



Australian Government

Closing The Gap

Commonwealth
Implementation
Plan

Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan

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Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan

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Acknowledgement

The Australian Government acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands and waters on which Australians live and work, and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



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Prime Minister's foreword

For 13 years, Closing the Gap has embodied our nation's best hopes.

It is an endeavour built on good faith and the best of intentions. There has been no lack of good will or work. But the results tell us our approach hasn't made the progress it should.

Too many opportunities have been missed — to listen, and to learn.

Two years ago, a historic, 10-year Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap was signed between all Australian governments, the Coalition of Peaks and the Australian Local Government Association.

It is a partnership that demands deeper listening, as we seek to do together what we cannot achieve alone. And, from this, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap was born.

The National Agreement sets us on a new path towards Closing the Gap: one grounded in mutual trust, shared responsibility, dignity and respect — and, most importantly, the genuine experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

At the heart of the National Agreement are four Priority Reforms that will fundamentally change the relationship between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.

This Implementation Plan details how the Commonwealth Government will contribute to the Priority Reforms, and achieve the targets that will improve outcomes. It outlines the practical actions to be taken across all areas of government to close the gap.

Along with the Commonwealth's plan, states, territories, local government and Indigenous groups will be implementing plans for their jurisdictions. These are plans that will complement each other. We will all be accountable for the plans we are implementing, and the Commonwealth will work with all to build on our commitments, year by year, to make them even stronger.

Every improvement will be done side-by-side, with respect for the wisdom and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and an appreciation for their grace towards their fellow Australians.

As we take these first steps on this new path, a simple hope guides us all: that one day, we can say that a young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander boy or girl growing up in Australia will have the same chances and opportunities in life as any other Australian.

I am confident that with our new partnership based on trust and truth, we will move further towards making this hope a reality.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', is positioned above the printed name and title.

The Hon Scott Morrison MP

Prime Minister of Australia

July 2021



Minister for Indigenous Australians' foreword

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and pay my respects to Elders past and present. It is their wisdom, guidance and commitment to future generations that inspire all Australians to provide a better future and greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Over the past 13 years a lot has been achieved in addressing the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, working towards equalising life outcomes for all Australians. However, we must acknowledge that progress has been too slow and we have not delivered the results we should have.

Recognising that all governments had to work more closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and that we all needed to hold ourselves to a higher level of accountability, we reached a new National Agreement on Closing the Gap in 2020.

This National Agreement takes governments much further than anyone envisaged when the Closing the Gap framework was first established, recasting our ambitious agenda for change and doing so in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This is a paradigm shift that fundamentally changes the way in which we work. Government is now walking this journey hand in hand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The National Agreement was negotiated with peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, paragraph by paragraph, page by page and target by target. It clearly lays out the Priority Reforms necessary to reshape how we do our business to deliver on the Closing the Gap outcomes.

Realising the commitments in the new National Agreement will take the expertise and effort of all the parties.

This Implementation Plan is the Commonwealth's commitment to action and accountability against the National Agreement. It will guide and focus our efforts by providing a better link between our actions and outcomes. It outlines the investments we will be making in key areas that are foundational to achieving outcomes over the life of the National Agreement, including those areas which are new, and those that require concerted effort.

The Implementation Plan makes clear that all portfolios of the Commonwealth will contribute to meaningful change. It is complemented by implementation plans developed by each of the jurisdictions that outline their contributions to achieving the outcomes.

Significant work is already under way through the national Closing the Gap Partnership between the Coalition of Peaks and all Australian Governments. This includes plans to strengthen specific industry sectors, progress towards establishing policy partnerships in areas that need coordinated approaches, and sharing knowledge and best practice across all jurisdictions. The Implementation Plan captures the Commonwealth contribution to these commitments.



All ministers, departments and agencies of the Commonwealth are deeply committed to driving forward the actions in this plan in collaboration and with determination, in the same spirit with which the National Agreement was forged.

I look forward with great enthusiasm to what we will achieve together.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ken Wyatt".

The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP

Minister for Indigenous Australians

July 2021



Working in partnership

The Redfern Statement was released on 9 June 2016 as an urgent call for a more just approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs.

Dr Jackie Huggins as Chair of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples stated: "It is the first time national Aboriginal leadership organisations have put a united call to an incoming government".

"After 25 years, eight Federal election cycles, seven Prime Ministers, eight Ministers for Indigenous Affairs, 400 recommendations and countless policies, policy changes, reports, funding promises and funding cuts it's time to draw a line in the sand" – Rod Little, Co-Chair National Congress of Australia's First Peoples.

On the morning of 14 February 2017, Dr Jackie Huggins handed the then Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, a coolamon holding the Redfern Statement at Parliament House Canberra.

In March 2019, the Commonwealth entered into a formal Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap with the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisations (the Coalition of Peaks) and all Australian governments to establish a new national approach to Closing the Gap.

In July 2020, all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks together signed the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement). This was the first of its kind – never before had Australian governments entered into a National Partnership with a cross section of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak community-controlled organisations.

The National Agreement commits all Australian governments to changing how they work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It recognises that achieving the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can only be done when we work in genuine partnership and share decision-making on policies and programs. The Commonwealth is committed to changing how it works to achieve better outcomes on the ground with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Since the National Agreement was signed, the Commonwealth has taken concrete steps to establish partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to develop solutions that work and enable shared decision-making processes. Everything we do under the National Agreement is done in partnership.

Closing the Gap Partnership

The Closing the Gap Partnership reflects a new model of working together where all governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders with an increased level of accountability on all parties for the achievement of outcomes. The Minister for Indigenous Australians represents the Commonwealth in the Closing the Gap Partnership and is Co-Chair of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap (Joint Council) with Ms Patricia Turner AM, Lead Convenor of the Coalition of Peaks. The Commonwealth, through the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA), supports the Minister in this role and coordinates across the Commonwealth to enable the Minister to effectively represent the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth provides secretariat support to the Joint Council and the governance architecture that sits underneath it, including the officials-level Partnership Working Group, Drafting Group and subject-matter specific working groups (see Figure 1). The Commonwealth's role is to support the Joint Council to have effective meetings and a forward agenda that is well organised, purposeful, and supports delivery of the commitments under the National Agreement.

The Commonwealth provides funding to the Coalition of Peaks to enable its participation in the Partnership. This funding enables the Coalition of Peaks to deliver a secretariat and policy coordination function to its member organisations. Additional funding has been provided by the Commonwealth for specific actions to be undertaken by the Peaks, such as the engagement process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people held in late 2019 to inform the development of the National Agreement. The Commonwealth is committing an additional \$10 million over four years from 2021-22 to continue and increase funding support for the Coalition of Peaks to enable its participation in Closing the Gap.

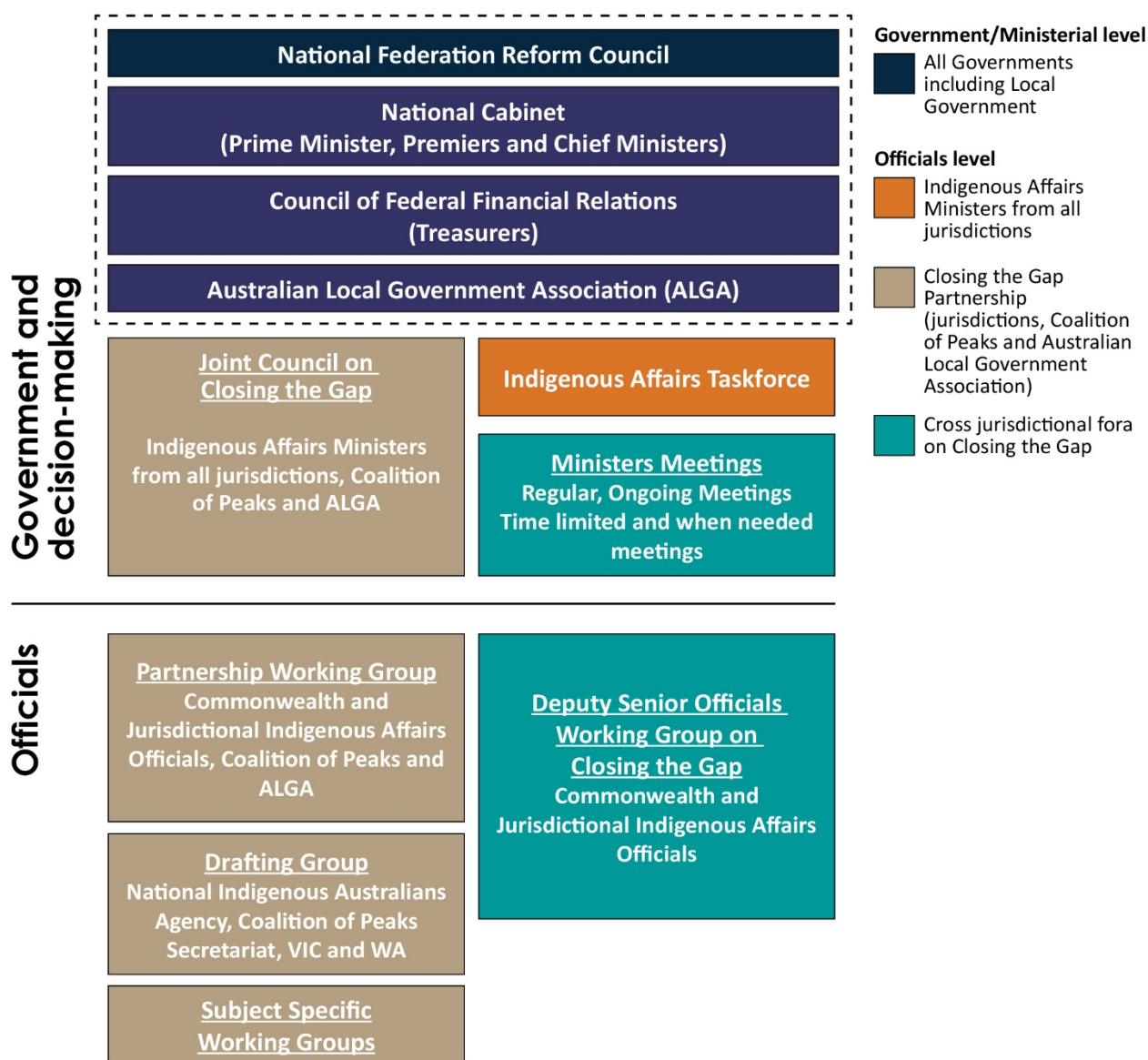
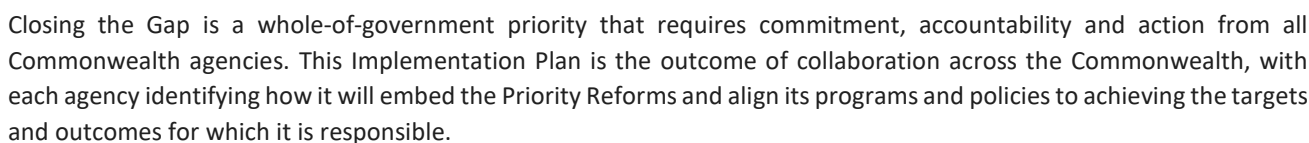


Figure 1

Purpose of this Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan sets out the actions the Commonwealth is taking to drive and embed real and positive change and how the Commonwealth will contribute to realising the ambition of the National Agreement. This is the first Implementation Plan. It establishes a strong foundation for the Commonwealth to deliver on its commitments and embed the Priority Reforms.



Partnering on this Implementation Plan

A Joint Working Group has been established (see Figure 2) to develop and monitor this Implementation Plan. It consists of the Coalition of Peaks and deputy secretaries of Commonwealth agencies with lead responsibility for targets. Through the Joint Working Group, senior Commonwealth officials and the Coalition of Peaks will be able to discuss priorities for Commonwealth action each year, work together to design actions and monitor progress of implementation.

Working with other governments

While the Commonwealth's primary role is to implement actions at the national level, it also plays an influencing and supporting role with other government parties to drive systems change and long-term outcomes. The Joint Council on Closing the Gap provides a mechanism for all government parties to engage and maintain open dialogue on delivery and implementation of the National Agreement. The Joint Council will be critical to ensuring shared accountability among all governments for achieving outcomes. The Commonwealth is continuing to engage with states and territories to consider changes and reforms relevant to each outcome within portfolios, such as specific ministerial meetings.

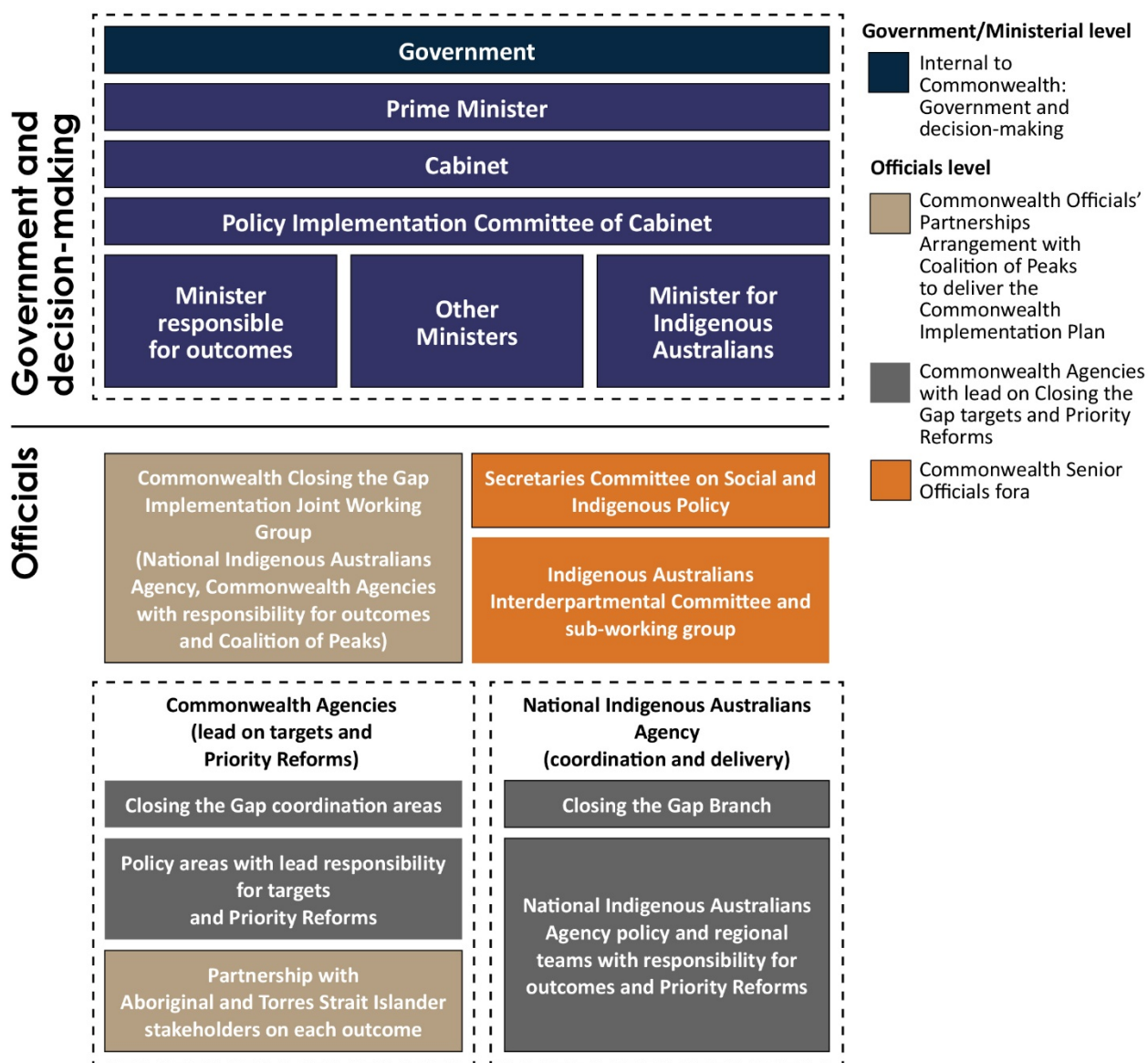


Figure 2

Making a difference

Achieving the outcomes envisaged in the National Agreement will require a significant change in how Government works at all levels. This change will be achieved by implementing the systemic reforms outlined in the Priority Reforms.

Like previous efforts on Closing the Gap, socio-economic targets have been set to measure whether efforts are making a difference. But new to this National Agreement is identifying the drivers that need to be addressed to meet each target. By targeting effort on these drivers, in line with what each level of government is responsible for and with a rigorous reporting and monitoring system, there is greater chance of progress on these targets.

The National Agreement enables more comprehensive and transparent reporting and tracking of outcomes, including at a jurisdictional and regional level. Every three years the Productivity Commission will undertake a comprehensive review of progress of the National Agreement, in addition to an annual data compilation report and a live data dashboard. This review will be complemented by an independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led review the year after each Productivity Commission review. These reviews will enable a clearer and more granular picture of where improvements

are being made and where they are lagging, including for particular cohorts of people or locations. These will help shape all governments' efforts, informing measures and actions needed to ensure progress across the board.

This Implementation Plan is a first step towards creating a clearer connection between the actions the Commonwealth is taking and how those actions contribute to achieving the outcomes and the Priority Reforms. The *Action tables* map the Commonwealth's actions against the drivers identified for each target. The drivers represent the theory of change for achieving the target. Not all drivers of change are captured as indicators under each target due to gaps in evidence and available data. The Data Development Plan which is being developed for Joint Council consideration by July 2022 seeks to address many of these gaps.

Building a clear picture of our efforts will help to ensure they are effectively targeted, address gaps in our service delivery, and ensure clear accountability for outcomes. The Commonwealth is working towards establishing structural changes and mechanisms to embed change across Commonwealth portfolios in line with the Priority Reforms, rather than focusing solely on initiatives specific to the Indigenous Australians portfolio.

Accountability, monitoring and reporting on progress

This Implementation Plan is a live document that will be updated through an annual reporting process. Annual reports will update on delivery and achievements in the preceding year and set priorities for action over the coming year.

The Commonwealth will draw on the Productivity Commission's data and analysis and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led review as evidence of where effort needs to be directed, in line with the Commonwealth's policy and program responsibilities.

Commonwealth portfolio ministers have responsibility for progressing actions against the outcomes and targets that sit within their portfolio, in close consultation with other relevant ministers. The Minister for Indigenous Australians, supported by the NIAA, is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the Commonwealth's Implementation Plan and Annual Reports, as well as leading the implementation of the Priority Reforms across the Commonwealth.

Structures across the Commonwealth have been established (including an Interdepartmental Committee and the Joint Working Group) to facilitate dialogue and coordination between agencies (see Figure 2). More detail on the Commonwealth's approach to embedding strong accountability, monitoring and reporting mechanisms is outlined in the *How this Implementation Plan will work in practice* section.



Priority Reforms

Embedding the Priority Reforms in the way Government works

At the heart of the National Agreement lie four Priority Reforms. The Priority Reforms articulate a program of reform to transform how governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and through this achieve better outcomes. The four Priority Reforms commit governments to:

1. building and strengthening structures that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share decision-making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress against Closing the Gap
2. building formal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sectors to deliver services to support Closing the Gap
3. systemic and structural transformation of mainstream government organisations to improve accountability and respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and
4. sharing access to location specific data and information to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to obtain a comprehensive picture of what is happening in their communities and make decisions about their futures.

The Commonwealth is taking action to deliver these Priority Reforms, acknowledging that genuine transformative change will take time. This first Implementation Plan paves the way forward and puts in place the initial actions that will deliver long-term change across the Commonwealth.

The Priority Reforms include *Partnership Actions* which are specific commitments under the National Agreement that are delivered in partnership by all parties. They also include *Jurisdictional Actions* that require each party to take action and report on how it is bringing into effect the commitment to transformation under each Priority Reform.



Priority Reform One: Partnership and shared decision-making

Outcome: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are empowered to share decision-making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress on Closing the Gap through formal partnership arrangements.

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

Partnership and shared decision-making are foundational to the National Agreement. The Commonwealth provides support to give practical effect to the Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap through delivering a secretariat function for the Joint Council on Closing the Gap and supporting the Coalition of Peaks to have their own secretariat and coordination function.

The Commonwealth has established separate governance structures for the Coalition of Peaks to work with senior Commonwealth officials to develop and monitor the Commonwealth Implementation Plan. The Commonwealth is also continuing to work in partnership with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders where relevant. Partnership and shared decision-making arrangements relevant to each of the socioeconomic targets are highlighted in the *Outcomes and targets* section of this Implementation Plan.

