagement and Decision Making (LEaD) Committees

d. Consistent Funding Model

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	Child and Family Centres	NT Government (Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities).	\$3.9 million	Child and Family Centres coordinate the delivery of support services to children, young people and families and assist them to navigate the local service system to make sure their needs are met. They are exclusively operated by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and are designed to take an approach that is culturally congruent and reflective of the aspirations of the local community to deliver services that strengthen family and community capacity to raise children successfully. There are now 10 centres across the NT.

e. Peak Body

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
JA2.1(1a)	The NT Government and APO NT will jointly establish a peak Aboriginal Education body	NT Government (Department of Education)		NT Government and APO NT representatives have met twice to progress an Aboriginal Peak Education body, and have agreed that APO NT will submit a proposal to lead community engagements, and the establishment of an Aboriginal steering committee, to progress the peak's establishment.
N/A	Support for contribution to the 10 Year Generational Strategy	NT Tripartite Forum, AMSANT	\$565,000 (across 2 agreements)	The Generational Strategy is being co-designed by the Australian and Northern Territory governments, Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT), North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and the NT Council of Social Services (NTCOSS).
	APO NT services funding agreement	APO NT	\$125,000 (\$525,000 total)	Peak Body Funding – 5 year agreement to 2021.

Action Table Health Sector Strengthening Plan

a. Consistent Funding Model

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	Pathways to Community Control Framework	NT Government (Department of Health)		15 ACCHOs deliver 133 Aboriginal health clinics/services across the Northern Territory. This is an increase of one health service (Manayingkarirra Primary Health Centre in Maningrida to Mala'la Aboriginal health Service Aboriginal Corporation in 2021 as part of the NT Government's Local Decision Making policy).

b. Workforce

No.	ACTION	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
BAU	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce Program 2019-22	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$500,000 (\$1.5 million total)	The provision of a Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce (RAODW) Worker working in partnership with a multi-disciplinary primary health care team and other professionals to provide and promote a comprehensive primary health care service in alcohol and other drugs that is culturally appropriate.
BAU	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce Program	Danila Dilba Biluru Butji Binnitulum Health Service Aboriginal Corporation (DDHS)	\$406,000 (\$1.8 million total)	The provision of a Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce (RAODW) Worker working in partnership with a multi-disciplinary primary health care team and other professionals to provide and promote a comprehensive primary health care service in alcohol and other drugs that is culturally appropriate.
	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce Program	Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation	Approx. \$400,000 (Approx. \$1.2m total)	Remote Alcohol & Other Drugs Workforce Program (Anyinginyi)
BAU	Mobile Primary Health Care Service	DDHS	\$497,000 (\$1.2 million total)	The Mobile Primary Health Care Service will, within available resources, assist people living rough to access timely, comprehensive and culturally appropriate primary care and public health services in Darwin and Palmerston.

c. Capital Infrastructure

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
	Construction of building for substance treatment program	Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services Aboriginal Corporation	\$152,000	New building at the VSU area at CAAPS to provide a space to accommodate the young people and their staff in the Substance Treatment Program.

d. Service Delivery

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
AAS	Commissioning ACCOS to deliver grief counselling and trauma-informed services for Aboriginal Territorians	NT Government (Department of Health, Department of the Chief Minister & Cabinet – Barkly Regional Deal)	\$1.35 million approx.	
BAU	Remote Primary Health Care	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	Approx. \$1 million (\$2.36m total)	1. Clinical services delivered to individual clients and/or families in clinic, home or community settings 2. Health promotion, being non-clinical measures to improve the health of the community, as a whole. 3. Corporate services and infrastructure that support the provision of health services 4. Advocacy, knowledge and research, policy and planning 5. Community engagement, control and cultural safety
BAU	Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Program - 01/07/2020 - 30/06/2025	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$247,000 (\$1.2m total)	The funded service activities include: 1. Planning and Management 2. Health Promotion and Community Education 3. Data Collection and Monitoring 4. Health Hardware 5. Clinical Services 6. Training 7. Research 8. Evaluation
BAU	Continuing Care and Coordination (CCC) services	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$310,000 (\$620,000 total)	To fund and develop CCC services for clients post AOD residential treatment to reduce risk of relapse and promote positive cultural choices for clients and their families.
BAU	Right Tracks program	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$180,000 (\$600,000 total)	Alcohol Harm Reduction Programs are community driven projects delivering local solutions and practical actions to reduce alcohol related harms.
BAU	Under 5s program	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$219,000 (\$1.1m total)	To provide accessible and balanced health services that contribute to the improvement of Aboriginal children's health outcomes.
BAU	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Regional Coordinator Alice Springs - 2021-2024	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$170,000	Coordinate activities across the multidisciplinary Child and Youth Assessment and Treatment Service (C&YATS) team, ensuring that children and young people with neurodevelopmental delay receive assessment and comprehensive service across sectors.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
BAU	Social and Emotional Wellbeing Support Worker Alice Springs	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation	\$121,000 (\$368,000 total)	To provide access to culturally secure mental health programs and services which effectively address the social and emotional health needs of Aboriginal people in Central Australia
BAU	Primary Health Care Services – Youth Detention – Darwin	DDHS	Approx \$1m (\$5.3m total)	Delivery of a Primary Health Care Service to detainees in the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre Darwin that includes providing appropriate primary health care to young people including the range of diagnostic, treatment and preventative care generally provided in primary health care. In addition the service will provide medication management, assessment of young people “at risk”, referrals and emergency care.
BAU	Bagot Community Primary Health Care Service	DDHS	\$492,000 (\$1.2m total)	The funded service activities are detailed in the service plan and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of Bagot Clinic Primary Health Care Services 2. Community Engagement 3. Quality Improvement Initiatives for Bagot Health Clinic Services 4. Assessment of Bagot Clinical Services
BAY	Continuing Care and Co-ordination Service	DDHS	\$300,000 (\$600,000 total)	To fund and develop continuing care and coordination (CCC) services for clients post AOD residential treatment to reduce risk of relapse and promote positive cultural choices for clients and their families. Services are to be delivered with the aim of facilitating sustained recovery and relapse prevention.
BAU	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Regional Activity Coordinator – Darwin 01/06/2021 – 31/05/2024	DDHS	\$140,000 (\$420,000 total)	The program enables a coordinator within DDHS in facilitating activities across a multidisciplinary team assessing children with neurodevelopment disorders (including FASD) and connecting them with appropriate early intervention and support programs across the sectors, and that families receive assistance and support with navigating interventions