Partnership actions

The National Agreement commits all parties to jointly establish joined-up approaches in five priority policy areas, in partnership with states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives by 2022. The five priority policy areas are justice (adult and youth incarceration), social and emotional wellbeing (mental health), housing, early childhood care and development, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Justice Policy Partnership

In April 2021, the Joint Council on Closing the Gap agreed to a proposal by the Commonwealth and the Coalition of Peaks to accelerate the establishment of the Justice Policy Partnership from 2022 to commence in 2021 in recognition of the enduring nature of this issue and collaborative effort required to achieve the targets. To enable this critical work, the Commonwealth has committed up to \$7.6 million over three years to directly support the Justice Policy Partnership. This funding includes support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and experts to participate in the Justice Policy Partnership, as well as resources for secretariat and policy support functions across NIAA and the Attorney-General's Department.

Place-based partnerships

The National Agreement commits all parties to jointly establish six place-based partnerships to focus on implementation of the National Agreement at the regional or local level. The selection of these locations will occur through jurisdictional shared decision-making processes including relevant states or territories, local government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as the Commonwealth through NIAA Regional Managers. The Commonwealth is supporting this engagement process by ensuring that the scope and implementation of place-based partnerships are in

line with the strong partnership elements outlined in the National Agreement. This includes building on existing place-based approaches that align with community aspirations. Locations will be considered by Joint Council by November 2021 with partnerships to be in place by 2024.

Commonwealth actions

The Commonwealth has committed a further \$10 million over four years from 2021-22 to continue and increase funding support for the Coalition of Peaks to ensure it has the capacity to effectively engage and participate in Closing the Gap governance mechanisms, including the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. This funding gives life to the Commonwealth's commitment to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Closing the Gap. The Commonwealth will be drawing on its established partnership with the Coalition of Peaks to partner directly on the development and monitoring of this Implementation Plan.

Partnership and shared decision-making framework

The Commonwealth will develop a partnership and shared decision-making framework to support best practice across all portfolios in establishing and strengthening partnerships and shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The NIAA, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, will develop guidance and a suite of support materials to enable agencies to develop partnerships and shared decision-making arrangements in a culturally safe way. This will help embed transformation across the Commonwealth by setting a standard about what good partnerships and shared decision-making arrangements are and providing support to enable these to be implemented in the context of policy and program development, implementation, and evaluation activities.

As required by the National Agreement, the Commonwealth will undertake a stocktake of partnerships in place including reviewing and strengthening existing partnerships. The Commonwealth will work with the Coalition of Peaks around the scope of this stocktake and the review, with a report to be provided to Joint Council in 2022. The partnership and shared decision-making framework will be informed by the stocktake and review of partnerships, which will help set a baseline to track and report on the number and strength of partnerships into the future.

Indigenous Voice

The Commonwealth is delivering ambitious reforms to place partnership and shared decision-making at the centre of all government interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes the Commonwealth's ongoing work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts and communities to co-design an Indigenous Voice. The proposal includes a Local and Regional Voice and a National Voice. Under the proposals, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will have a greater say in decisions that affect their daily lives, with mechanisms that support working in partnership with all levels of government including at the local and regional level, and providing advice to the Australian Parliament and Commonwealth at the national level about programs, services, policies, and laws that impact communities.

Local shared decision-making

The Commonwealth is also supporting local shared decision-making models to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can participate in the development, delivery and evaluation of programs and services that affect them. For example, it is investing in partnership arrangements to support shared decision-making processes across Empowered Communities sites. This initiative supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders as they work with their communities and partners to progress local priorities. In Empowered Communities regions, partnerships with governments and joint decision-making processes are continuing to evolve, with local communities guiding funding decisions and strategies to address critical issues impacting their lives.

Aboriginals Benefit Account reform

The Commonwealth has announced the creation of a new Aboriginal-controlled body to administer investments and beneficial payments from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) in the Northern Territory. Once legislated, the new body will receive an initial endowment of \$500 million with around \$60 million ongoing funding per annum, to spend on Aboriginal investments and supporting community projects in the NT. The Commonwealth has worked with the Northern



Priority Reform Two: Building the community-controlled sector

Outcome: There is a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

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

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, including community-controlled organisations, can deliver culturally safe, effective services. They also provide additional benefits such as increased employment opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the workforce and into leadership. Increasing the number, availability and resourcing of these organisations provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the ability to choose the service they want to access. This is an important part of fully realising the outcomes envisaged in the National Agreement. Above all else, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians should have access to quality services that meet their needs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are an important part of the service delivery landscape and are essential to delivering critical services across all the Closing the Gap outcome areas. The National Agreement acknowledges that services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are often preferred by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over mainstream organisations. The Commonwealth is committed to building the capability of community-controlled and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, so that they continue to deliver quality services.

Partnership actions

Sector Strengthening Plans

The National Agreement requires parties to identify sectors for joint national strengthening every three years through Sector Strengthening Plans. These plans will align with the elements for a strong community-controlled sector outlined in the National Agreement, covering workforce, capital infrastructure, service provision, governance and accountability. The Plans will provide a national framework for all parties to deliver on a joined up approach. The initial priority sectors are early childhood care and development, housing, health and disability.

Dedicated Sector Strengthening Plan working groups, made up of government officials from all jurisdictions and Coalition of Peaks representatives, will develop the Sector Strengthening Plans, with secretariat support from NIAA. The Commonwealth will also fund resources to enhance the capacity of the disability, health, housing and early childhood and care peak organisations to effectively engage in, and contribute to the development of Sector Strengthening Plans.

The Commonwealth has committed \$46.5 million over four years to strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector. States and territories have also committed \$30.7 million to this joint funding pool. The Commonwealth has drawn on its contribution to the virtual funding pool to fund positions in SNAICC, the First Peoples Disability Network and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (through the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation) to lead development of the Sector Strengthening Plans. As of June 2021, work is underway to action a proposal from SNAICC for an Intermediary Services Support Pilot to support early years service providers to deliver high quality, responsive and accessible services. A Strategic Plan for Funding the

Development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Sector (Strategic Plan) has been agreed by Joint Council, to ensure maximum impact is achieved with this funding. Commonwealth agencies are working with peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations on funding proposals for sector strengthening, in line with the Strategic Plan's funding priorities.

Jurisdictional actions

The Commonwealth has a strong track record of investing directly into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service delivery and community-controlled sector in recognition of the critical role these organisations play in achieving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For example, since 1971 Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) have come to play a unique service delivery and leadership role in Australia's primary health system. ACCHS are operated and governed by the local community and deliver holistic, strengths-based, comprehensive and culturally safe primary health services across urban, regional and remote communities. There are now nearly 150 ACCHS operating over 300 clinics. The Commonwealth provides about 80% of funding for primary healthcare under the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP) to the ACCHS sector to deliver these services.

Funding to strengthen the community-controlled sector

The Commonwealth has committed new funding of \$154.4 million over 2021-22 to 2024-25, as well as \$100 million over 2021-22 to 2024-25 from the IAHP, to fund repair, reconstruction and enhancement of health infrastructure in the community-controlled sector. This will greatly increase the capacity of ACCHSs to deliver a range of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Access to quality, culturally safe health services is essential to achieving the Closing the Gap outcomes.

In the social services portfolio, the Commonwealth is investing \$3.2 million to review the needs of the community-controlled sector in child and family services, with a view to increasing their involvement in service delivery. This is an early, targeted action that will support a greater proportion of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to be delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Funding prioritisation policies

The National Agreement commits all governments to increase the proportion of service delivery funding that is provided through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, including through prioritisation policies. Commonwealth agencies are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to identify efficient and effective ways to progressively implement this commitment, which must be completed by 2024.

The Commonwealth through the NIAA has strong prioritisation policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific programs already in place. Since the inception of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations have been preferenced wherever possible. This means that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are the preferred service delivery provider or grant recipient in instances where there is equal ranking with a non-Indigenous organisation in a competitive grants round through the IAS. As with other prioritisation policies, the IAS grants process includes the application of usual Commonwealth government standards of assessing quality and value for money.

The IAS has increased the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers since its inception in July 2014 from 35% to over 60%. This has led to downstream outcomes such as better employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Commonwealth is working with the Coalition of Peaks to develop a grant connected policy that will preference Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, across all Commonwealth grants where they meet all other application requirements, including demonstrating value for money. Introducing any grant connected policy requires a business case, including a cost benefit analysis, be prepared for the consideration of Government, which the Commonwealth will develop in partnership with the Coalition of Peaks.

The Commonwealth is also working with the Coalition of Peaks to identify the best way to implement the funding prioritisation policy requiring allocation of a 'meaningful proportion' of new government funding initiatives, which are

intended to service the broader population across socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with relevant expertise, particularly community-controlled organisations. This will take into account the number and capacity of such organisations and the service demands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and will likely vary across portfolios depending on agencies' and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations' stages of capability and readiness.

The Commonwealth is committed to service quality and offering choice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access the services that work for them. These new funding policies will not provide a guarantee of funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, but will provide a policy basis to preference funding to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation where other criteria are met.

The NIAA will in the meantime develop a suite of materials to guide and support all Commonwealth agencies to develop and implement their own prioritisation policies within their existing grant programs and procurement activities. This is to be done in partnership with their stakeholders. As part of these materials, the NIAA will consider including supporting guidance on cultural safety for organisations contracted by government to deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As required by the National Agreement, the Commonwealth will review its current spending to identify opportunities to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. The review is due to be completed in July 2022. It will provide valuable information on the role and value of these organisations in Commonwealth service delivery and opportunities to increase the proportion of service delivery funding to them.

Capacity building of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

Prioritising funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service delivery organisations is only one half of the solution. It also requires appropriate support for these organisations to take up the funding and be able to deliver high quality, value-for-money services.

The Commonwealth supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations through the work of the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC). Under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act), the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations has unique powers to support and protect CATSI Act corporations that are experiencing financial or governance difficulties. Through the appointment of a special administrator, the Registrar is able to prevent the corporations from failing, and aims to return control of the corporation back to its members in better health. This is a particularly important function where the corporations are providing essential services to communities, such as health and housing, or managing native title rights and interests. ORIC provides governance training to members and directors of CATSI Act corporations to support them to establish and maintain good governance and financial management practices.

Indigenous Procurement Policy

The Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) has been in place since 2015 and aims to increase the rate of purchasing from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. It is a whole-of-government policy that has seen all portfolios exceed their 2019-20 targets of 3% of the number and 1% of the value of accessible contracts being awarded to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. An evaluation of the IPP was published in 2019 and the NIAA is currently developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to guide future evaluation.

Jawun Partnership

The Commonwealth also supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sectors in other ways, such as through skills and knowledge transfer. The Australian Public Service (APS) has a formal partnership with Jawun, a not-for-profit organisation that is connecting skilled people with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in communities to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led empowerment and leadership. Secondees share their expertise and support the organisations and communities to achieve their development goals. The Commonwealth has supported over 550 Australian Public Service (APS) staff participate between 2015 and 2020.



Next steps

The Commonwealth recognises that strong community-controlled sectors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations can deliver improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Commonwealth is working to maximise these benefits through strategic investments in community-controlled sectors and a holistic process to critically understand the needs of specific sectors through the development of Sector Strengthening Plans.

The Commonwealth will support and grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations by promoting agency-specific prioritisation policies for grants and procurement, as well as progressing whole-of-government options for funding prioritisation policies. These initiatives will grow the demand for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the service delivery system.

This will be matched by a suite of supporting materials to support capacity building of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and the community-controlled sector to meet increased demand for services.



Priority Reform Three: Transforming government organisations

Outcome: Governments, their organisations and their institutions are accountable for Closing the Gap and are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund.

Target: Decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experiences of racism.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures have endured the ongoing effects of institutionalised and systemic racism for too long. Addressing and eliminating institutionalised and systemic racism is imperative to achieving the outcomes in the National Agreement.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, like all Australians, interact with government services every day. It is important that these services can be accessed without fear of experiencing racism or unconscious bias – recognising that racism and discrimination negatively impact health and wellbeing in several ways, both directly and indirectly. To meaningfully transform Commonwealth agencies, and funded organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be engaged in the design, implementation and evaluation of government policies, programs and service delivery.

The Commonwealth is committed to demonstrating respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to celebrate them as a rich part of our nation.

Partnership actions

The National Agreement requires all governments to strengthen or put in place independent monitoring mechanisms to ensure progress on embedding the transformational elements of this Priority Reform. The Commonwealth will explore how the three independent mechanisms already in place can help ensure Commonwealth agencies are transforming and delivering in alignment with the commitments under the National Agreement:

- The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) provides independent reviews and performance audits of Commonwealth agencies. The ANAO annual audit is designed to anticipate and respond to current and emerging risks and challenges impacting on public administration and informs the public of the planned audit coverage for the Commonwealth sector.
- The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) seeks to better understand how well placed the APS is to meet current and future challenges and how to best position itself for the future. The APSC undertakes periodic external reviews of organisational capability and delivers its “State of the Service” report in Parliament each year, which identifies the year-to-year trends in workforce participation and capability across the APS.
- The Australian Human Rights Commission’s (AHRC) role is to advocate to government and others for human rights to be considered in laws and policy making. The AHRC supports the Commonwealth by providing training and resources for employers to help organisations embed diversity and inclusion and foster an environment in which discrimination is not tolerated. The AHRC has two Commissioners who work directly on issues that improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ experience of racism in Australia: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and the Race Discrimination Commissioner.

Jurisdictional actions

The National Agreement commits all governments to engaging meaningfully and transparently with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including by publishing their approaches to engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

people. The Commonwealth already has a number of publicly available policies outlining agency approaches for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (see *Action tables*).

Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme

The Commonwealth recognises that many of the issues impacting outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including health and wellbeing, stem from past government policies of forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The trauma caused by these past policies has led to Stolen Generations survivors and their descendants experiencing worse health and wellbeing outcomes than other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. In recognition of this ongoing impact, the Commonwealth is committing \$378.6 million over five years for a financial and wellbeing redress Scheme for living Stolen Generations survivors who were removed as children from their families in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory prior to their respective self-government and the Jervis Bay Territory. This Scheme will provide practical support for Stolen Generations survivors to address their often complex health needs.

Supporting intergenerational healing will positively impact the health and wellbeing of Stolen Generations survivors, their families and communities. This Scheme represents a major practical step forward towards healing, alongside the additional measures the Commonwealth is taking to progress truth-telling as part of the nation's journey to reconciliation. This process of truth-telling and healing is essential to transform how government interacts and works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Engagement framework

The Commonwealth will develop a framework for engagement to set a baseline expectation of how to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the design and delivery of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific and mainstream policies and programs. This framework will provide guidance and support for agencies on when and how to effectively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a culturally safe way that will be built on trauma-aware and healing-informed principles. This will include enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to organise and represent themselves, share data and information to support effective engagement, and build transparency into engagement approaches.

The framework will also address the need to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people before, during and after emergencies, natural disasters and pandemics.

It will also enable the Commonwealth to better track existing engagement approaches and deliver on its commitment to publish these. The Commonwealth will draw on its partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, including the Coalition of Peaks, to develop and refine this framework.

Embedding cultural safety in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan is being refreshed and will include a focus on cultural safety to align with the human rights-based approach of the Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2016-2026. It has a strong focus on the impact of racism and discrimination on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes, and seeks to identify and eliminate racism in mainstream settings.

Building cultural competence in key sectors

The Commonwealth is committing \$7.7 million over three years to improve the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the child and family sector workforce engaged through the Department of Social Services' grant funding, signalling its intention to transform mainstream service delivery. This is a critical area to provide cultural safety for vulnerable families and children so they can access the services they need when they need them.

In addition, the Commonwealth recognises the role of cultural capability in teachers' efforts to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Commonwealth has invested \$1.6 million over three years (until 2022) to commission the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to undertake a project investigating how teachers and leaders in schools across Australia can be supported to enhance their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020–2024 and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework are the two key policies to improve employment opportunities and experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across the Commonwealth public sector.

The Commonwealth recognises that increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce requires an appropriate monitoring mechanism to track staff experiences of discrimination and racism. The APSC conducts an annual APS employee census, which collects confidential attitude and opinion information from APS employees on important issues in the workplace, including APS staff experiences of discrimination and experiences of racism. The outcomes of the census are used to identify key issues across agencies and design agency-level actions to improve experiences.

Frontline service delivery

Frontline service delivery is critical to ensuring positive experiences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments. The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring the highest level of service through Services Australia. The Services Australia Customer Experience Survey is designed to identify where service delivery has fallen short of public expectations and how it can be improved. This survey continues to be a critical tool for the Commonwealth to provide the best standard of service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Reconciliation Action Plans

Genuine transformation requires internal reform. The Commonwealth funds Reconciliation Australia as the national body for reconciliation. Reconciliation Australia manages the development and tracking of Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) implementation across organisations and governments to increase cultural awareness, capability and safety. There are four stages of RAPs to progress reconciliation; reflect, innovate, stretch and elevate. Reconciliation Australia provides authoritative research to inform the national conversation, including through the State of Reconciliation in Australia Report and the Australian Reconciliation Barometer.

Next steps

Identifying and addressing institutional and systemic racism is hard and complex and requires deep appreciation that trauma has ongoing impacts that can pass from one generation to the next. Recognising this, the Commonwealth will immediately progress the implementation of direct support to Stolen Generations survivors.

The NIAA will lead actions to support cultural and systemic change across all Commonwealth agencies. This includes developing an engagement framework to set a baseline for how the Commonwealth engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, to be developed in partnership with other Commonwealth agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners.

The Commonwealth will invest in improving the cultural competence of service delivery in key sectors including the child and family sector and education sector.



Priority Reform Four: Sharing access to data and information at a regional level

Outcome: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to, and the capability to use, locally relevant data and information to set and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap, achieve their priorities and drive their own development.

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

Access to detailed place-based data can empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. The sharing of data at a regional and local level can inform decision-making by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for their communities.

Partnership actions

The key partnership action under this Priority Reform is to identify and establish new community data projects in up to six locations by 2023. The aim of these projects, to be funded by the Commonwealth, is to support regional shared decision-making. The Commonwealth is working with the Coalition of Peaks to finalise contractual arrangements to deliver the community data projects, and is working through the Joint Council to settle the details of how these will be implemented.

The NIAA chairs and provides secretariat support for a Data and Reporting Working Group that includes representatives from all parties to the National Agreement as well as key Commonwealth agencies with data responsibilities. The Data and Reporting Working Group:

- provides advice and technical support to the Partnership Working Group and Joint Council on data and reporting issues, including developing the Data Development Plan, and
- gives advice on changing the way data is collected and developed to support the objectives of the National Agreement.

This working group operates in a manner consistent with the Partnership, with an emphasis on decisions made by consensus by all parties, to deliver data commitments in the National Agreement.

Jurisdictional actions

Data access and transparency

The Commonwealth has a number of existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support data access and use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and has existing strategies in place to make data more transparent. For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Round Table for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics advises the Commonwealth on relevant activities including the Census, surveys, data integration and data governance. The Commonwealth supports Engagement Managers, who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander officers, to work directly with communities across Australia to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and use of ABS data.

The Commonwealth is developing an Australian Data Strategy which will set out how to enhance effective, safe and secure data use over the period 2021 to 2025. The Australian Data Strategy will explore the contribution of data to the

digital economy, identify the Commonwealth's use of data in delivering its functions and set out how the Commonwealth will manage data as a critical asset. The Australian Data Strategy will outline the Commonwealth data system and opportunities to enhance it, including the Commonwealth's settings to support use, value, custodianship, sharing and security of both public and private data in Australia to improve outcomes for all Australians. The strategy will also commit Commonwealth agencies to building and enhancing data maturity, visibility and capability in the APS, and increase consumer awareness, use and control of their data for personal benefit.

To embed an open, transparent and capacity-focused approach to sharing information and data, the Commonwealth is developing specific advice on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data for the APS Data Champions Network. This will drive a consistent approach to sharing data pertaining to, and of interest to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with them and to forming partnerships to guide how data is collected, used, reported and accessed. This will help embed the data sharing elements outlined in Priority Reform Four in data projects across the Commonwealth.

Intergovernmental Data-Sharing Agreement

In April 2021, the National Cabinet agreed that jurisdictions will work together to capitalise on the value of public data to achieve better outcomes for Australians. In order to achieve this, first ministers committed to develop an intergovernmental agreement to share data across jurisdictions, which will be considered at a future National Cabinet meeting. This will support the data development work required to show the full experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in efforts to Close the Gap.

Regional data dashboard

In 2020, the Commonwealth released a new regional data dashboard to track trends in Australia's regions over time, including specific data relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The dashboard shows performance on areas such as labour market, infrastructure, housing, economic activity, the environment, demography and wellbeing. This will contribute to easier access to and use of disaggregated data at regional levels.

Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians

The Commonwealth has invested \$13.7 million over four years commencing in 2020-21 for the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program, which will provide government and community decision-makers with better economic, social and demographic data on regional Australia, including publicly accessible and searchable location-specific information. Improving outcomes for regional Australians requires better tracking of data on the state of the regions, as well as better information for governments and local communities, to make decisions that affect those communities.

Knowledge Exchange Platform

To disaggregate and share data, the Commonwealth is developing a Knowledge Exchange Platform as part of the Indigenous Research Exchange. Its purpose is to make research findings more accessible, more contestable and more usable, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Knowledge Exchange Platform is still under development, and its launch is anticipated at the end of 2021.

Next steps

The Commonwealth's commitment to ensuring that regional data is available and accessible is reflected by the range of measures in this Implementation Plan, including the intergovernmental agreement to share data between jurisdictions and the Australian Data Strategy. Over the next 12 months the Commonwealth will progress these initiatives and ensure that they serve the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Outcomes and targets

The National Agreement includes 17 socio-economic outcome areas that will make the greatest difference in achieving positive life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The outcomes take into account the accumulated life experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their socio-economic wellbeing, as well as their cultural identity and the need for intergenerational healing.

The targets have been developed to measure these outcomes. The key drivers for achieving each target have been identified in the National Agreement, as well as indicators which will help measure whether efforts are making inroads on the things that will help achieve the targets. Together, they sharpen the focus of all parties to direct effort and investment to what matters. Figure 3 summarises the outcomes and targets framework established under the National Agreement.



Figure 3

This Implementation Plan provides a snapshot of the Commonwealth's existing actions, strategies, and frameworks that contribute to Closing the Gap, while also highlighting areas for additional focused investment. It focusses on those areas where the Commonwealth has the most direct levers for driving reform. This Implementation Plan, along with state and territory implementation plans, enables monitoring and accountability of actions to achieve each outcome and target under the National Agreement.

Each target chapter of this Plan outlines key efforts and investments that contribute to the broader outcome and the specific target. This is supported by more detailed information in the Action tables. Some actions have been included under multiple sections in recognition of the interconnectedness of the outcomes and targets.

Outcome 1: People enjoy long and healthy lives

Target 1: Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.

Health is a fundamental human right. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, conceptions of health extend beyond physical health and wellbeing, to include the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of individuals, families and communities throughout the whole of life. This recognises health as fundamental to enabling full participation in life, including the capacity to fully participate in education, employment and economic activity.

Health services that are prevention-focused, responsive, culturally safe and free of racism are critical to addressing inequities in health outcomes. Services must also be trauma-aware and healing-informed. However, Closing the Gap in life expectancy by 2031 requires changes beyond just the health system. To achieve this outcome, improvements must be seen across all Closing the Gap targets to drive better outcomes across the broader determinants that influence health.

The Commonwealth's implementation of the new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031 (Health Plan) will be the key driver for improvements against Outcome 1 over the next 10 years.

Minister responsible

Minister for Health and Aged Care

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

At the national level, health partnership arrangements are already in place to drive collaboration and shared decision-making across policies and programs. These include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnerships Forums, which support engagement between governments and the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) sector in each state and territory. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19, which is supporting delivery of health care during the COVID-19 pandemic that is locally led, holistic, comprehensive and culturally safe, is being led in partnership between the National Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth also partners with the National Health Leadership Forum to drive outcomes across broader sectors that influence health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

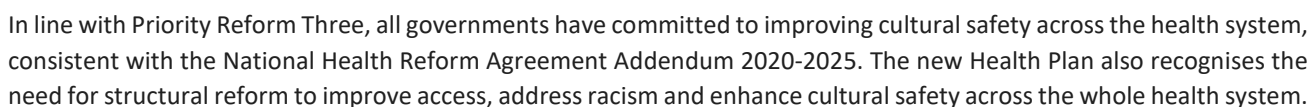
In line with Priority Reform One, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders have been, and will continue to be, strong voices in guiding reforms across primary health, mental health, workforce and aged care reforms. Partnership approaches, including across mainstream policies, programs and services, and to oversee the implementation of the Health Plan, will continue to be strengthened.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Consistent with Priority Reform Two, funding through the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP) supports the delivery of culturally safe and comprehensive primary healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the ACCHS sector, and acknowledges the vital role ACCHS play as a core facet of the Australian health system. The Commonwealth provides around two-thirds of the \$4 billion IAHP (over four years) to the ACCHS sector. For the primary health care component specifically, about 80% of the funding allocation is being provided to ACCHS.

ACCHS will continue to be prioritised for the delivery of healthcare programs and services targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This will include further work to improve infrastructure and technology, to provide support for transition to community control and to address service gaps.

Health services also need to be equipped to adopt place-based healthcare that meets the needs of their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, including through telehealth and point-of-care testing. A strong and effective network of ACCHS is particularly vital in the context of pandemics, such as COVID-19, and in response to natural disasters, such as bushfires and floods.



The newly released National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan and the National Medical Workforce Strategy will also work together to build a health workforce that is equipped to provide culturally safe, high quality care across all locations.

With respect to Priority Reform Four, more work is needed to ensure data sharing at the regional level, including the availability of data that measures the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in terms of holistic conceptions of health and wellbeing. This includes locally relevant cultural determinants, as outlined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. Partnerships on regional data development and sharing will continue to evolve, including with respect to the Online Services Reporting and KPI data that is collected through the ACCHS sector.

Actions

The Health Plan is the overarching policy framework to drive progress against the health targets, including for Outcome 1. Its development has been led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector, recognising the critical need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be involved in the policy development process. It also recognises the critical role both the ACCHS sector and the broader health system must play in ensuring better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Primary care

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also a priority in the Primary Health Care 10-Year Plan 2021-31 and the National Preventive Health Strategy. This demonstrates a commitment to prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health across health policies – not just those specifically targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Through the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth is investing more than \$780 million to prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and ageing outcomes. This is in addition to the targeted funding already provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through the \$4 billion IAHP (over four years).

This is also in addition to broader work being undertaken across the health system to improve life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through cancer screening initiatives, enhancements to Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS) items (including telehealth) and pharmacy reforms to improve access to medicines.

To address seriously deteriorating or non-existent health infrastructure, the Commonwealth will invest new funding of \$154.4 million over 2021-22 to 2024-25, as well as \$100 million over 2021-22 to 2024-25 from the IAHP, to deliver new and renovated health clinics and associated housing for health professionals. This funding will be prioritised for infrastructure projects (clinics and staff housing) in communities with the poorest quality infrastructure and/or highest growth in population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This will support provision of best practice clinical care in modern, fit for purpose clinics, help attract highly skilled clinical staff and increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

Ongoing funding for the delivery of comprehensive primary healthcare services is delivered through the IAHP, with \$518 million provided in 2020-21 – the majority of which has gone to ACCHS. This includes \$90 million in funding provided through the IAHP Primary Health Care Funding Model over 3 years from 2020-21 to 2022-23. A further \$36.5 million has been made available over three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) for Primary Health Care Service Expansion Funding. Through the IAHP, the Commonwealth is also providing approximately \$23 million per annum for sector development through the Sector Support Network.

To further improve access to primary healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, MBS items 715 and 228 are available specifically for a Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. Patients who have received a Health Assessment may also be eligible for follow-up allied health services (items 81300–81360), and follow-up service by a practice nurse or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner (item 10987). The 2021-22 Budget also includes an additional \$22.6 million to improve continuity of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a chronic disease through the Practice Incentives Program – Indigenous Health Incentive.



Chronic disease

Investment from the IAHP supports action to directly address the leading causes of chronic disease and death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes activity to address ear and hearing health, eye health, renal health and rheumatic heart disease. The 2021-22 Budget announced an additional \$31.1 million in funding to treat and prevent acute rheumatic fever/rheumatic heart disease and trachoma, to be implemented through a partnership approach.

Investment is being made to improve survival rates from a range of life-threatening cancers, given that cancer is the highest cause of mortality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes \$12 million announced in the 2021-22 Budget to continue to enhance the National Cancer Screening Register, which will facilitate the direct distribution of bowel screening kits to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care centres.

Addressing alcohol and other drugs use

To help address substance use, investment in Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services will be bolstered under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) by \$66 million over the forward estimates. This ongoing funding will ramp up from around \$13 million administered in 2022-23, to an average of \$20 million administered per year from 2023-24 and will increase access to outcomes-focused alcohol and other drugs treatment services that are culturally safe. Other new initiatives will deliver overdue repairs to alcohol and other drugs services infrastructure, strengthen the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drugs workforce as well as improving data collection and reporting. Addressing harmful substance use is expected to contribute to improved outcomes across several outcome areas in addition to Outcome 1.

The Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program has been funded since 2010 (in different forms) with the aim of improving life expectancy among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by reducing tobacco use. TIS is a multi-component program, delivering evidence-based population health activities and Indigenous Quitline support, and has responded to the needs of priority populations, which include pregnant women who smoke and people living in remote areas.

Rural and remote health

As announced in the 2021-22 Budget, the expansion of the Allied Health Rural Generalist Pathway includes up to 30 packages allocated to ACCHS, which will improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in rural and remote areas through increased access to a highly skilled allied health workforce. Furthermore, through the Australian General Practitioner (GP) Training Program, the Commonwealth directs \$35 million per year towards securing culturally safe primary health care. Funds are directed to maximising the number of GP training placements delivered in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health settings and promoting cultural competence. Annual Strategic Plans for the implementation of this Program are developed in partnership with the relevant state or territory ACCHS peak body.

COVID-19 response

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19 has been a critical partner in preparing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities for COVID-19. Taking a partnership model has better enabled responses, including community preparedness grants, retrieval and evaluation packages, point of care testing and ACCHS-led GP respiratory clinics, to be delivered in a tailored and culturally safe way. The 2021-22 Budget announced an additional \$18.2 million to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, including through partnerships with ACCHS.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19, co-chaired with the Deputy CEO of the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), will continue to provide advice to ensure the rollout of vaccines is safe, timely and effective.

Next steps

While these actions are important steps forward to drive progress against Outcome 1, more needs to be done to remove barriers to access, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive the healthcare they need, when they need it. The greatest gains will come



through ensuring the whole health system across the continuum of care is prevention-focused, responsive, culturally safe and free of racism. Ensuring trauma-aware and healing-informed approaches across all care settings will also require workforce training and transformation. Efforts must include partnerships between ACCHS and mainstream services to develop and implement culturally safe and responsive training mechanisms, as well as expanding the capacity and reach of the ACCHS and social and emotional wellbeing workforce. The new Health Plan will help drive this agenda.

Under the National Agreement, health has been agreed as a sector for joint national strengthening through a Sector Strengthening Plan. The Department of Health is progressing this work in partnership with NACCHO, NIAA and state and territory health departments. The Sector Strengthening Plan will be delivered in November 2021, providing a pathway for action against agreed priorities. Implementation of the Sector Strengthening Plan will align with implementation activities for the Health Plan.



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

Target 2: By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91%.

Birthweight is a key determinant of infant morbidity, mortality, growth and development, and a fundamental element of the first 2000 days of life, the most crucial period impacting a child's lifetime health, wellbeing and fulfilment. Children who are born within a healthy weight range have a lower risk of dying during their first year of life, are less prone to ill-health in childhood and are less likely to develop chronic disease as adults, including cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease and Type 2 Diabetes. Increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight will significantly improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants and children and lay the foundations for better lifelong health and wellbeing.

The Commonwealth's implementation of the new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031 (Health Plan) will be the key driver for improvements against Outcome 2 over the next 10 years.

Minister responsible

Minister for Health and Aged Care

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth through the Department of Health has strong partnership arrangements with the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) sector for the delivery of maternal and antenatal health services. This includes incorporating partnership models and principles into targeted programs, such as the Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program. The Commonwealth will continue to strengthen and expand these partnership arrangements to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at the centre of decision-making in driving progress against Outcome 2.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

As outlined in Outcome 1, the Commonwealth provides around 80% of funding for primary healthcare under the \$4 billion (over four years) Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP) to the ACCHS sector for the delivery of culturally safe and comprehensive primary healthcare services. This includes funding for maternal and antenatal care services delivered through ACCHS. The ongoing work to expand and strengthen the ACCHS sector (see Outcome 1) will continue to underpin the delivery of comprehensive primary health care services, including maternal and antenatal care, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. This directly supports the objectives of Priority Reform Two.

To address barriers to accessing maternal and antenatal care, mechanisms must be implemented to eliminate racism and enhance cultural safety in service delivery. Maternal and antenatal care services need to be designed to provide services and support that meet the needs of their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and embed community governance and control. The application of co-design and partnership approaches will be critical in achieving these outcomes, directly supporting Priority Reform Three for mainstream transformation and improved accountability.

To support Priority Reform Four, partnerships on regional data development and sharing will continue to evolve, including with respect to the Online Services Reporting and KPI data that is collected through the ACCHS sector, which includes data on maternal and child health outcomes.



Actions

The Commonwealth is investing in health services to enable mothers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies to have early and ongoing access to effective, culturally appropriate antenatal care, which is a key determinant of birthweight.

The Commonwealth is providing additional investment of \$45 million over four years to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pregnant women and babies. This includes support to grow the maternal health workforce and redesign maternity services to reach more pregnant women and support them for longer. Funding will also support an expansion of the health workforce by creating jobs for registered midwives and training for local Aboriginal health workers and other community members to provide culturally safe childbirth support across identified communities of need. This will also include expanding the effective, evidence-based Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program from 13 to 15 sites, to enable the program to support more women pregnant with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander baby.

This is in addition to the already significant investment in delivering culturally safe comprehensive primary health care, including pre-conception, antenatal and postnatal care, and ongoing investment in other effective maternal and child health programs. Efforts are being specifically targeted to implement solutions in partnership with those communities that experience high rates of risk factors for low birthweight births. For example, the Commonwealth has committed \$183.7 million in funding up to 2021-22 for the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program, which includes targeted efforts to reduce tobacco use not only during pregnancy, but in young women before they become pregnant.

In the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth announced the removal of employment criteria that excluded some privately practising midwives from the Commonwealth's two medical indemnity schemes: the Midwife Professional Indemnity Scheme (MPIS) and the MPIS Run-Off Cover Schemes. This will provide equity in access to these schemes, including for those employed by ACCHS.

As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth is providing \$15 million over four years from 2021-22 for the 2021 Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mothers and Babies Grant Opportunity. This will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led research that translates existing knowledge to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies have access to culturally-safe care during pregnancy, birthing and the post-natal period. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Targeted Call for Research into Improving Maternal and Child Health in the Early Years is also under development, providing up to \$5 million over five years.

To support pre-natal and infant health, the Commonwealth is continuing to work with the ACCHS sector to address the outbreak of infectious syphilis in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through the Enhanced Response, which includes support for a rapid point of care testing program across 40 ACCHSs and funding for expanded sexual health workforce and programs in 23 ACCHS. Funding for the Enhanced Response includes \$21.1 million from 2017-18 to 2020-21 and approximately \$24 million from 2021-22 to 2023-24 from the IAHP.

Next steps

Achieving this outcome will require targeted investment in actions to address the key determinants of birthweight, including access to culturally safe and consistent antenatal care, maternal smoking, and maternal experience of socio-economic disadvantage and family violence.

Efforts should focus on those at higher risk of having a low-birthweight birth, including mothers who have delayed or irregular access to antenatal care, live in regional and remote areas, experience socio-economic disadvantage, use tobacco during pregnancy, are underweight or have experienced family violence. Data analysis will help inform the key levers of influence and the geographic regions that need the most attention.

The new Health Plan is the overarching policy framework to drive progress against Outcome 2 (see also Outcome 1). The Health Plan includes a focus on healthy babies and children to ensure that these children are provided with the foundations they need to thrive. The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy will also drive progress against Target 2 through a focus on maternal health and wellbeing.



Outcome 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years

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%.

Preschool prepares children to participate in and enjoy learning through and post school, to build language skills, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and engage with their peers, and for parents, aunties, uncles, grandparents and carers to feel confident and empowered to guide and support their children's learning and development. To achieve this Outcome, coordinated whole-of-government effort and investment is required in partnership with families, communities, services and the non-government sector. To build trust, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families also need early childhood education and care delivered in a culturally inclusive and safe way.

Minister responsible

Minister for Education and Youth

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

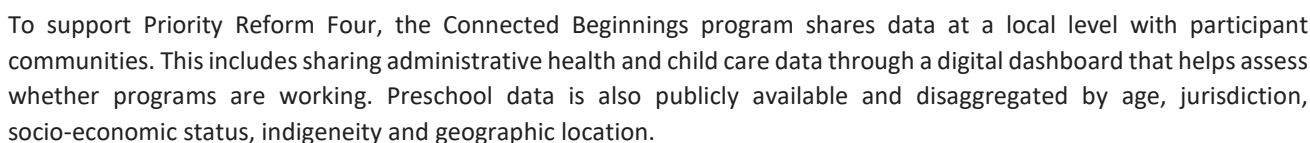
The Commonwealth has existing partnership arrangements with SNAICC for the development of national frameworks and strategies relating to children, including the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy.

In addition, the Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills and Employment has established a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group which includes representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education and care services and peak bodies, that reports to the Early Childhood Education and Care Reference Group (ECECRG). The ECECRG provides a key consultation and engagement mechanism for the Department with the early education and care sector.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Solutions need to focus on building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement with early childhood education and care services, lifting the cultural competency of staff, ensuring services are culturally appropriate, and offering wrap-around services, as well as addressing issues that currently undermine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families' trust in Commonwealth services.

The Commonwealth will continue to work in partnership with SNAICC and representatives from Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and services on the delivery of new and expanded initiatives to ensure the programs align with the Priority Reforms and support community-led decision-making and service delivery by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services. The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that wherever possible, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations lead and manage Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) grant funded child-care services and Connected Beginnings program sites. A current Communities of Practice program for CCCF Restricted providers aims to build capability through education and collaboration, and by providing opportunities to build networks between community-controlled organisations.



Actions

The Commonwealth provides funding to state and territory governments to support access to preschool education through the Universal Access National Partnership Agreement, under which \$453.2 million was committed in 2021. Ongoing funding for preschool education was announced in the 2021-22 Budget. The first four years of funding will be offered to the states through a new \$2 billion Preschool Reform Agreement from 2022 to 2025.

Details of the new agreement are subject to negotiations with state and territory governments, however there will be a focus on working with states and territory governments to increase the enrolment and attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for the next four years.

Expanding place-based initiatives

- \$81.8 million to expand the Connected Beginnings program to 27 extra sites, taking the total number of sites to 50 by 2024-25, and benefiting an additional 8,550 children to support 13,860 children in total
- an additional \$29.9 million to expand the CCCF Restricted program to fund 20 additional high quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child care services and to strengthen community engagement and outreach in existing services to lift the participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- \$9 million towards the establishment of four additional replication sites of the Early Years Education Program, a multi-disciplinary model that offers high quality early education and care, infant mental health and family support, in partnership with families and local community organisations and agencies which assists at risk and disadvantaged children make significant early learning and developmental gains
- \$1.9 million to trial an early learning teaching model that strengthens literacy and numeracy learning in early child education and care settings and undertake an evaluation of the outcomes.

Children's Education and Care National Workforce Strategy

COMMONWEALTH CLOSING THE GAP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 30

appropriate learning environments for all children. The final Strategy and Action Plan will be considered by education ministers in the second half of 2021.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy

Coordination across early education and care by governments is critical to ensuring early years investment makes the most difference to children and families. The Strategy aims to provide a long-term approach to inform future policy and investment to assist children thrive. It will enable stronger collaboration and coordination across governments, and provide the systems and services that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood outcomes. This includes supporting access to quality, culturally appropriate, early childhood development, care and education services. The Strategy will help guide the approach to early life outcomes and enable other national strategies for early childhood education and children to consider the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The Commonwealth is also working in partnership with SNAICC, sector representatives and state and territory governments to develop a Sector Strengthening Plan for the early childhood education and care sector.

Next steps

The preschool enrolment Target is on track to be met. However, sustained effort is required to lift participation levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Targeted investment will need to continue to be supplemented by complementary mainstream and targeted investments from all jurisdictions.

Final details of the new Preschool Reform Agreement are subject to negotiations with state and territory governments. The Commonwealth has commenced negotiations to enable an agreement to be in place by the end of 2021 with funding commencing in 2022. The Commonwealth will work with state and territory governments to establish new attendance performance targets from 2024 and an outcomes measure that will begin in 2025, taking into account each jurisdiction's different starting points. There will be specific focus on this performance target and lifting the attendance rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in preschool, with the targets tied to funding. The revised outcome measure will be instrumental in directing Government effort to where it is needed.

This preschool measure will be supported by the roll out of other measures including the new \$122.6 million package of early childhood education and initiatives, which are further detailed in Outcome 4.

The finalisation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy and Sector Strengthening Plan will occur by the end of 2021.



Outcome 4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years

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%.