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
BAU	COVID-19 Vaccination Support Program - 06/07/2021-31/12/2021	DDHS	\$235,000	To increase the vaccination rates of the Northern Territory's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Community.
BAU	Various AOD residential and non-residential support programs	Foundation of Rehabilitation With Aboriginal Alcohol Related Difficulties Aboriginal Corporation	\$2.1m (\$8.8m total)	Various agreements and grants to provide residential and therapeutic programs for clients with alcohol and other drugs including volatile substance misuse in accordance with principles for effective alcohol and other drug treatment, CCC, Commit Program
BAU	Continuing Care Service	Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group Aboriginal Corporation	\$150,000	The Continuing Care Service is to promote individual and community wellbeing and reduce relapse to substance abuse.
	Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Service	Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group Aboriginal Corporation	\$983,000 (\$3.68m total)	Provide a 24 hours residential alcohol and other drugs including volatile substance abuse treatment services for up to 20 clients (at any one time)
	Tennant Creek Sobering Up Shelter	Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group Aboriginal Corporation	\$833,000 (\$3.12m total)	Provision of a 16 bed Sobering Up Shelter in Tennant Creek
BAU	Healthy Homes Program	Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation	\$47,000	Implement a Healthy Homes Program including employing a part time Aboriginal Environmental Health Worker
	NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting (MECSH) Program	Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation	\$900,000 (\$3.2m total)	NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting
	Alcohol Actions Initiatives	Binjari Community Aboriginal Corporation	\$20,000	Alcohol Action Initiatives are community driven projects that deliver local solutions and practical actions to reduce alcohol related harms.
	Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Service	Bushmob Aboriginal Corporation	\$1.33m (\$6.3m total)	Volatile Substance Abuse/Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services for Young People

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
	Venndale Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Service	Kalano Community Association Aboriginal Corporation	\$567,000 (\$2.8m total)	Provide services in the community to support trauma informed therapeutic treatment and care options to reduce the harm for clients and their families affected by alcohol and other drug
	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce	Katherine West Health Board Aboriginal Corporation	\$300,000 (\$825,000 total)	To support and provide the three Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs workers with the skills to undertake activities that increase the capacity for service provision at the local level, and enable appropriate support for clients, carers, families and communities affected by alcohol and other drugs.
	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce	Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation	\$106,000 (\$530,000 total)	To enhance a range of services in the North East Arnhem communities to support treatment and care options for clients and their families affected by Volatile Substance Abuse
	Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce	Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation	\$318,000 (\$1.59m total)	The provision of a Remote Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce working in partnership with a multi-disciplinary primary health care team and other professionals to provide and promote a comprehensive primary health care service in alcohol and other drugs that is culturally appropriate.
	Integrated Support Program	Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation	\$1.065m (\$1.4m total)	Casework, case management, return to country and collaboration with specialist providers to deliver an integrated response to reducing alcohol misuse
	Men's Residential Rehabilitation Service	The Central Australian Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit Aboriginal Corporation	\$840,000 (\$3.15m total)	To provide residential, day and therapeutic programs for clients with alcohol and other drugs, including volatile substance misuse
	Women's Residential Rehabilitation	The Central Australian Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit Aboriginal Corporation	\$250,000 (\$1.13m total)	To provide residential, day and therapeutic programs for female clients with alcohol and other drugs, including volatile substance, misuse.

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
	Wugularr, Barunga, & Manyallaluk Youth Support Worker Program	Wanta Aboriginal Corporation	\$70,000 (\$140,00 total)	Youth Support Worker to work with Wugularr School and Remote School Attendance Strategy team to facilitate engagement of youth with education, AOD diversion activities and constructive relationships between youth and the community.

e. Governance

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
BAU	NT Aboriginal Health Forum	AMSANT, NT DoH, NT Public Health Network, Commonwealth DoH & Dept PMC.		The forum oversees the transition process for NT Aboriginal health services under the Pathways to Community Control program.

f. Peak Body

No.	Action	Responsibilities	Resources	Report on progress to date
N/A	Support for AMSANT to support ACCHOs & ACCOs	AMSANT/ NT Government (Department of Health)	\$750,000 (\$1.875 million over 5 years)	1. Coordination/network development 2. Planning and policy/strategy development 3. Peak body activities 4. Developing and growing members / sector support and development 5. In-kind support (secondment) - Provide adequate supervision and support to effectively manage secondment arrangement (1xFTE)