A strong start in life provides the necessary foundation for the years ahead. There is a critical window from conception to age five (the first 2000 days) where, more than any other time in life, children's health and wellbeing, development in language and cognitive skills, knowledge and identity can be positively influenced.

Success in the early years underpins all Closing the Gap outcomes as there is strong evidence about the impact of losses and gains during this time and on-going effect over time. Young children thrive in environments where there is a strong connection to culture and community, families have stable and adequate housing and are enabled to provide safe and nurturing home environments, there is access to quality early learning, health and disability issues are identified and treated early, and children are supported by a service system that is place-based, integrated and culturally responsive.

Ministers responsible

Minister for Education and Youth with the Minister for Health and Aged Care and Minister for Families and Social Services

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The actions to strengthen partnerships in Outcome 3 are applicable to Outcome 4. The Commonwealth will work in partnership with SNAICC, NACCHO and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders on the expansion of existing programs and delivery of new measures.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

The actions to embed Priority Reform in Outcome 3 are applicable to Outcome 4.

Actions

Meeting this Outcome will be very challenging. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to meet all five AEDC domains requires coordinated action across portfolios and levels of government, and involves addressing interconnected socio-economic factors like parental income, employment status and education level. Increased access to preschool and child care will support better AEDC outcomes for all children. In addition, there is a need to ensure children who attend early learning have the best chance of being successful in early learning, and to maintain those gains over time.

Child care

The Commonwealth invests in a range of areas which support the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education and care. In 2020-21, \$10.3 billion in funding was provided through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), and associated Child Care Safety Net measures, to help families with the costs associated with child care and support the inclusion of children who experience disadvantage. Safety Net measures include the Additional Child Care Subsidy, which provides additional financial support to supplement the CCS for eligible families, and the Inclusion Support Program, which aims to give children a strong start through access to inclusive and quality early childhood education and care services. Through the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth is investing an additional \$1.7 billion over three years from July 2022 to support families with more than one child with the

cost of child care. In 2022-23 around 250,000 families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait families, will benefit from this measure.

Expanding place-based initiatives

As part of this Implementation Plan, an additional \$122.6 million is being provided from 2021-22 to 2024-25 for a set of initiatives to lift the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in quality and culturally appropriate early childhood education and care services. Building the evidence base of what works in early childhood education and care will enable broader rollout of successful initiatives over time.

Connected Beginnings expansion

The Connected Beginnings program is a place-based initiative aimed at working with community stakeholders to integrate and strengthen access to early childhood education, maternal and child health, and family services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's school readiness. The program connects hard to reach families to services and uses a collective impact approach to ensure goals and strategies are co-designed with community leaders and families, based on evidence of what works in Australia and overseas. The program also promotes data sharing and information at a regional and community level, consistent with Priority Reform Four.

Administrative data shows the program is making a difference and improving outcomes in communities since it commenced in 2017, with:

- an 8% increase in the number of children aged 60-72 months who are fully immunised, from 79% to 87% in 2020
- an increase in child care attendance from 202 hours per year in 2018 to 214 hours per year in 2020, and
- Connected Beginnings sites outperforming the national average for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women receiving their first early antenatal care visit at 13 weeks (45% compared to 33%).

The \$81.8 million program expansion will support an additional 27 communities, taking the total number of sites to 50 by 2024-25 and benefiting an additional 8,550 children, to support 13,860 children in total. Site selection will be informed by analysis of AEDC data, population and socioeconomic data, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder consultation and local community engagement. In each site, a backbone organisation will be funded to work with the local community across existing services to ensure children are safe, healthy and ready to thrive at school by the age of five. The expansion will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a greater say in how the program is delivered to their people, in their own places and on their own country. It will also support a strong community-controlled sector through capacity building and investment, including a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce stream to employ local people.

Community Child Care Fund Restricted expansion

The Commonwealth will expand the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Restricted program in up to 20 additional high quality and mostly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-run child care services, mainly in remote and very remote areas with low or no supply of CCS approved child care. It will also fund the expansion of existing CCCF Restricted services to engage families to increase child care participation and attendance, taking into account higher costs of service delivery in remote areas, training needs for educators and outreach to strengthen community engagement. Analysis shows that there are around twenty, mostly remote, communities where there is a lack of high-quality approved child care, with an estimated 1,200 children (aged 0-4) in these locations, who are eligible for care but currently do not access care. The measure will help reduce barriers to accessing child care including a lack of transport or culturally appropriate services. The overall expansion of the program will benefit up to 3,500 children.

Early Years Education Program expansion

Funding of \$9 million will replicate the Early Years Education Program across four locations in Queensland and Victoria, including in a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander site. The program supports disadvantaged children to bridge the gap to school readiness. The expansion will benefit an estimated 200 children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The program is a multi-disciplinary model aimed at children from birth up to three years of age that offers high quality early education and care, infant mental health and family support. It is delivered in partnership with families and local community organisations and agencies, to help children living with significant stress and social

disadvantage make significant early learning and developmental gains. Findings from the University of Melbourne's interim evaluations of the original site showed significant improvements for children on the key drivers of school readiness, including cognitive skills, resilience, and socio-emotional development. Commonwealth funding will be supplemented by philanthropic and state and territory support.

An early learning teaching trial

Funding of \$1.9 million will support the design, implementation and evaluation of a trial of a new early learning teaching model that strengthens literacy and numeracy learning in early child education and care settings, with a focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as they get ready for school. This measure will be delivered in two selected early childhood education and care services and is expected to benefit up to 200 children and their families, including up to 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The model will be designed to complement the broader play-based curriculum, in line with existing Australian early learning frameworks, which are known to have a significant positive impact on children's early developmental outcomes. International evidence indicates explicit instructional approaches can be more effective for some cohorts to teach specific skills in literacy and numeracy. A US evaluation of explicit instruction found participation in an explicit instruction model and pre-literacy program led to positive improvements in gross motor skills, print-concept knowledge, and alphabet knowledge in 3 to 4-year-old children, with effects amplified for children who experience disadvantage. The trial will draw on this international evidence, along with local expertise on the benefits of different instructional models. The trial will be designed and delivered in partnership with experts and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to ensure the roll out is culturally safe. Consultation will also occur with state and territory governments and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

Improving health outcomes

To improve health outcomes in the early years, there are a number of initiatives underway. The Health Plan has a focus on healthy babies and children (see Outcome 1). The NHMRC is providing approximately \$6 million over five years, beginning in 2019, for four research grants funded through their Targeted Call for Research into Nutrition in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. The NHMRC is also developing a Targeted Call for Research into Improving Maternal and Child Health in the Early Years, providing up to \$5 million over five years, which is expected to open in late 2021.

Next steps

A comprehensive, coordinated approach is required to support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in their early years. New initiatives will work together ensuring maximum participation is met with the best possible models to help children and families address childhood development delays, and will establish a critical foundation for children to get ahead in early childhood and stay ahead in school and beyond.

Formal partnerships with peak bodies, researchers, philanthropy, state and territory governments and other key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders will inform the expansion of Connected Beginnings and approach to the selection of future sites. Once potential sites are identified, a grant process will be undertaken in early 2022 to identify local backbone organisations to manage the program at the local level. Scoping for new CCCF Restricted sites will also be informed by consultation and data on service gaps. Once potential sites are identified, a grant application process will be undertaken in 2022.

Early Years Education Program delivery partners will establish an Institute in 2021 to oversee the roll out and evaluation of new sites. Partners will develop strong relationships with relevant local communities and organisations and will commence a co-design process for the design, implementation and evaluation in a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific site. A process will commence shortly to identify an organisation with relevant early childhood expertise to design the new early learning teaching model. Sites will commence in 2022, informed by consultation with stakeholders.



Outcome 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential

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%.

Education is an important foundation for realising improved outcomes in many aspects of life. Year 12 or an equivalent attainment is particularly critical to supporting entrance into further education pathways and improved employment outcomes. Evidence shows that when supported by strengths-based, high-expectations approaches, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people can thrive in education and be supported to reach their potential. To enable this, school environments must be culturally safe and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures must be valued, respected and visibly present.

While state and territory governments have constitutional responsibility for schooling, funding responsibility is shared with the Commonwealth, and national education policy is agreed by all governments together. While significant progress has been made towards achieving this Outcome, further work is needed to improve attainment of students in regional and remote areas, and to improve the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people upon completing Year 12.

Education ministers' shared goals for education in Australia are underpinned by:

- The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration, which recommits all Australian governments to delivering education systems that promote excellence and equity, and includes a commitment that all students learn about Australia's rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and a commitment that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are empowered to reach their full learning potential
- The National School Reform Agreement 2018–2023 — a joint agreement between the Commonwealth, states and territories, to lift student outcomes across Australian schools — which articulates a set of national policy initiatives and an expectation that parties engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on reforms that impact them. It also includes bilateral schedules with jurisdiction-specific initiatives, including on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Through the Quality Schools package, the Commonwealth is investing a record \$315.2 billion in recurrent schools funding from 2018 to 2029. This package enables education authorities and schools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their full potential, by providing funding to meet their educational needs. Funding includes the base Schooling Resource Standard per student amounts, plus loadings for additional needs, such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading which is estimated to provide \$5.6 billion over the same period. The IAS also provides over \$220 million each year in targeted, complementary funding to improve education outcomes.

Ministers responsible

Minister for Education and Youth and Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, state and territory governments and education authorities to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve the best possible outcomes. The Commonwealth is currently engaging with a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education stakeholders through bi-annual Indigenous Education Consultative Meetings.

The Commonwealth will continue to strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support the achievement of this Outcome. To this end, the Commonwealth has provided funding to establish the National

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Council (NATSIEC). The aim of NATSIEC will be to identify and provide advice on barriers to student attainment, and provide a collective and representative voice on education matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. NATSIEC's establishment will provide a formal engagement mechanism between the Commonwealth and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education representatives. In addition, work is under way to establish a new mechanism to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are informing the education ministers' meetings.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Building a direct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice to the education ministers meetings will involve working through a co-design partnership to develop an advisory mechanism, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives.

The Commonwealth will work with states and territories to reach agreement on data sharing protocols via education ministers meetings under National Cabinet, the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) or the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). This is likely to include what data will be collected, level of geolocation, how data will be disseminated, how it will be used and by whom. This work will help deliver commitments under Priority Reform Four.

A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education is proposed for the work of the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) as part of its mandate to support use of evidence-based practices in all schools. The Commonwealth recognises and values the role teachers play in supporting education achievement and aspiration. This focus of AERO will support teachers' professional practice by ensuring evidence on what works is made readily implementable by teachers.

The Commonwealth recognises the role of cultural capability in teachers' efforts to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Commonwealth has invested \$1.6 million over three years (until 2022) to commission the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to undertake a project investigating how teachers and leaders in schools across Australia can be supported to enhance their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency.

Actions

Education and Indigenous Affairs ministers came together for an inaugural meeting in December 2020 and expressed their commitment to do more to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education outcomes. Recognising this, and respective roles of the Commonwealth and states and territories in education, in 2021 the Commonwealth is coordinating engagement with each state and territory, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education stakeholders.

Scaling Up Success

New funding of up to \$25 million will see the rollout of evidence-based approaches that are successfully addressing key drivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student education outcomes. This measure will focus on expanding access to programs that have already proven to be effective in improving primary school reading outcomes. Expanding access to evidence based instructional and leadership approaches will enable more schools to be responsive to community needs and aspirations.

Building on country boarding schools

The Commonwealth recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote and very remote areas often experience a range of barriers to education success, including limited access to local secondary school options. There are only 21 government secondary schools and 14 non-government secondary schools in remote or very remote locations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students make up a quarter of all boarding students, and the majority of these are from remote and very remote locations. There are not enough boarding places for all remote students, with an increase in demand of more than 40% in recent years.



To help address this issue the Commonwealth will provide more options for local secondary education in remote communities. Funding of \$75 million will be provided to support the construction of three facilities through Studio Schools Australia. Up to 2,080 students will have the opportunity to undertake their secondary schooling on country once the new schools are fully operational.

City-Country Partnerships Fund

A new investment of \$26 million will support new formal partnerships between large, high performing independent schools and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools. This proposal builds on the success of existing school partnerships that have been shown to be a strong mechanism to lift outcomes in remote schools. These partnerships will accelerate progress toward Year 12 or equivalent attainment by improving principal leadership and operational management, and addressing workforce shortages through teacher transfers. These formal partnerships may take different forms, including providing operational leadership, addressing workforce needs, and delivering instructional coaching.

Next steps

Under the Australian Constitution, while funding for school education is shared between national and state and territory governments, responsibility for delivery and regulation of school education rests with state and territory education authorities and governments. Current trajectories suggest meeting the Year 12 attainment Target will be a challenge, and will require concerted effort on the part of all Australian governments. The Commonwealth will continue its work with state and territory governments on education reform. The Commonwealth has supported incorporation of NATSIEC, and will strengthen that relationship over time. This actively supports Priority Reform Two.

The Commonwealth will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and jurisdictions to ensure that the initiatives outlined above are developed and delivered in partnership. The measures are complementary to existing recurrent funding arrangements for school education, and will build the evidence base to support improved outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

On the roll out of new on country boarding schools, work with stakeholders will continue to identify community aspiration, site selection, need and viability, building on existing memoranda of understanding between relevant organisations.

The implementation of the City-Country Partnerships program will occur via the development of guidelines to support a competitive allocation process to identify suitable schools.

Outcome 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways

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%.

Providing more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve higher level qualifications significantly improves employment prospects, as well as outcomes in other areas. Further education can be a useful tool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve meaningful social and economic outcomes at both a personal and community level. This Outcome also depends on gains against Target 5 (Year 12 or equivalent attainment).

The Commonwealth funds universities through the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA). This includes the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) and Commonwealth Supported Places, and supplementary programs to support students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These additional measures include the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), the Indigenous Student Success Program, the Indigenous Regional Low SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF), Regional University Centres, Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships, and the Tertiary Access Payment.

The Commonwealth's considerable investment in skills includes both mainstream and targeted programs designed to increase participation in vocational education and training (VET), including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Commonwealth currently provides around \$1.6 billion to state and territory governments each year to support the delivery of VET under the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development. While it is the responsibility of state and territory governments to operate and fund their own training systems, the Commonwealth works closely with them to ensure the VET sector delivers the skills critical to meeting the needs of employers and learners.

Ministers responsible

Minister for Education and Youth and Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth has a strong relationship with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium (NATSHEC), which is a peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder in the higher education sector. The Commonwealth also engages with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies including the Union of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Postgraduate Association, and the National Indigenous Research and Knowledge Network (NIRAKN).

In the VET sector, while states and territories have a range of partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Commonwealth recognises that there have been limited opportunities to date for national partnerships and engagement. The Commonwealth is actively considering opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on VET governance and advisory bodies. The National Careers Institute is exploring the introduction of a designated position on its Advisory Board, which was established to ensure people have access to accurate and authoritative careers information and support irrespective of their age or career stage.

The Commonwealth will explore opportunities to establish formal partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships with stakeholders in the higher education and VET sectors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student bodies.

During 2021, the Equity in Higher Education Panel, which includes Commonwealth representatives and representatives from NATSIHEC and the university sector, will develop a Student Equity in Higher Education Roadmap, a five year strategy aligned with the reform agenda to drive and support wider aspiration, improved access, participation, retention, success, and completion and better transition to employment outcomes of students from under-represented groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Panel will partner with other stakeholders and peak organisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education to co-design the Roadmap.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Mission Based Compacts for Universities will be negotiated from 2021 to focus universities' attention on the outcomes of the National Agreement and articulate how they will contribute to its achievement. Aligning compacts with the outcomes of the National Agreement can help to influence institutions to offer services or supports to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, in order to help them to complete tertiary qualifications.

To build the evidence base and inform future VET policy and program development, the Commonwealth will undertake a study on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners in the VET system. This study will focus on opportunities and challenges for increasing participation and completion rates in VET, including for Australian apprentices, in close collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, training providers and communities.

Foundation Skills For Your Future Remote Community Pilots will deliver tailored language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills assessment and training in four remote locations across Australia, in partnership with local providers. The pilots will undergo formal evaluation and findings will be shared with participating communities. The information and analysis gathered from the evaluation will help to inform policy design for targeted foundation skills support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, including future program delivery and funding arrangements and changes to existing programs.

Actions

Improving tertiary education outcomes depends on a whole-of-student lifecycle approach that is culturally appropriate, from early childhood through to graduation from VET and university. Achieving Target 6 is dependent on increasing the number of students who successfully complete Year 12 or equivalent education to a level that enables them to aspire to, choose, and succeed in, a tertiary pathway.

University

In order to increase enrolment and completion rates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the Commonwealth provides significant funding to universities. Focusing on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who begin study to complete their qualifications is also critical to achieving this Outcome.

A key Commonwealth reform in higher education is the demand driven program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in rural and remote areas (\$17.1 million from 2020-21 to 2023-24) under the Job-ready Graduates higher education package. From 2021, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in regional and remote Australia will be guaranteed a Commonwealth Supported Place at a university of their choice, when accepted into their chosen course of study. This measure provides a financial incentive for Australia's public universities to increase their numbers of, and support for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This support is also complemented by other assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students such as ABSTUDY and the Away from Base programs.

The HEPPP now has a funding allocation that incentivises universities to increase engagement and participation of regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Commonwealth is working with the education sector to design the new IRLSAF (under the Job-ready Graduates Package), which from 2024 will combine the HEPPP, regional loading, enabling loading and enabling loading to allow universities to use their funding more flexibly to support equity outcomes and best serve the needs of their local communities, supporting more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete higher education. The IRLSAF aspect of the Job-ready Graduates Package signals the Commonwealth's commitment to ensuring Australia's public universities are inclusive of, and provide targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and students from regional and remote areas.

Two of the 25 Commonwealth-funded Regional Universities Centres, the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation and the Wuyagiba Study Hub Aboriginal Corporation, focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Arnhem Land to access higher education while staying in their community. The Centres, which also provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, offer facilities such as study spaces, video conferencing, computing facilities and internet access as well as pastoral and academic support for students studying via distance at any tertiary institution.

Vocational education and training

The Commonwealth provides considerable funding to states and territories for VET delivery as part of the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development, as well as directly funding Commonwealth VET programs, including apprenticeships and traineeships, and foundation skills programs.

The Commonwealth is also working with states and territories on a National Skills Reform Agenda, including negotiating a new National Skills Agreement, revising the standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and developing a VET Workforce Quality Strategy, which will help the VET sector to better support all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete tertiary qualifications. These reforms, along with ongoing support for apprenticeships and traineeships and foundation skills programs, including the Foundation Skills for Your Future Remote Community Pilots, will also contribute to achieving this Outcome.

In the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth is investing an additional \$20.6 million in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program to increase the number of job seekers eligible to access foundation skills training and ensure access for job seekers regardless of where they are located, including in remote locations.

Next steps

During 2021, the Equity in Higher Education Panel will partner with peak organisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education and other stakeholders to co-design the Student Equity in Higher Education Roadmap. Once complete, the Roadmap will inform the design of the new IRLSAF funding model to allow universities to use their funding more flexibly to best serve the needs of their cohorts and local communities, supporting more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete higher education.

In furthering the Commonwealth's actions specific to VET, throughout 2021-22 the Commonwealth will implement measures relating to the SEE program to increase access to foundation skills training by eligible job seekers, regardless of where they are located. This includes access by eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers, including those in remote locations. The Foundation Skills for Your Future Remote Community Pilots will begin from June 2021, with training to be provided through until 30 June 2023.

Alongside negotiations for the new National Skills Agreement, during 2021, the Commonwealth will continue working in conjunction with the skills and training sector to strengthen quality arrangements and supporting resources. This will include the development of skills sets and professional development programs to build the capability of the VET sector to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Work is also underway to improve data collection and sharing, including with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), and through engaging expertise to undertake a study on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the VET system.



Outcome 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are engaged in employment or education

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%.

Increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who are engaged in employment, education or training significantly improves outcomes over the life course, including long-term employment prospects and improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

The actions the Commonwealth will undertake to achieve Outcomes 5, 6 and 8 will also help to achieve Outcome 7. Key challenges to achieving this Outcome include improving participation rates in the later years of schooling, lifting higher education enrolment and completion, and increasing participation in the labour market.

The Commonwealth's considerable investment in skills includes both mainstream and targeted programs designed to increase participation in vocational education and training (VET). The Commonwealth currently provides around \$1.6 billion to state and territory governments each year to support VET delivery under the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development. While it is the responsibility of state and territory governments to operate and fund their own training systems, the Commonwealth works closely with them to ensure the VET sector delivers the skills critical to meeting the needs of employers and learners.

Ministers responsible

Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business and Minister for Education and Youth

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

There are several partnership arrangements in place, as described under Outcomes 5, 6 and 8.

The Commonwealth will build on existing relationships with organisations such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Council (once incorporated), Indigenous Education Consultative Meetings, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium, the Union of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principals Association, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Postgraduate Association, and the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network to deliver education, training and employment supports.

The Commonwealth will also draw on other established mechanisms such as Community Advisory Boards and existing governance structures like those established through the Community Development Program (CDP) and connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders established through the development of the New Employment Services Model (NESM).

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Mainstream employment services are available to support all job seekers (including young people) to help them find work or engage in further education and training. The proposed provider licensing framework for the NESM will provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to apply to deliver services, including potentially as specialist providers. This supports Priority Reform Two.

A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education is proposed for the work of the Australian Education Research Organisation as part of its mandate to use evidence based practices in all schools. This aligns with Priority Reform Three.



Actions

Commonwealth actions are designed to increase the number of available jobs while ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people have the skills and experience to take up these opportunities. State and territory governments have an integral role to play in supporting jobs and local economies and the Commonwealth will work closely with jurisdictions to ensure investment at the state and territory level prioritises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

The Commonwealth is investing \$1.2 billion from 2021-22 over four years to support disadvantaged young people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people get into education or employment (including apprenticeships) through the youth-focused Transition to Work (TtW) service. The service has achieved more than 71,300 job placements since it began in 2016. In January 2018, eligibility for the TtW service was expanded to include all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 15 to 24 years. Evaluations have found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TtW participants were 5.6 percentage points more likely to achieve study outcomes after 52 weeks than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jobactive participants. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants now make up 33.8% of the TtW caseload, with 16,287 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people referred to the service since eligibility was expanded in January 2018.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth who are in prison, the Time to Work Employment Service (TWES) is a national, voluntary, in-prison employment service that aims to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants aged over 18 years prepare for employment on release from prison, and improve their likelihood of connecting with post-release employment services. All TWES providers have experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are required to deliver services to participants in a culturally competent manner, tailored to the needs of the participant.

Ensuring access to higher education will also continue to be a key focus for the Commonwealth. From 2021, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in regional and remote Australia will be guaranteed a Commonwealth supported place at a university of their choice when accepted into their chosen course of study. This measure provides a financial incentive for Australia's public universities to increase their numbers of, and support for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In particular, from 2021, the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) now has a funding allocation that incentivises universities to increase engagement and participation of regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Commonwealth is working with the education sector to design the new Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund (under the Job-ready Graduates Package), which from 2024 will combine the HEPPP, regional loading and enabling loading to allow universities to use their funding more flexibly to support equity outcomes. This support is also complemented by other assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students such as ABSTUDY and the Away from Base programs.

The Commonwealth's ongoing support for VET, providing greater access to foundation skills and courses and ongoing support for apprenticeships and traineeships, and our joint work with the states and territories to strengthen the VET system outlined at Outcome 6, will also contribute to Outcome 7.

Next steps

Based on current trends, Outcome 7 is on track to be achieved. The effect of COVID-19 on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth transitions is not yet visible, but past economic downturns have shown increased engagement in education.

Should Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth unemployment persist during the economic recovery, this may offset any increase in education and training and undermine the achievement of the Outcome. Ongoing investment in youth and mainstream employment services will mitigate this risk.



Outcome 8: Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

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

The enablers of, and barriers to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's participation in employment are complex and intertwined with social, cultural, geographic and economic factors (e.g. access to childcare, educational attainment, health outcomes, incarceration rates, housing, and transport).

Rewarding and sustainable employment opportunities are transformational for individuals, families, and communities. Employment contributes not only to financial and economic security, but also to self-determination and wellbeing. Providing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to engage in employment will enable them to enjoy these benefits.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are thriving in workplaces across Australia, making an important contribution to their families, communities and our nation. To improve employment outcomes, accessible pathways must be built from school to further education and training, and to employment, combined with measures that support stronger labour markets and business development to increase job opportunities.

The Commonwealth has responsibility for the provision of mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific employment services that help connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with employment opportunities. These actions will be underpinned by the Commonwealth maintaining macroeconomic policies that help create the economic conditions that support ongoing increases in employment.

Minister responsible

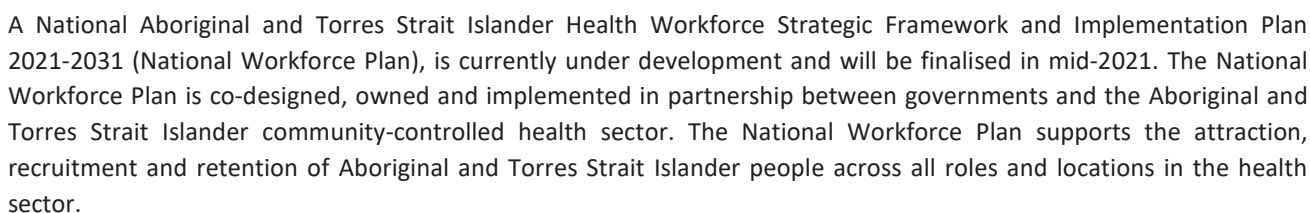
Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth has often undertaken consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to inform policy development and design but recognises the imperative to move toward co-design. The Commonwealth will further develop partnerships with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to ensure initiatives aimed at economic development and employment are more effective.

The Commonwealth is engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in delivering employment services. An example of this is the Community Development Program which has Community Advisory Boards or existing governance structures in each servicing region. The Yarrabah Employment Services Pilot has been co-designed with the Yarrabah community. The Yarrabah Pilot opened its doors to Yarrabah job seekers on 2 July 2018. It has enabled the community to build its capacity to deliver employment services that respond to community needs and aspirations. It serves as an example that the Commonwealth can learn from regarding building community capacity in the sector, and the delivery of place-based approaches.

The development of the New Employment Services Model (NESM) involved extensive consultation, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, as well as independent advice delivered by the Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel (which also included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation).



As outlined in Outcome 7, the proposed provider licensing framework for the NESM aims to increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector taking part in the delivery of employment services. The NESM will also improve the ability of providers to deliver effective personalised assistance tailored to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers. In the pre-employment program ParentsNext, six of the providers at present are also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisations. These support Priority Reform Two.

Actions

The Commonwealth is responsible for various supply and demand-side initiatives, including the Indigenous Business Sector Strategy, the Indigenous Procurement Policy and the Indigenous Employment and Supplier-Use Infrastructure Framework that aim to increase employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and stimulate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business participation in the economy. The Commonwealth also invests in mainstream employment services, such as jobactive, CDP and Disability Employment Services (DES), which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers across urban, regional and remote Australia.

The Commonwealth is transforming the employment services sector. The NESM is replacing jobactive from July 2022. The proposed licensing framework for the NESM includes specialist providers for identified cohorts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and all providers will be required to develop servicing strategies that reflect the local community in which they operate.

As announced in the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth is co-designing a new remote engagement program with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and key stakeholders to better fit the changing job market and meet the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers to transition into sustainable employment in remote communities. The new remote engagement program will replace the CDP in 2023. Initial piloting of the new program will take place in up to four locations from the second half of 2021.

The new Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) will support pathways to meaningful and sustainable employment through flexible, place-based investment. Self-employment initiatives, such as the New Business Assistance with New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), helps people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to start and run their small businesses by providing free accredited training, personalised mentoring and NEIS Allowance (if eligible).



Jobseekers are also able to access support to gain work experience (for example, through Work for the Dole and the National Work Experience Programme, and Youth Jobs PaTH) or move to another area to take up a job (Relocation Assurances to Take-up a Job). Other employment services also support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's employment outcomes such as ParentsNext and Transition to Work.

The Local Jobs Program, which commenced in late 2020 in response to COVID-19, is being expanded from 25 employment regions to all 51 employment regions across Australia. The program is also being extended to finish on 30 June 2025. Each region will establish a Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce, which may include representation from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. These Taskforces will establish a Local Jobs Plan, which identifies key employment and training priorities for their region, and almost all regions have identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment as a focus area. The Local Recovery Fund is available in each region to support activities that address the priorities in the Local Jobs Plans. The Local Jobs Program will also contribute to progress towards Outcome 7, as a number of the employment regions have identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth employment and training as a key priority.

The TWES is a national, voluntary, in-prison employment service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which aims to prepare participants for employment on release from prison. All TWES providers have experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are required to deliver services to participants in a culturally competent manner, tailored to their needs.

The National Workforce Plan will create job opportunities in the health sector for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, support both current and future job-readiness through strengthened training and education opportunities, and contribute to the building of a culturally safe health system to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Next steps

Achieving this Outcome will be heavily influenced by the nature and extent of the ongoing economic recovery from COVID-19, combined with the effectiveness of supports to help increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander labour force participation and employment. On the supply side, the development of the NESM, scheduled to begin in July 2022, is expected to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes in the coming years.

However, employment services alone cannot close the gap and ongoing employment growth combined with improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational attainment will be required. Consistent with Priority Reform One, the Commonwealth will pursue any potential opportunities for co-design with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on actions to support the achievement of this Outcome.



Outcome 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs

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

Housing is a key determinant of wellbeing, with adequate housing universally recognised as part of the right to an adequate standard of living. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access adequate housing underpins other socio-economic outcomes and provide a foundation for progress against other targets. Living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing supports health, wellbeing and safety.

While progress has been made to reduce overcrowding in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander home ownership, action towards meeting this Outcome is important to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to secure appropriate housing.

The Commonwealth understands housing is fundamental to the welfare of all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Commonwealth has a number of initiatives to improve housing and homelessness outcomes. In 2021-22, this includes an expected \$5.3 billion through Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) to help eligible Australians on welfare pay their rent, and around \$1.6 billion to states and territories through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA). Overall, the Commonwealth expects to spend around \$9 billion to improve housing and homelessness outcomes.

Minister responsible

Minister for Housing, Homelessness, Social and Community Housing

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Housing has been identified as an area for a collaborative approach as one of the joint policy partnerships to be established under Priority Reform One of the National Agreement. This policy partnership will bring together the Commonwealth, states and territories, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to identify opportunities to work more effectively across governments to achieve positive housing outcomes. This policy partnership will be established in 2022.

In addition, the community-controlled housing sector is one of the priority areas for the development of a Sector Strengthening Plan. This Plan is being developed by governments with the community-controlled housing sector and will be provided to Joint Council in April 2022.

To help address high levels of overcrowding in the Northern Territory, and improve the health and quality of remote Northern Territory housing, the Commonwealth is investing \$550 million over five years, matched by the Northern Territory Government, to create the \$1.1 billion National Partnership for Remote Housing in the Northern Territory (NPRHNT). Under the NPRHNT, the Northern Territory Land Councils have an oversight role over the investment and, through the Northern Territory's Local Decision Making policy, provide for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice at all levels of housing delivery, from tenants to decisions of strategy and policy.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Housing is one of the four key sectors identified under Priority Reform Two, building the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to enable them to deliver housing services. The Commonwealth, and

states and territories, have committed funding to build the capacity of the community-controlled sector and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies will lead the development of the housing Sector Strengthening Plan.

Actions

The Commonwealth is working with jurisdictions to ensure the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are met. In 2021-22 the Commonwealth expects to spend around \$9 billion to help improve housing and homelessness outcomes for all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes:

- \$1.6 billion through the NHHA
- an estimated \$5.3 billion in CRA to help eligible income support recipients pay their rent
- \$254 million on the National Rental Affordability Scheme to improve affordability in the private rental market.

Additionally, the Commonwealth is working through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation to increase the supply of affordable housing and increase home ownership rates, and through the NPRHNT to increase social housing in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.

National Housing and Homelessness Agreement

Under the NHHA, the Commonwealth and jurisdictions share responsibility for housing, homelessness and housing affordability. However, states and territories are responsible for determining priorities and the type and locations of services funded, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. States and territories also make decisions about social housing, including the building, allocation and refurbishment of dwellings. Under the NHHA states and territories are required to match homelessness funding and have a publicly available homelessness strategy. Homelessness strategies in each jurisdiction must address a range of priority cohorts listed in the NHHA, and outline reforms or initiatives contributing to a reduction in the incidence of homelessness. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a priority homelessness cohort under the NHHA.

Housing affordability and home ownership

The Commonwealth invests in programs targeted at housing affordability and home ownership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes the Indigenous Home Ownership Program (IHOP), delivered through Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) to provide low-deposit, low-interest home loans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who face barriers to accessing mainstream finance. The Commonwealth recently provided \$150 million in additional funding to IBA to deliver 360 new housing construction loans in regional Australia. Additionally, as announced in the 2021-22 Budget, eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to a range of Commonwealth programs (new or extended) to improve the affordability of home ownership. This includes the HomeBuilder Scheme, Family Home Guarantee, the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme and the First Home Super Saver Scheme.

Further, Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) provides safe, comfortable and culturally appropriate accommodation services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who must live away from home to access services and economic opportunities. This includes short-stay, health and educational accommodation as well as specialised homelessness services.

Next steps

The Productivity Commission will begin a review of the NHHA in 2021, which will help inform discussions with states on any future housing arrangements designed to support housing and homelessness outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including those with disability. This review will present an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on the NHHA, including about whether it adequately addresses the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Outcome 10: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not over-represented in the criminal justice system

Target 10: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15%.

As the majority of prisoners in Australia are incarcerated for state and territory offences, achieving this Outcome will rely on action by state and territory governments, as each administers its own criminal justice system including policing activities, criminal laws and bail and sentencing practices.

Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system is a complex and multifaceted issue, compounded by high levels of disadvantage. As outlined in the Pathways to Justice report¹, a range of social and economic issues, including child removal, youth detention, child abuse, substance misuse, family violence, low educational attainment, mental and physical health issues, disability, homelessness, unemployment and intergenerational and childhood trauma are all conduits for engagement with the criminal justice system and therefore contribute to high incarceration rates. Further, the increasing rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women has particular implications for families and communities.

To achieve this Outcome, the Commonwealth's approach will need to address the contributing factors listed above, along with addressing the specific issues in the justice sector. This includes ensuring gender diversity and disability needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are embedded into actions. Progress towards all other targets will assist the achievement of the broader justice outcomes. Most significantly, progress towards the targets related to out-of-home care (Target 12) and family violence (Target 13) will significantly assist in achieving the outcomes as the drivers of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are wide-ranging and complex. Progress on targets that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health and wellbeing, education and employment outcomes will also benefit justice outcomes.

Ministers responsible

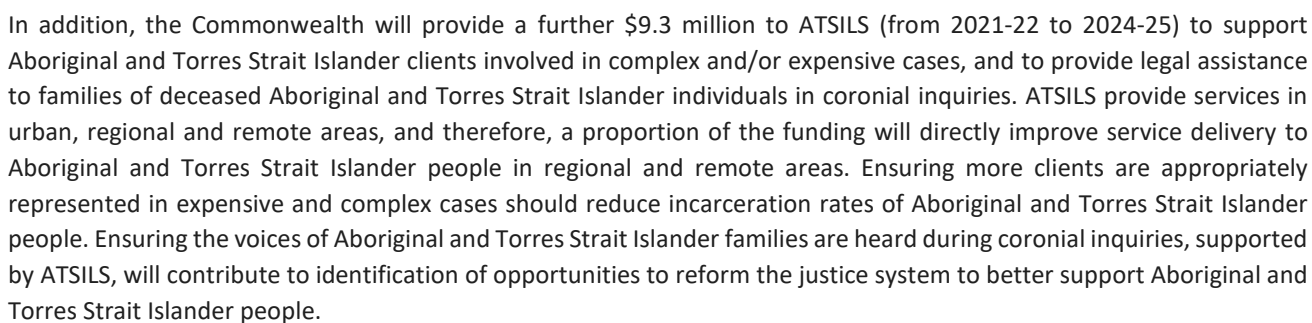
Attorney-General and Minister for Indigenous Australians

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

A strong partnership between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is key to identifying, prioritising and implementing actions to reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in detention. Under Priority Reform One, a Justice Policy Partnership will be established between the Commonwealth, states and territories, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives in recognition of the enduring nature of the issue and collaborative effort required. This partnership will build new and strengthen existing partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies, organisations and mainstream institutions and organisations. The Joint Council agreed on 16 April 2021, to bring forward the establishment of the Justice Policy Partnership. It will now be established in 2021, rather than 2022. The Commonwealth has committed up to \$7.6 million over three years to directly support the Justice Policy Partnership.

The Commonwealth is committed to supporting solutions that meet the needs of at risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that build on the strength of communities, address intergenerational trauma and support community-led approaches to healing.

¹ Pathways to Justice - An Inquiry into the Incarceration Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Australian Law Reform Commission 2018



The Commonwealth will invest an additional \$8.3 million over three years (between 2021-22 and 2023-24) to provide culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. This will assist to reduce the barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families face with mainstream services and ensure that services provided are community-driven and trauma-informed. Assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, including those experiencing complex issues to achieve safe and functional care arrangements for children and improved family functioning post-separation, should support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children to live their lives in safety and with dignity. This should also contribute to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adults in both the child protection and criminal justice systems.

Implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment

Next steps

The Commonwealth will work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, the Coalition of the Peaks and the states and territories to establish a Justice Policy Partnership in 2021. The Partnership provides an opportunity for the Commonwealth to demonstrate leadership in achieving Outcomes 10 and 11, notwithstanding its limited levers to achieve direct change.

Outcome 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not over-represented in the criminal justice system

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

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are almost exclusively imprisoned for state and territory offences, such as public order offences and theft. As such, meeting this Outcome will rely heavily on state and territory government action, as they administer their own criminal justice systems, including policing activities, criminal laws and sentencing practices.

Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system is a complex and multifaceted issue, compounded by high levels of disadvantage. As outlined at Outcome 10, a range of social and economic issues are drivers of engagement with the criminal justice system.

Youth justice outcomes can be achieved through supporting positive pathways into adulthood for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families. This involves ensuring those most at risk of entering the criminal justice system are provided the support they need to thrive in their early years, with strong connections to family, culture, community and country, and access to a culturally safe education.

To achieve this Outcome, together with Outcome 10, the Commonwealth's approach will need to address the contributing factors, along with addressing the specific issues within the justice sector. Progress towards all other targets will assist the achievement of the broader justice outcomes as the drivers of the incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are wide-ranging and complex. Most significantly, progress towards the targets related to out-of-home care (Target 12) and family violence (Target 13) will assist in achieving justice outcomes. Targets that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health and wellbeing, education and employment outcomes will also extend to benefit the justice outcomes.

Ministers responsible

Attorney-General and Minister for Indigenous Australians

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

A strong partnership between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is key to identifying, prioritising and implementing actions to reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people held in detention. Under Priority Reform One, a Justice Policy Partnership will be established between the Commonwealth, states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives as outlined under Target 10. This partnership will also consider youth justice issues.

Actions

The Commonwealth is committed to working with state and territory governments to identify and address the drivers of the incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their jurisdictions and constitutional remits. The Commonwealth will continue to develop practical measures to decrease the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth held in detention within its remit that complement jurisdictions' actions to achieve this Outcome.

The establishment of the Justice Policy Partnership will enable a focus on ways to reduce incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and youth. The partnership will bring together the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to identify ways to achieve Outcomes 10 and 11. Alongside the partnership, the Commonwealth is continuing to fund activities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice outcomes and to reduce the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth incarceration rate.



Addressing the drivers of incarceration

Many actions outlined in this Implementation Plan address the drivers that lead to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Actions set out in Target 10 also apply to this Target.

Early childhood education is a key protective factor for preventing youth offending. As outlined at Outcome 3, government coordination across early childhood education and care is critical to ensuring investment in the early years makes the most difference to children and families. The new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy will provide a long-term approach, refocus policy and existing investment, and enable stronger collaboration and coordination across portfolios, the early childhood system and, most importantly, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children in their early years. This strategy will contribute to positive change in this Outcome.

The IAS funds activities that enable children to thrive, strengthen families and support healing. The IAS Safety and Wellbeing Program funds measures that aim to reduce the youth incarceration rate (over \$261.3 million funding to be provided in 2021-22). These include youth diversionary activities, Community Night Patrols and Custody Notification Services. The Safety and Wellbeing Program also supports youth through-care services that provide intensive case management to those in prison or detention, starting pre-release and continuing post-release to address the underlying causes of offending and prevent re-offending. These activities complement efforts by states and territories to improve justice outcomes.

Specialist legal services

The initiatives outlined at Target 10 apply to this Outcome.

Implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment

The initiative outlined at Target 10 applies to this Outcome.

Next steps

The Commonwealth will work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, the Coalition of the Peaks and the states and territories to establish a Justice Policy Partnership in 2021. The Commonwealth considers the Partnership provides an opportunity for the Commonwealth to demonstrate leadership in achieving the adult and youth justice outcomes, notwithstanding its limited levers to achieve direct change.



Outcome 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not over-represented in the child protection system

Target 12: By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45%.

The Commonwealth is committed to transforming the way it works with states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their organisations and communities to improve outcomes and life trajectories for children at risk of entering, or already in, the child protection system.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people benefit from having strong links to family, culture, country and community. Improving outcomes for children in out-of-home care is likely to result in improvements in safety and wellbeing, educational attainment and youth incarceration rates. Core to achieving Target 12 is strengthening early interventions for those who are considered at risk of entering out-of-home care to stop them entering the system in the first place, and supporting those who have already experienced harm to reduce intergenerational trauma and impacts.

While state and territory governments are responsible for statutory child protection systems, the Commonwealth provides national leadership, and will work with the states and territories to reduce child abuse and neglect through *Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031* (National Framework).

The Commonwealth also delivers universal support and services to help families raise their children, along with a range of targeted early intervention services to families and children. This includes family support payments, child care subsidies, Medicare, employment services, child and parenting support services, family relationship services and the family law system.

Minister responsible

Minister for Families and Social Services

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

To deliver tangible and sustained improvements in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, governments must share decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. States and territories are primarily responsible for child protection, and therefore have the lead in recalibrating the partnership approach to out-of-home care, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families and the broader community benefit.

The Commonwealth, state and territory governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders have collaborated on the development of the new National Framework to ensure that Target 12 is a key priority, recognising that everyone has a role to play in ensuring Australia's children and young people are safe and well.

The Commonwealth is working closely with SNAICC, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and experts, and state and territory governments to co-design a range of national frameworks and strategies, including development of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy and the new National Framework. The implementation plans for these strategies will include specific actions and measures to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in child protection systems, and work towards achieving this Outcome.

The co-design process will also inform ongoing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance structures for the implementation of the National Framework, where the Commonwealth is expected to enter into a formal partnership

with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations by May 2022. The formal partnership will empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share decision-making with governments at a national level, and work alongside governments to co-develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific policies.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

The Sector Strengthening Plans outlined in Priority Reform Two will support the achievement of Target 12. Through the co-design process, partners will agree how the successor plan to the National Framework will address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, for example, how to build the community-controlled child and family sector, transform relevant government organisations and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make informed decisions.

The Commonwealth is considering options to improve how it adopts advice and shares decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities on mainstream policies, particularly to ensure all policies and programs relating to this Outcome are culturally appropriate and safe.

Actions

Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031

In collaboration with the states and territories, the National Framework is the key mechanism for the Commonwealth to address Target 12, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people being a key focus. Aligning the National Framework with work underway for other relevant socio-economic targets of the National Agreement will also be a key consideration.

To drive strategic coordination, community services ministers agreed on 9 April 2021 to four priorities for the successor plan to the National Framework:

- addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems
- a national approach to early intervention and targeted support for children and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage – this includes strengthening the interface between services across jurisdictions including disability, early childhood education and care, health and mental health, drug and alcohol, domestic violence, justice, housing and employment service systems
- improved information sharing, data development and analysis, and
- strengthening child and family sector workforce capability.

Community services ministers have also agreed that there will be a focus on children and young people with disability, and parents and carers with disability under the successor plan. Disability will be a key consideration when developing the first five-year implementation plan for the successor plan and the disability sector will be engaged in its development.

Consultation and co-design processes are underway to inform the National Framework's outcomes and actions. Importantly, this will support embedding the four Priority Reforms in the successor plan and actions in the two, five-year implementation plans. This includes considering how the Commonwealth can work together to strengthen partnerships and shared decision-making, and build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector.

The Commonwealth is also developing the new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy that will support children to thrive in their early years across a range of priority areas including safety, family support, education, health and connection to culture. This strategy is being developed in partnership with SNAICC, recognising the critical role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must have in the design and development process.

New measures

To deliver on Target 12 in line with the Priority Reforms, the Commonwealth is delivering a package of four new measures to support the first Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

- Funding over five years to improve multidisciplinary responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with multiple and complex needs, by redesigning service models to effectively respond to multiple and interrelated issues in families (such as family violence, mental and physical health problems, substance use and disability) that may lead to child abuse and neglect. This includes embedding the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the service model re-design. This funding is subject to state and territory governments agreeing to participate in implementing the redesigned service models.
- \$7.7 million over three years to develop the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous child and family sector workforce engaged through the Department of Social Services grant funding in prevention and early intervention services in the child and family support sector working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.
- \$3.2 million over two years to assess the needs of, increase the involvement of, and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations in the child and family sector.
- \$38.6 million over three years from 2021-22 for an Outcomes and Evidence Fund to support the commissioning and implementation of outcome-based funding. Proposals initiated by ACCOs (preferred) or other local service delivery partners for addressing the Targets will be sought and assessed, with suitable proposals subsequently co-designed between government and selected ACCOs. If co-design results in a mutually agreed proposal, the Department of Social Services will enter into funding agreements for successful projects. The funding models for successful projects will include outcome-based payments to incentivise service delivery and develop evidence of what works to facilitate transformational change and deliver tangible, improved outcomes.

Child protection

The Commonwealth is working with the community-controlled sector, particularly SNAICC which has been provided funding for a range of activities including:

- the development of a guide to support implementation of the Child Placement Principle
- delivery of workshops to support children and family sector practitioners and policy makers to develop strategies to improve their implementation of the Child Placement Principle
- documenting emerging best practice and successful models in early intervention and prevention through consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, and
- compliance reviews of state and territory government implementation of the Child Placement Principle.

Prioritisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle indicators in data development will continue. The Commonwealth will also finalise the Department of Social Services review of the Families and Children Activity, including consideration of how it could better improve outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The Commonwealth, through the Department of Social Services, is extending and reforming family and children grants under the Families and Children Activity worth more than \$290 million per year. These extensions of up to five years to 30 June 2026 will provide continued early intervention and support for disadvantaged families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

The Commonwealth is working with the South Australian Government on a social impact investing initiative tailored to families of young children aged six and under on temporary care orders aimed at successfully returning children to their families. Three centres will be established in Adelaide in outer-northern metro (Smithfield), inner north/west (Kilburn) and south (Noarlunga).

The Commonwealth's additional investment of \$8.3 million over three years (between 2021-22 and 2023-24) to provide culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations will also help assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, including those experiencing complex issues, to achieve safe and functional care arrangements for children.



Next steps

The new National Framework is expected to be agreed in mid-2021. The Commonwealth, state and territory governments will continue working in partnership with SNAICC, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group and other stakeholders to develop the actions and measures of success for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific five-year implementation plan of the new National Framework. It is expected that the implementation plan will be agreed by the end of 2021.

Delivering the new measures included in this Plan will help drive better outcomes under this Target and support achievements made under the new National Framework.



Outcome 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe

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 by at least 50%, as progress towards zero.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children have the right to live their lives in safety and with dignity. Prioritising cultural healing, family restoration and the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through community driven, trauma-informed services is key to breaking cycles of violence where they exist.

Control, discrimination, racism and intergenerational trauma are significant drivers of family violence. Over the life of this Implementation Plan, policies and programs relating to family safety will focus on reducing all forms of family violence and abuse against women and children. Particular focus on young people as a cohort is critical given they have their own needs and perspectives when it comes to experiences of family violence, and their experiences are formative in guiding their future attitudes and behaviours.

The new National Plan to End Violence against Women and their Children (the National Plan) will be the primary mechanism for implementation of Target 13. Implementation of the National Plan is a shared commitment between Commonwealth and state and territory governments.

The Commonwealth aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to make choices that will protect and promote their own and their families' long-term physical, emotional and cultural safety to work towards breaking the cycle of trauma and violence. The Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) report, informed by an extensive nation-wide consultation process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls was finalised in 2020. The Women's Voices report elevates the diverse lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls and provides recommendations, calls to action and priorities that will be used to inform the future policy direction of all targets across the National Agreement, including this Target.

Minister responsible

Minister for Families, Social Services and Women's Safety and the Minister for Women

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

To deliver tangible and sustained improvements in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities, the Commonwealth will partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations and subject matter experts to guide the development and implementation of strategies to reduce all forms of family violence and sexual violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence will work in partnership with governments to inform responses to Target 13 and determine the strategies in the new National Plan. The Advisory Council will work with the National Federation Reform Council (NFRF) Taskforce on Women's Safety, co-chaired by the Minister for Families and Social Services and the Minister for Women, with membership of all state and territory women's safety ministers. The Taskforce represents joint commitment of the Commonwealth, states and territories to work in partnership on women's safety, including development of the new National Plan.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

The Commonwealth will continue to progress its approach to developing policies and delivering programs through shared decision-making and in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Actions

National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children

Improving women's safety, economic security, wellbeing and prosperity requires a culture of dignity and respect. In the 2021-22 Budget the Commonwealth committed \$1.1 billion to the 'towards zero' target to end violence against women and children. This historic investment in women's safety measures will build on the work of the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan, and ensure a seamless transition to a new National Plan to end violence against women and children, starting in July 2022.

Violence takes many forms including physical, psychological, emotional and financial. The National Plan recognises the different types of violence experienced by women and children and has focused on reducing family, domestic and sexual violence. Measures in this Budget build on the National Plan including improved support to assist women experiencing or escaping family and domestic violence, investments in the family law system, increased primary prevention and education efforts to change behaviours and attitudes.

The new National Plan has been identified as the primary mechanism for governments to address Target 13. The Commonwealth has commenced consultation for the new National Plan which is set to commence in July 2022. The Commonwealth will work in partnership with the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence announced as part of the 2021-22 Budget, to guide the development and implementation of the new National Plan. The Commonwealth will also work with states and territories to develop measures under the new National Plan.

As part of the transitional strategy towards the new National Plan, in the 2021-22 Budget the Commonwealth is investing an additional \$26 million to improve the safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women seeking support and legal assistance, including by: expanding the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services program to address critical service gaps; improving the quality and capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family safety organisations; and enhancing the cultural safety of non-Indigenous family safety organisations.

National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse

In late 2021, Australian governments will release the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse, to prevent, detect and respond to child sexual abuse committed in Australia, online, and by Australians overseas. The Commonwealth is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to implement all measures under the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse, and to ensure its alignment with other national policy frameworks, such as the current and new National Plan, and the National Agreement. In the 2021-22 Budget, \$146 million in initial funding for this work was announced, including \$10.9 million in new funding to co-design place-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing approaches to support survivors of child sexual abuse. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Expert Advisory Group will provide expert advice and oversight of design and implementation.

Disability

In response to the Disability Royal Commission highlighting that women with a disability experience higher levels of all forms of violence, the Commonwealth is investing \$9.3 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to develop resources that aim to reduce violence against women and girls with disability, and improve service responses when violence occurs. Although this initiative does not specifically focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, investment in this area will benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children as they experience higher levels of violence and have a higher prevalence of disability.

Data development

The Partnership recognises there is no single data point or source that currently could be used to measure progress toward this Target. Rather multiple data sources are needed to truly understand and respond to the complex nature of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. Initial actions under this Target seek to address this. Data development actions under the new National Plan will prioritise strengthening the evidence base by gathering information and conducting research on violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, and

increasing reporting and in-depth analyses on the prevalence and incidence of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.

As part of its commitment to data development, under the 2021-22 Budget the Commonwealth will invest \$31.6 million over five years to establish the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personal Safety Survey through the ABS. The new survey will be a key primary national collection of family, domestic and sexual violence statistics. This survey will include and identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. This will form a significant part of the evidence base on violence against women and children and address the gap in data on violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Before the new National Plan begins, the Commonwealth will canvass ways to improve jurisdictional data collection and reporting for better comparability across the states and territories, working towards national consistency where possible. The Commonwealth is establishing a comprehensive data and reporting system on family, domestic and sexual violence. An integrated data asset will involve the sharing, linking and access to de-identified data from a wide range of sources.

Family Violence Prevention Legal Services

The Commonwealth is funding the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (\$17 million over 2021-22 and 2022-23, in addition to the core funding of \$75 million for 2020-23) to provide expanded family safety services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their families. These programs will address the critical need to expand the program to areas where services are needed but do not currently exist and improve the quality of support through additional non-legal wraparound support to clients and community legal education.

Other supports

The Commonwealth will continue to build on the evidence base for culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific approaches to victim and perpetrator support, including evaluation of programs. Through the IAS, the Commonwealth will continue to fund activities to reduce harm from alcohol and other drug use, provide victim support and improve the overall health and wellbeing of communities.

The new measures announced under Target 12 will also support outcomes under this Target, in particular the measure to improve multidisciplinary responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children with multiple and complex needs and the Outcomes and Evidence Fund.

The Commonwealth's additional investment of \$8.3 million over three years (between 2021-22 and 2023-24) to provide culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations will also assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, women and children who are experiencing domestic and family violence.

Next steps

The next steps to establish the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personal Safety Survey include planning discussions between the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the ABS and the establishment of a memorandum of understanding arrangement. The ABS will partner with DSS and representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to work through the scope and decisions that will need to be made. The ABS will also review existing processes that may be used from other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focussed surveys to make the field collection efficient and manage respondent burden.

The next steps for the integrated data asset include planning discussions. DSS has approached partner agencies to plan and establish the development of the integrated data asset, and held initial discussions. DSS will also identify and establish an agreement with a suitably qualified organisation to deliver the integrated data asset.

The Commonwealth is working with key stakeholders to establish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence.

The above measures will inform the development of the new National Plan, which will include specific consideration of family violence in the context of the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.



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

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

Social and emotional wellbeing is the foundation for physical and mental health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is a holistic concept that recognises the importance of connection to land, culture, spirituality and ancestry, and the interrelated nature of these factors. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities have a right to be socially and emotionally well, and be supported by mental health and other services that are effective, high quality, clinically and culturally appropriate, and affordable.

Trauma-aware and healing-informed approaches must be tailored for diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes ensuring they are empowered to determine and drive care delivery, and to control their social and emotional wellbeing outcomes. Strong, safe and resilient families are key to ensuring a solid foundation for social and emotional wellbeing throughout the life course. This includes a focus on building strong relationships by embedding the cultural significance of kinship, family and community.

Minister responsible

Minister for Health and Aged Care

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The 2016 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project Report tells us that partnerships and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, Elders and communities is a common success factor in community-based interventions or responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide. This ensures that solutions are built on a solid foundation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's strengths and cultures, and promote what healing means to them.

The Commonwealth will continue to partner at the national level with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in mental health, suicide prevention and social and emotional wellbeing. In addition, the Commonwealth has an existing funding arrangement with Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia, the new national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national leadership body for social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention. Gayaa Dhuwi is governed and controlled by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and peak bodies working in these areas, promoting collective excellence in mental health care.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

Consistent with Outcome 1, the role of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) continues to be strengthened to deliver and coordinate culturally safe and responsive mental health and suicide prevention services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Partnership with community-controlled health services at the local level will also be embedded to ensure that services targeted at the population level are culturally safe and equipped to deliver responses specific to the needs of communities.

The Commonwealth will continue to work with communities to better understand how the design and delivery of mental health and suicide prevention services can best meet their needs. This includes ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a say in determining their own priorities and solutions and have access to relevant data at the regional and local level to help inform decision-making on mental health and suicide prevention.

- \$12 million to maintain local initiatives across Australia at the former national suicide prevention trial sites, including two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific sites
- \$30.5 million for a national survey to measure, for the first time, the prevalence of mental ill health in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, and
- \$8.3 million to support greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the mental health workforce through 20 additional mental health-specific scholarships, and providing training to support healthcare workers to deliver culturally safe care.

The Commonwealth has supported the implementation and evaluation of 12 suicide prevention trial sites in identified priority areas. Trials in the Kimberley and Darwin regions are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific, and five other trial sites have a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Primary Health Networks (PHNs) were funded to lead trial site activity, and are actively engaged with communities, local governments and service providers to ensure that trial activities are focused on local needs. The Kimberley and Darwin trial sites have developed a coordinated and culturally appropriate suicide prevention model that is locally driven and locally owned.

Through the Indigenous Australians Health Programme (IAHP), the Commonwealth is also investing funding to PHNs to administer the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health program, which aims to improve access to culturally appropriate mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2019-20, \$29.1 million was allocated to PHNs for the commissioning of these services, of which \$20.7 million was provided to ACCHS. For the period 2016-17 to 2022-23, a total of \$201.6 million has been allocated to this activity.

New investment to expand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug services outlined in Outcome 1 will also support achievement of this Outcome.

Funding for healing

The Commonwealth recognises that many of the issues impacting outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including health and wellbeing, stem from past government policies of forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The trauma caused by these past policies has led to Stolen Generations survivors and their descendants experiencing worse health and wellbeing outcomes than other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Supporting intergenerational healing will positively impact the health and wellbeing of Stolen Generations survivors, their families and communities.

The Commonwealth is committing \$378.6 million over five years for a financial and wellbeing redress scheme for living Stolen Generations survivors who were removed as children from their families in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory prior to their respective self-government and the Jervis Bay Territory. This scheme will provide practical support for Stolen Generations survivors to address their often complex health needs.

The Commonwealth, through the IAS, is also investing funding of over \$51.7 million in 2021-22 to deliver social and emotional wellbeing services and workforce development. This includes Link-Up services to provide counselling, family tracing and reunion services to members of the Stolen Generations and support to the Healing Foundation for healing projects.

Next steps

To ensure strong governance, by 2022 the Joint Council on Closing the Gap will establish a joined up policy approach to social and emotional wellbeing between the Commonwealth, states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. The Commonwealth will also explore the potential to better target IAS social and emotional wellbeing funding to achieve outcomes under this Outcome and advance the Priority Reforms.

Furthermore, the Commonwealth will work closely with the states and territories to fully realise the recommendations of the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health and the National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Report. The majority of these recommendations require collaboration with state and territory governments, with a number to be pursued jointly through a new National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement.

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

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

Target 15b: By 2030, a 15% increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in the sea.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's connection to their land and waters is central to their spiritual and cultural identity and the wellbeing and health of their communities. Promoting and facilitating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to manage country and enjoy their rights to land and waters will contribute to social, cultural, environmental and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities.

Approximately 52% of all land in Australia now has a recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interest (under the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) or Commonwealth or state statutory land rights regimes). A further 20% is subject to native title claims. There are also 40 outstanding claims under the *Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* (ALRA), as well as other claims under state land rights regimes.

Land and water rights in Australia are subject to different Commonwealth, state and territory legal regimes. The Commonwealth's actions complement the actions of the states and territories. The states and territories are generally the primary respondents to native title determination applications and also lead on land claims and grants under their respective land rights regimes.

The Commonwealth plays a key role in ensuring the native title system operates effectively to facilitate claims resolution and agreement making, and is responsible for the ALRA.

Minister responsible

Minister for Indigenous Australians and Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth plays a facilitation role in bringing together stakeholders in the native title sector to develop and implement native title policy, including by working closely with (and providing funding for) the sector's peak body, the National Native Title Council (NNTC). The Commonwealth is working with the NNTC and native title corporations Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) to consider options to improve PBC capacity and support native title holders to better manage their lands and waters, and enjoy their native title rights and interests. The Commonwealth will work with PBCs and the NNTC to develop shared reform priorities.

Under the ALRA, the Commonwealth is working with the Northern Territory Land Councils and Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Advisory Committee to ensure Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory have a say in how ABA grant funding is spent. The Commonwealth is also working with the Northern Territory Land Councils and the ABA Advisory Committee to provide ABA funding to Northern Territory community organisations.

A co-design process with the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council (WBACC) is underway to consider amending the *Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Grant (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986* (Land Grant Act) to encourage local decision-making

and enable best practice governance arrangements for the benefit of members. Separately, the Land Grant Act allows for further grants of Jervis Bay Territory land to WBACC and a process is underway to consider available parcels of land.

The Commonwealth funds a national network of 15 Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers (NTRBs-SPs) and the four Northern Territory Land Councils. These bodies provide assistance and representation to native title claimants, native title holders and traditional owners in the Northern Territory. The Commonwealth works closely with these bodies in the development of native title and Northern Territory land rights policy.

Embedding the Priority Reforms

The Commonwealth funds the NNTC to work with PBCs and native title holders to improve their capacity and decision-making through regional forums and training. In addition, grant funding is available to PBCs (approximately \$6.5 million per year) to build organisational capacity to support the effective management of their native title rights and interests, build long term sustainability, and support effective agreement-making.

In early 2021, the Commonwealth passed the *Native Title Legislation Amendment Act 2021* (NTLAA) and amended the *Native Title (Prescribed Bodies Corporate) Regulations 1999* to increase the transparency and accountability of PBCs to native title holders and streamline PBC decision-making. To support greater PBC dispute resolution, the Commonwealth will work with the NNTC and NTRBs-SPs to co-design a mechanism to assist with PBC membership disputes. The Commonwealth is also considering options to increase PBC transparency and accountability to native title holders in relation to native title benefits.

Together, these initiatives align with Priority Reform Two and will support the community-controlled PBC sector to continue to strengthen governance structures and transparency for native title holders, and to leverage community development, business and employment opportunities arising from their native title rights and interests.

Native title agreements can materially contribute to Closing the Gap. The Commonwealth has put in place Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) Policy Principles, a whole-of-government approach to the way in which ILUA negotiations are conducted. These principles align with Priority Reform Three, ensuring a consistent, best practice approach is taken by all Commonwealth departments in ILUA negotiations.

The National Native Title Tribunal's (NNTT) Native Title Registrar keeps three native title registers: the Register of Native Title Claims; the National Native Title Register; and the Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements. The NNTT also maintains databases on native title applications, registration decisions and determinations, and future act applications and determinations. These registers are publicly available and provide access to native title data (including at a regional level). The Commonwealth is also funding the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to maintain an information hub for PBCs and people interested in native title. This information and data assists PBCs to understand their rights, obligations and functions which aligns with Priority Reform Four.

The Commonwealth has also worked with the Northern Territory Land Councils and Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) Advisory Committee since 2018 to co-design a package of generational reforms to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*. This extensive co-design process has provided the opportunity to modernise the ALRA with the ongoing agreement and support of key stakeholders. The reforms will establish a new Aboriginal-controlled body to administer investments and beneficial payments from the ABA, clarify community entity township leasing arrangements and streamline mining and exploration license approvals whilst maintaining strong protections for traditional owners in the Northern Territory.

Actions

Funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land holding bodies and representatives

The Commonwealth provides annual funding for NTRBs-SPs (approximately \$100 million per year), and for the Federal Court of Australia (the administrative entity), which includes the Court's native title practice area and the NNTT (a total allocation of approximately \$294 million per year).

The Commonwealth allocates \$86.2 million per year from the ABA to the four Northern Territory Land Councils for the performance of statutory functions, including providing support for the finalisation of the remaining 40 outstanding



Northern Territory ALRA land claims. The Commonwealth also provides funding and support for the operations of the Aboriginal Land Commissioner who conducts formal land claim inquiries under the ALRA to facilitate the finalisation of claims and associated grants of Aboriginal land (\$579,000 in 2020-21). In November 2019, the Minister for Indigenous Australians agreed to fast track finalisation of 15 land claims which were the subject of a report prepared by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner.

The Commonwealth is investing an additional \$36.7 million in PBCs over the next four years to further strengthen PBCs to improve their capacity and realise the benefits of native title for native title holders. This additional support includes:

- \$21 million for the PBC Capacity Building measure to expand the program of PBC support
- \$8.6 million to expand PBC Basic Support provided through NTRB-SPs, and
- \$7.1 million to assist PBCs to implement the reforms in the NTLAA which affect PBCs.

Maintaining effective legislative frameworks

The Commonwealth maintains the effectiveness of the NTA and ALRA through monitoring and adjusting legislative frameworks as needed. Under the NTLAA the Commonwealth added a new provision to the NTA (section 47C) to enable native title and government parties to agree to disregard the historical extinguishment of native title over an area that has been set aside or vested to preserve the natural environment, such as areas of national, state and territory parks. This allows for more areas of land to be claimed under the NTA and support the realisation of this Outcome.

Next steps

The Commonwealth will continue to ensure arrangements under the NTA and ALRA support resolution of native title claims and land claims in the Northern Territory. In addition to the actions outlined above, the Commonwealth has committed to:

- considering longer term-funding agreements and recognition for NTRBs-SPs under the NTA to support planning and investment in claims resolution – this will be done through a new working group with NTRBs-SPs established to ensure funding and service delivery arrangements best meet the interests and needs of native title holders and claimants, and
- continuing to work with the Land Councils and the Northern Territory Government to support the finalisation of 40 outstanding Northern Territory land claims.

Significant action by the states and territories is also required to meet these Targets. The Commonwealth will continue to bring together all jurisdictions through forums to support the realisation of this Outcome, and work with the jurisdictions to consider and develop native title policy and reforms. However, the states and territories need to streamline legal and associated administrative and policy arrangements for resolving land claims under state and territory systems and continue to resolve native title claims by consent where possible and consider policy arrangements to facilitate resolution of claims.

Outcome 16: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing

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

For the first time, the National Agreement includes a target that acknowledges the critical role that language and culture play in the ongoing health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The inclusion of this Target represents a structural change in the role of language and culture in broader policy development and implementation.

Language is fundamental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and identity, even for those who do not speak language. Strengthening language is central to achieving outcomes across all Closing the Gap outcomes. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, traditional and new, provide significant social and economic benefits to their speakers. Speaking language has demonstrated benefits for individual health and wellbeing, is beneficial in learning contexts, and is an asset in terms of employment prospects and income-generating opportunities across a wide range of sectors. In this document, references to ‘speaking’ language include communication systems, such as sign languages, that use gestures rather than speech.

The overwhelming majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – around 90% – report that they do not speak their traditional language. The Commonwealth recognises the importance of supporting language acquisition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seeking to learn language, and recognises that appropriate consideration of language across Commonwealth policies, programs, and services is a critical element of supporting language acquisition.

In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Commonwealth is committed to strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. This includes through the Commonwealth’s support for the capture, preservation, maintenance, use, and consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, to prevent further language loss, enable equitable access to government services and opportunities, and to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to experience the many health, wellbeing, and employment benefits of speaking language.

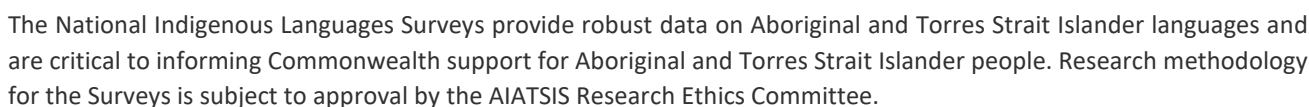
The Commonwealth welcomes the United Nations Declaration of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-32), and looks forward to working with international and domestic partners on activities that ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages thrive, are celebrated, and are considered across government services and policies. Australia will represent the Asia and Pacific region on the first rotation of the Global Taskforce organising the International Decade.

Minister responsible

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth provides Australia’s peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages organisation First Languages Australia (FLA) annual operational funding and strategic project funding through the Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) program. The role of FLA as the peak organisation representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups is to communicate, advocate and educate about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages to all Australians. FLA is advised by a committee of nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and includes representatives from most states and territories, and the Torres Strait.



The Commonwealth supports the preservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages through the Indigenous Language Dictionaries project. This project works with participating communities to record and translate language in a tangible printed publication. The Commonwealth has committed \$200,000 per year until 30 June 2023 from the IAS to support the Indigenous Language Dictionaries project.

The Commonwealth will continue to support Indigenous language interpreting services, to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal access to government services and opportunities, and to provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Indigenous language.

Additionally, the Commonwealth invests more than \$3.7 million annually via the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment National Partnership Agreement, to support the Northern Territory Government's Aboriginal Interpreting Service (AIS). The AIS provides interpreting services across the Northern Territory.

While these actions are important steps forward to drive progress against Target 16, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are currently under threat. The Commonwealth recognises that the greatest gains against Outcome 16 will come from continued investment in the ILA program.

To ensure strong governance, the Joint Council on Closing the Gap will establish a joined-up approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages by 2022. This will identify opportunities to work more effectively across government jurisdictions, to reduce gaps and duplication, and drive progress against Outcome 16.

The Commonwealth will also continue to work with states and territories and local governments, to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are considered across the full breadth of all governments' policies, programs and service delivery.



Outcome 17: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives

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

Digital technologies are changing the way Australians live, work and do business. All Australians need access to these technologies to fully participate in social and economic life. There is, however, a digital divide for some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the three elements of inclusion: access, affordability and digital ability.

Addressing this digital divide will help ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can enjoy the benefits offered by digital technologies, including taking advantage of the employment and business opportunities associated with the digital economy.

Minister responsible

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, with the Minister for Government Services

Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commonwealth will work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in progressing actions under Target 17. As part of this, the Commonwealth will develop an Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan (IDIP) which will help support improved digital inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the three areas of access, affordability and digital ability. The Commonwealth is working with relevant members of the Coalition of Peaks, including First Nations Media Australia and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses to develop the IDIP, which will be based on community priorities.

The Commonwealth is working to identify gaps in current efforts, including around data collection. Efforts under this Outcome will also aim to ensure actions are tailored to each community and their needs, and will help build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout the policy development and delivery process.

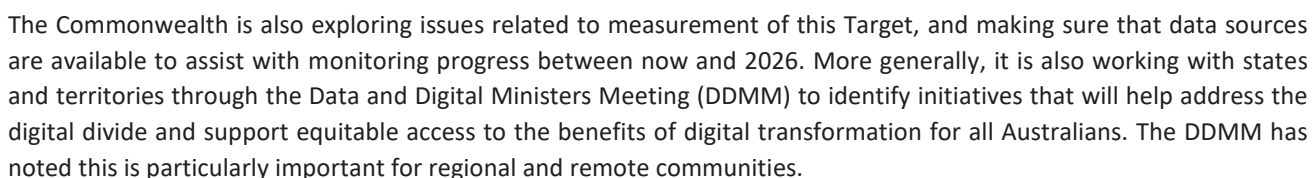
Embedding the Priority Reforms

The Commonwealth will continue to develop a deeper understanding of the needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when accessing and using government services. This understanding will enable the Commonwealth to design and deliver services that are user-centred and inclusive, and provide equitable access to all users, regardless of ability or environment.

Establishing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people will provide the Commonwealth with a platform for learning and understanding. Taking a user-centred approach will also enable the Commonwealth to challenge unconscious bias in decision-making by using qualitative and quantitative data that has been gathered through engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Actions

The Commonwealth is delivering a range of measures to support different elements of digital inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Future actions will promote community-led responses to build on outcomes which are designed and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and will be targeted to addressing any gaps in existing measures.



Under the IAS, the Commonwealth manages a network of up to 245 community payphones and 301 Wi-Fi satellite phones in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and funds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media activities nationally, primarily through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting.

The rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN) is providing access to fixed broadband with speeds of at least 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) to all premises, with 90% of fixed-line services able to access speeds of over 50 Mbps. The NBN Company (NBN Co) is consulting with retail service providers to develop products that will improve take-up for households on low incomes, renters and older Australians.

Upgrades to the NBN were announced in September 2020. By 2023 an estimated 75% of premises in the fixed-line footprint will have access to speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second. As part of the upgrades, NBN Co has also created a \$300 million fund, which it will use to co-invest with Commonwealth, state and territory governments and local government to deliver access to higher speed wholesale broadband services over the NBN to households and businesses in regional and remote areas of Australia. The \$300 million co-investment fund is expected to assist in moving more regional areas from fixed wireless or satellite to a fixed line access technology.

The Commonwealth is also continuing to invest in improving access to telecommunications infrastructure in regional and remote Australia through the \$380 million Mobile Black Spot Program with co-investment from state and territory governments. As part of the Program, \$80 million in funding has also been allocated for Round 6, the process for which is expected to begin after the Round 5A competitive assessment process is complete.

The Commonwealth is also investing in targeted, place-based connectivity solutions through the Regional Connectivity Program (RCP). Under Round 1 of the RCP, the Government invested \$90.3 million in telecommunications infrastructure projects to address local digital priorities in 81 regional areas. As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Commonwealth announced that it would commit a further \$84.8 million to the RCP.

As part of the additional RCP funding, a further \$24.6 million has been allocated towards an additional 51 meritorious Round 1 proposals, which were unable to be supported from the initial funding envelope.

In addition, \$68.5 million in dedicated funding has been allocated to improve telecommunications infrastructure in North Australia.

The next Regional Telecommunications Review has begun with the formal appointment on 1 June 2021 of the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee (RTIRC). The RTIRC will undertake a thorough examination of regional telecommunication issues, in line with its terms of reference. In addition to examining the adequacy of regional telecommunications as required under the statute, the terms of reference flag a number of particular matters of interest to the Commonwealth, including the impact of its policies and programs, COVID-19, new technologies, service reliability and regional development.

In developing and finalising its report, the RTIRC needs to consult publicly and is expected to hold meetings with communities and stakeholders, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Accessible service delivery

The Commonwealth will also continue to apply the Digital Service Standard to the design and delivery of public facing services, which will provide all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people access to services that are inclusive and create equitable access, regardless of their ability and environment.

Digital literacy

NBN Co is undertaking activities to support connectivity and digital capability which may benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. This includes the Digital Capability Tool to assist individuals to assess their digital ability and identify opportunities for improvement a digital literacy program to encourage safe and productive online participation, and the Innovate with NBN grants program which promotes and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business participation and innovation online.

Next steps

The IDIP is being developed by the NIAA, with support from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. This work is part of the Commonwealth's response to the recommendations of the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review. As mentioned earlier, the IDIP will focus on access, affordability and digital ability. Consultations with stakeholders began in June 2021 with the plan to be completed in 2021.



Cross-cutting outcome areas

The Commonwealth recognises that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is incredibly diverse. Different cohorts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have different needs and their unique experiences must be considered when designing policy and programs to achieve outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Achieving outcomes for these cohorts will help achieve the targets and outcomes under the National Agreement. That is why the National Agreement includes the commitment that, where available and appropriate, data against targets and outcomes will be disaggregated by disability, gender and age to understand whether actions being taken are addressing the needs of these groups. The following sections highlight what the Commonwealth is doing in addition to the *Outcomes and targets* actions to cater for these particular cohorts of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

Disability

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, western notions of ‘disability’ and exclusion on the basis of capabilities are not concepts that readily translate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages or cultures. Evidence demonstrates high inclusion in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community life for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diverse capabilities. This demonstrates a key difference in perspectives about disability, which needs to be incorporated into the design and implementation of access, inclusion and disability policies and programs across all targets.

On every other socio-economic indicator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability experience acute social, wellbeing and health inequalities. The prevalence of disability among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is twice the rate experienced by other Australians. It is complex and intersects with social and structural determinants of health and wellbeing, including education, justice, housing, employment and access to appropriate infrastructure. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability also experience multiple layers of individual and structural discrimination (ableism and racism) based on both their disability and Indigeneity, contributing to trauma, isolation and exclusion.

Actions

Ensuring that investments under each of the socio-economic targets are inclusive, accessible and equitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, will help meet Closing the Gap targets. For example, the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020, described in Target 12, will have a focus on children and young people with disability, and parents and carers with disability in its design and implementation. This approach reflects Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031, a key mechanism for the Commonwealth, states and territories to realise disability as a cross-cutting outcome for Closing the Gap. Under Australia’s Disability Strategy all agencies are responsible for contributing to the improvement of outcomes for people with disability.

The Commonwealth through the Social Services portfolio is supporting an increase to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individual community disability advocates, increasing the number of ACCHOs registered to deliver National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) services, and designing a new National Early Childhood Program to provide information, linkages and community-based supports for young children (birth to school age) with emerging developmental concerns or disability outside the NDIS. Improving the hearing health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adults through additional and tailored hearing services will also be a priority for the Social Services portfolio and the Department of Health.

The National Disability Insurance Agency are implementing the NDIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and Thin Market Projects to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on NDIS packages.

The Commonwealth, is working with the community-controlled sector and states and territories to develop a disability Sector Strengthening Plan. This plan is due to be complete by April 2022.



Gender and sexuality

There are distinctive needs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, girls and LGBTQIA+SB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboy) communities that should be considered in developing responses to achieve better outcomes, particularly in the areas of safety and justice, health and wellbeing, education, economic security, land, housing, employment, training and business.

Gender and sexuality are inherently linked. There is a significant opportunity to leverage the unique strengths, needs and aspirations of these cohorts to achieve the desired outcomes of many government policies and programs. In designing policy initiatives and support approaches to address these, greater understanding is needed of the impacts that colonisation has had on the construction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's gender identities and sexuality.

When gender and sexuality as intersectional considerations are meaningfully incorporated into policy and program design, it ensures that the diverse experiences and identities of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are included, supported and empowered. This enables greater access to appropriate services and improved outcomes for those accessing them, as well as elevating the voices of women and LGBTQIA+SB peoples in advocacy and decision-making.

Actions

As mentioned in Target 13, the Women's Voices report led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner elevates the diverse and lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, girls and their communities. The Women's Voices Report was tabled in the Australian Parliament on 9 December 2020 and will be used to inform future policy direction. The Commonwealth will provide a response to the recommendations of the Women's Voices report.

Stage 2 of the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Project is funded under the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. Stage 2 will see the development of tools and resources to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls to advocate for themselves and actively participate in the change they want for their futures.

The Commonwealth, through the NIAA, will support the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) to explore options to improve gender representation on the boards of Indigenous corporations registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). This will include supporting registered organisations to understand how they can embed gender representation in their governance arrangements if culturally appropriate and desired. Options for ORIC include providing gender-sensitive information to interested CATSI Act organisations, and collecting gender disaggregated data about CATSI Act organisation board composition, where possible. This work will be undertaken within existing resources.

The Commonwealth will explore options for the possible development of a mandatory APS-wide culturally sensitive gender and sexuality training program to inform decision-makers and policy and program design. This action will improve the capability of the APS to identify and eliminate racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia across government, and challenge unconscious biases that result in decisions based on stereotypes. This work will be undertaken within existing resources.

Aged care

In response to the findings of the Aged Care Royal Commission, the Commonwealth announced in the 2021-22 Budget a significant investment of \$572.5 million to make the aged care system more accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including:

- \$106 million to fund a workforce of 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide trusted face-to-face support and assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people better navigate and access care. This workforce will also sit alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people while Regional Assessment Service (RAS) and Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) assess their care needs upon entry and while in care

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- \$396.9 million to fund aged services to upgrade existing buildings and construct purpose built care services, including to connect residential facilities with communities on country and provide essential staff housing. This funding will also support Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services to expand into aged care
 - \$61.6 million additional service delivery funding for the 43 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Care Services (NATSIFCS), and
 - \$8 million to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with governance, business, training and leadership.

These investments will not only ensure culturally safe aged care services are available and accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, they will result in a more skilled, supported workforce and boost local economic activity. This will help increase the capability and viability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to deliver care and improve cultural safety across the aged care system.

To further improve cultural safety across the aged care system, the Indigenous Employment Initiative program is also providing funds for aged care providers to subsidise the training and employment costs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people providing non-clinical aged care services to older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Further actions

The Commonwealth is taking forward a number of other actions that further support Closing the Gap that are not directly aligned to particular outcomes or Priority Reforms. The Commonwealth is also delivering on other commitments set out in the National Agreement that need to be actioned in implementation plans to contribute more broadly to Closing the Gap.

Local, regional and remote

Taking a place-based approach, the Commonwealth works with local, regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop policies and programs and broker solutions that respond to community needs and aspirations. The Commonwealth is leveraging communities' assets and strengths including the human, social, cultural, political and economic capital. This place-based approach is critical to achieving better outcomes for regional Australia, and the significant proportion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population who live in regional areas.

Actions

The Commonwealth is delivering the next phase of investment to support the continued implementation of the 20 year Our North, Our Future: White Paper for Developing Northern Australia. The recently announced Our North, Our Future: 2021-2026 – Next Five Year Plan aims to strengthen and improve economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Northern Australia.

Through its Regional Deals, the Commonwealth has put in place arrangements that are tailored to a region's comparative advantages, assets and challenges, reflecting the unique needs of each region. The Barkly Regional Deal is the first regional deal in Australia and features a community governance framework that brings together Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations, business leaders, youth, the non-government sector, and the three levels of government. The Hinkler Regional Deal was signed in January 2020 and a Regional Deal for Albury Wodonga is under development – both deals prioritise engagement with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Additionally, the Commonwealth supports local decision-making through models including Empowered Communities. The Commonwealth's investment supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to work with their communities and partners to identify and progress local priorities. In Empowered Communities regions, partnerships with governments and joint decision-making processes are continuing to evolve, with local communities guiding funding decisions and strategies to address critical issues that affect their lives (see Priority Reform One).

Local place-based approaches are also an effective way to drive better outcomes for families and communities. Stronger Places, Stronger People is a community-led place-based initiative being implemented by the Commonwealth in partnership with state and territory governments and 10 communities across Australia. It involves collaboration between the whole community, all levels of government, service providers, business, philanthropic organisations and others to develop and deliver local plans of action to support communities to achieve their aspirations. Some Stronger Places, Stronger People communities, for example in Bourke NSW and the Far West Coast Region of South Australia, are positioning their community-led initiatives to address Closing the Gap outcomes.

The Commonwealth is also driving better outcomes in close collaboration with states and territories, such as through the Northern Territory Families and Children Tripartite Forum to improve services and outcomes for Northern Territory families. The forum's purpose is to address an identified need for structured and sustained high-level engagement between the Northern Territory Government, Commonwealth Government and the community sector regarding children experiencing vulnerability, young people and families, and child protection and youth justice issues.



The Commonwealth is working with and supporting a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led regional approaches.

- The Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly in NSW receives support from the NSW Government and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth engages with Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly on service delivery as a key stakeholder in the region. Through the NIAA, the Commonwealth collaborated with Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly to show-case the Assembly's community-led governance model
- The Yarrabah Leaders Forum in Queensland receives funding from the Commonwealth to support its role as the leadership and local decision-making group for the community
- Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) in Western Australia is supported by the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments. KJ operates on a model of comprehensive community input to program design and delivery to build strong, sustainable communities across the Martu Lands. The Commonwealth provides funding to help support KJ to deliver its cultural, country and social programs
- The Torres Strait Treaty relies on strong governance arrangements which are supported by the Commonwealth. These governance arrangements include the annual Traditional Inhabitants Meeting held between Australian and Papua New Guinean traditional inhabitants to facilitate local level discussions and solutions to inform policy deliberations.

Further, the NIAA will over the next 12 months develop and pilot Regional Investment Strategies, as part of its Policy and Investment Framework to support a place-based approach to decision-making about expenditure of the IAS. The aim is to ensure investment decisions are developed in partnership with communities, shaped to meet the local context and community-identified needs. The Regional Investment Strategies model will be evaluated with a view to improvement and broader rollout across the Commonwealth if appropriate.

Better regional data is important to efforts to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in regional and remote Australia. See the *Priority Reform Four* chapter for further detail.

Commitments in the National Agreement

Data Development Plan

The Commonwealth is working with all parties to develop a Data Development Plan (DDP). The DDP will address data gaps in the National Agreement and ensure Closing the Gap enables high quality reporting on progress that also reflects the difference of experience across the country and among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The DDP will outline clear timeframes for data development actions to be delivered and who will be responsible for each action. This will be reviewed by the Joint Council on Closing the Gap when it reviews the Productivity Commission and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led reviews, at which time Joint Council may consider changes to the plan.

To progress work on the DDP, the NIAA established a Data and Reporting Working Group with membership from the Coalition of Peaks, states and territories and key data custodians including the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. This Working Group provides advice and technical support on data and reporting issues relevant to the National Agreement. The Working Group will develop the DDP for endorsement by the Joint Council in 2022.

Joint Communications Strategy

Building awareness and ownership of the National Agreement is an important aspect of driving the change required to achieve outcomes under Closing the Gap. The Commonwealth currently hosts the Closing the Gap website (www.ClosingtheGap.gov.au) that provides easy-to-access and practical information about the National Agreement, its commitments and how it is being implemented. The website provides resources to build awareness of Closing the Gap including posters, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and links to the Coalition of Peaks and each government's



respective websites. It also includes an Implementation Tracker to enable all Australians to follow progress on implementing the commitments in the National Agreement.

The National Agreement committed all parties to develop a Joint Communications Strategy. The Commonwealth and the Coalition of Peaks co-led the development of the Strategy with the support of jurisdictions. The Joint Communication Strategy was agreed by the Joint Council in April 2021 and is available on the Closing the Gap website.

The key objectives of the Joint Communications Strategy are to:

- build ownership, trust, credibility and accountability of the National Agreement among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and assist them to engage with governments to apply the commitments in the National Agreement
- provide a central role for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media
- ensure communications about the National Agreement are clear, accessible, timely, relevant and work to preserve the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages
- ensure communications products are developed and implemented in partnership, including through community generated content, and
- build awareness and support among all Australians, including to ensure strong systemic engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Examples of actions the Commonwealth is implementing to deliver on these objectives include:

- convening a Communications Working Group, with Coalition of Peaks and representatives of states and territories (WA and ACT) to progress the development of a new Closing the Gap logo to symbolise the partnership approach under Closing the Gap
- co-designing an Implementation Tracker to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the community generally to identify where progress is up to in each jurisdiction on each initiative committed to under the National Agreement
- developing an eLearning module for Commonwealth public servants to ensure they are embedding the values articulated in the National Agreement into their practice, and
- developing communications products to enable more consistent, considered approaches to establishing and strengthening partnerships and shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all Commonwealth portfolios.

The Commonwealth will continue to develop new communications actions in line with the Joint Communications Strategy over the course of the National Agreement.



How this Implementation Plan will work in practice

The National Agreement recognises that a new way of working is required to improve life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and that this must include partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations. This Implementation Plan provides the foundation for this change by identifying how the Commonwealth is adjusting its policy settings to design, deliver and report on its policies and programs to meet the commitments under the National Agreement.

Like the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, this Implementation Plan is a living document. It provides a snapshot of what action is being taken, where reform is required, and what partnerships will support this progress. It is a transparent document that will be reviewed, updated and made public. This will ensure that the Commonwealth is accountable for its actions and commitments under this Implementation Plan and the National Agreement.

Annual reporting

The Commonwealth's first annual report will be delivered in mid-2022. As the National Agreement sets out, each annual report will provide information on the delivery of this Implementation Plan and commitments under the National Agreement. The Commonwealth's annual report, including changes to this Implementation Plan, will be provided to Joint Council, tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament and made public each year. The Commonwealth will work with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners on annual reports and updates to the Implementation Plan.

The Commonwealth's annual report will look back over the previous year reflecting on actions taken and the results of Productivity Commission data reporting and reviews. It will also report on reviews led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other relevant evidence of progress. The annual report will also look forward and set out priority areas for action to continue to make progress toward targets.

As required by the National Agreement, each annual report will list the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that have been allocated funding, listing the names of the organisations and the amount allocated.

Through this annual cycle the Commonwealth will review and assess progress based on available data and evidence to ensure that the Commonwealth's actions and effort is targeted on the things that will make a difference. This process will inform reprioritisation of policy and program effort and support consideration of new investment.

The NIAA's Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) will provide the overarching architecture to guide the NIAA's decision-making on what the NIAA invests in and why, including the strategic and evidence-based context to inform this. The PIF will help inform the annual review of this Implementation Plan by providing a clear line of sight between the National Agreement and policy and investment decisions made by the NIAA and how these align with those made by other Commonwealth agencies. The annual reporting process will feed into the NIAA's PIF to support decision-making on future investments.

Accountability

The Joint Council has developed an Implementation Tracker which is available on the Closing the Gap website. The Implementation Tracker enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Joint Council and the community generally, to identify progress on each initiative committed to under the National Agreement.

The Commonwealth's commitment to achieve results and make improvements against targets is a responsibility shared by all ministers, and all ministers will be held accountable by the government for actions to achieve outcomes and Priority Reforms in their portfolios. The Minister for Indigenous Australians will maintain a key role in coordinating this whole-of-government approach and for driving transformational change across the Commonwealth.

Communicating about this Implementation Plan

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities' awareness of the Commonwealth's Implementation Plan is important to enable active and critical engagement with its commitments and actions. The Commonwealth hosts the Closing the Gap website (www.ClosingtheGap.gov.au) which is where the public can access the Implementation Plan. The website will host a page linking to all jurisdictional implementation plans.

The Commonwealth has been, and is, strengthening its internal communications mechanisms on Closing the Gap. For instance, the NIAA is exploring the potential to develop an eLearning module for APS staff to communicate information about the National Agreement and emphasise the role of APS staff in delivering the Implementation Plan. Commonwealth agencies have Closing the Gap coordination functions and/or teams that provide information about, and updates to, implementation planning. The NIAA will continue to convene interdepartmental committees to support communication and joined up effort across the Commonwealth.

Meeting our commitments

This Implementation Plan meets all the requirements set out in the National Agreement. See checklist below.

As per the National Agreement, jurisdictional Implementation Plans will:	Checked
Be fully aligned with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and state that their purpose is to implement the National Agreement (cl96)	☒
Respond to the differing needs, priorities and circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia (cl96)	☒
Demonstrate a commitment to undertake all actions in a way that takes full account of, promotes, and does not diminish in any way, the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (cl21 and 107)	☒
Be whole-of-government plans, covering government agencies and statutory bodies (cl108)	☒
Be developed and delivered in partnership between governments, the Coalition of Peaks, and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners (cl108)	☒
Set out how existing policies and programs will be aligned to the National Agreement (cl104 and 108)	☒
Set out actions to achieve the Priority Reforms and partnership actions (cl108)	☒
Set out actions to achieve the agreed outcomes and targets (cl108)	☒
For transparency, include information on funding and timeframes for actions (cl108)	☒
Include the approach to annual reporting, including when they will release their public report (cl108)	☒



As per the National Agreement, jurisdictional Implementation Plans will:	Checked
Include data development actions identified in the Data Development Plan (cl106)	☒
Be published on the jurisdiction’s website (cl111)	☒



Glossary of terms

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation (other than an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation) – There is no one definition of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation in Australia. For the purposes of this plan, it can be a business, charity, not-for-profit organisation, incorporated under Commonwealth, state or territory legislation, that, as a minimum requirement, is at least 50% owned, controlled and managed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led review – Independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led reviews will be carried out within twelve months of each three yearly independent review by the Productivity Commission. They are an opportunity to capture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities experience of Closing the Gap implementation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – The Commonwealth Government acknowledges that there is no single Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture or group and that there are many diverse communities, language groups and kinships throughout Australia. For the purposes of this Implementation Plan, the term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is respectfully used.

All Australian governments – consisting of the Commonwealth Government, state and territory governments, and the Australian Local Government Association.

Coalition of Peaks – the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Peak Organisations. The Coalition of Peaks is a representative body consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national and state and territory community-controlled peak organisations that work to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Commonwealth – The legal entity of the Commonwealth of Australia, created by the Australian Constitution. The term may also be used to differentiate the Australian Government from state and territory governments.

Cultural safety – Cultural safety refers to overcoming the power imbalances of places, people and policies that occur between the majority non-Indigenous position and the minority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person so that there is no assault, challenge or denial of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's identity, of who they are and what they need. Cultural safety is met through actions from the majority position that recognise, respect, and nurture the unique cultural identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Only the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person who is a recipient of a service or interaction can determine whether it is culturally safe.

Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) – The IAS is the way the Commonwealth Government funds and delivers a range of programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. At its inception in 2014, the IAS was a significant reform in the administration and delivery of services and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, consolidating a number of programs, grants and activities.

Joint Council – The Joint Council on Closing the Gap. This is the Ministerial Council on Closing the Gap, with representation from all levels of government and the Coalition of Peaks. Further details on the Joint Council can be found in the Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap 2019-2029.

Mainstream institutions and agencies – These are government agencies, institutions, organisations and services that fund and develop policies or deliver services to all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

National Agreement – The National Agreement on Closing the Gap was signed by all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks in July 2020. It sets out commitments for all Australian governments to work together



with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.

Partnership Agreement – The Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap 2019-2029, signed by COAG and the Coalition of Peaks, setting out shared decision-making arrangements on the next phase of Closing the Gap.

Productivity Commission – Commonwealth Government’s independent research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians. It will develop and maintain a publicly accessible dashboard comprising data and associated supporting materials to inform the reporting on progress on Closing the Gap. The dashboard will be updated on a regular basis (at a minimum, annually) and will be maintained for the full term of the National Agreement. It will also undertake a comprehensive review of progress every three years.

Significant and sustained – A year-on-year improvement relative to the baseline data that is equal to or greater than the historic rate of change.

Action tables

Priority Reform One: Partnership and shared decision-making

Priority Reform One Outcome: Shared decision-making: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are empowered to share decision-making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress on Closing the Gap through formal partnership arrangements.					
Priority Reform One Target: There will be formal partnership arrangements to support Closing the Gap in place between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments in place in each state and territory enshrining agreed joint decision-making roles and responsibilities and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have chosen their own representatives.					
Action	Status – new or existing	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Partnership Action: Five joined up partnerships between the Commonwealth, states and territories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives in priority policy areas: justice, social and emotional wellbeing, housing, early childhood care and development, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.	New	\$7.6 million for the Justice Policy Partnership over three years	Establish Justice Policy Partnership by 2021 and other partnerships by 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians and Ministers relevant to each partnership	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting they are able to have a say in their community on issues important to them Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting improvements in their communities
Partnership Action: Six place-based partnerships.	Existing	No	By 2024	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting they are able to have a say in their community on issues important to them Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting improvements in their communities



Jurisdictional Action: Undertake a stocktake of partnership arrangements already in place within their own jurisdictions and provide a report to the Joint Council.	Existing	No	By 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Partnerships reviewed (new or existing) meeting the 'strong partnership elements' (as defined in the National Agreement [Clause 32 and 33]) Number of partnerships by function, such as decision-making or strategic
Jurisdictional Action: Review and strengthen existing partnerships to meet the strong partnership elements, unless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the partnership do not wish to include these elements.	Existing	No	2023	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Partnerships reviewed (new or existing) meeting the 'strong partnership elements' (as defined in the National Agreement [Clause 32 and 33])
Supporting the partnership with the Coalition of Peaks The Commonwealth will continue and increase its funding to the Coalition of Peaks to ensure it has the capacity to effectively engage and participate in Closing the Gap governance mechanisms, including the Joint Council on Closing the Gap.	New	\$10 million over four years from 2021-22	2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting they are able to have a say in their community on issues important to them Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting improvements in their communities
Empowered Communities Empowered Communities leaders and the Commonwealth are working together in 10 regions, with further work underway to establish trial partnership arrangements with Empowered Communities leaders and the Commonwealth and state and territory governments in two of the sites, East Kimberley and Inner Sydney.	Existing	\$34.5 million	2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting they are able to have a say in their community on issues important to them Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting improvements in their communities



Indigenous Voice Proposals The proposals for an Indigenous Voice could provide an opportunity for shared decision-making by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by providing advice and input on matters that impact on their lives.	Existing	\$7.3 million for a co-design process and developing options for constitutional recognition	The co-design process is expected to be completed in mid-2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting they are able to have a say in their community on issues important to them Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians reporting improvements in their communities
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Priority Reform Two: Building the community-controlled sector

Priority Reform Two Outcome: There is a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.					
Priority Reform Two Target: Increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Partnership Action: Sector Strengthening Plans for joint national strengthening effort.	Existing	No	First four sectors by 2022, then every three years	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting fewer barriers in accessing services Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement Number of sectors with elements of a strong sector (clause 45), by element
Building the Community-Controlled Sector Joint Funding Pool	Existing	\$46.5 million	2020-21 to 2023-24	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement Number of sectors with elements of a strong sector (clause 45), by element



Strengthen the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Service sector through improved infrastructure To address seriously deteriorating or non-existent health infrastructure, the Commonwealth will make an investment to deliver new and renovated health clinics and associated housing for health professionals.	New	New investment of \$154.4 million and \$100 million from the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP)	Four years over 2021-22 to 2024-25	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Number of sectors with elements of a strong sector (Clause 45), by element Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting fewer barriers in accessing services
Assess the needs and increasing the involvement of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations in the child and family sector	New	\$3.2 million over two years	2021-22 to 2022-23	Minister for Families and Social Services	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement



Jurisdictional Action: Develop and implement policies to increase the proportion of service delivery through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled-organisations (Clause 55 of National Agreement), including: • a grant connected policy that will preference Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, in grants, and • identifying the best way to implement the funding prioritisation policy requiring allocation of a ‘meaningful proportion’ of new government funding initiatives, which are intended to service the broader population across socio-economic outcome areas to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with relevant expertise, particularly community-controlled organisations.	New	No	By 2024	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement Number of government contracts awarded to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting fewer barriers in accessing services
Jurisdictional Action: Spending review to identify current spending on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services (Clause 113 of National Agreement).	Existing	No	July 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of government contracts awarded to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations



Indigenous Advancement Strategy – currently preferences Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	Existing	No	Over four years to 2024-25	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement Number of government contracts awarded to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting fewer barriers in accessing services
Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) ORIC supports and protects CATSI Act corporations that are experiencing financial or governance difficulties and provides governance training to members and directors to support them to establish and maintain good governance and financial management practices.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting fewer barriers in accessing services
Indigenous Procurement Policy	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations contracted by governments across the Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas of the National Agreement
Jawun Partnership	Existing	No	Ongoing	Assistant Minister for the Public Service	



Priority Reform Three: Transforming government organisations

Priority Reform Three Outcome: Governments, their organisations and their institutions are accountable for Closing the Gap and are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund.					
Priority Reform Three Target: Decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experiences of racism.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Partnership action: Develop or strengthen an independent mechanism, or mechanisms, that will support, monitor, and report on the transformation of mainstream agencies and institutions.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in government mainstream institutions and agencies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in governance positions in government mainstream institutions and agencies
Jurisdictional action: publish engagement approaches that give effect to the transformation elements on engagements at Clause 59(f). This is will be included in the development of the Framework for Engagement mentioned below.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements



Jurisdictional action: engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives before, during, and after emergencies such as natural disasters and pandemics. This will be included in the development of the Framework for Engagement mentioned below.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies
Jurisdictional action: annual reports to include information on how jurisdictions are undertaking and meeting the transformation elements.	Existing	No	Annually from mid-2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements Number and proportion of government mainstream institutions and agencies with Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in place, by RAP type
Framework for Engagement The Commonwealth will work with the Coalition of Peaks to develop guidance for Commonwealth agencies on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on policies and programs that affect them.	New	No	Work to commence in 2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies



Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme	New	\$378.6 million over five years	2025-26	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies
The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan The Health Plan is being reviewed and will include a focus on cultural safety by aligning with the National Cultural Respect Framework's human rights-based approach.	Existing	\$1.4 million over three years (2021-23) to Mayi Kuwayu to undertake an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural wellbeing study This will inform the accountability framework for the refreshed Health Plan and be used to measure the Health Plan's progress against this outcome and target	2021-31	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government, mainstream institutions and agencies
Developing the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous child and family sector workforce engaged through the Department of Social Services (DSS) grant funding.	New	\$7.7 million over three years	2021-22 to 2023-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020–24	Existing	No	2024	Assistant Minister for the Public Service	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in government mainstream institutions and agencies Number and proportion of government mainstream institutions and agencies with Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in place, by RAP type



APS Indigenous Graduate Program	Existing	No	Ongoing	Assistant Minister for the Public Service	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in government mainstream institutions and agencies Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework	Existing	No	2023	Assistant Minister for the Public Service	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in government mainstream institutions and agencies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in governance positions in government mainstream institutions and agencies Number and proportion of government mainstream institutions and agencies with Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in place, by RAP type Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism



Services Australia Customer Experience Survey	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Government Services	Government mainstream institutions and agencies reporting actions to implement the transformation elements Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies
Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) including resourcing for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and the Race Discrimination Commissioner.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Attorney-General	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting experiences of racism Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as feeling culturally safe in dealing with government mainstream institutions and agencies



Priority Reform Four: Shared access to data and information at a regional level

Priority Reform Four Outcome: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to, and the capability to use, locally-relevant data and information to set and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap, their priorities and drive their own development.					
Priority Reform Four Target: Increase the number of regional data projects to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make decisions about Closing the Gap and their development.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Partnership Action: Develop Community Data Projects.	Existing	TBC	2023	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of formal data sharing partnerships established between government agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/organisations Number of government initiatives established to make data more accessible and usable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations Number of government agencies working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to build expertise in data collection and analysis
Data Development Plan as committed under the National Agreement.	Existing	No	By July 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	



AIATSIS Knowledge Exchange Platform (KEP) In the 2017 Budget, the Australian Government provided \$10 million of funding for the establishment of an Indigenous Research Fund. AIATSIS administers the Fund through the Indigenous Research Exchange.	Existing	\$10 million	The KEP is anticipated to be launched by the end of 2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of government initiatives established to make data more accessible and usable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations
ABS Round Table for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics to advise ABS on relevant activities including the census, surveys, data integration and data governance.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Treasurer	Number of formal data sharing partnerships established between government agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/organisations Number of government initiatives established to make data more accessible and usable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations Number of government agencies working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to build expertise in data collection and analysis
Progress in Australian Regions Online Dashboard	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development	Number of comprehensive regional data profiles created
Australian Data Strategy	Ongoing	No	2021-25	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Number of government initiatives established to make data more accessible and usable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations



Regional Data Hub through the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program	Existing	\$13.7 million to the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program over four years from 2020-21	2020-21 to 2023-24	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development	Number of government initiatives established to make data more accessible and usable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations
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Outcome 1: People enjoy long and healthy lives

Target 1: Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Closing the gap in life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - Health Infrastructure To address seriously deteriorating or non-existent health infrastructure, the Commonwealth will make an investment to deliver new and renovated health clinics and associated housing for health professionals.	New	New investment of \$154.4 million and \$100 million from the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP)	Four years over 2021-22 to 2024-25	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
Strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services This investment will increase access to enhanced outcomes-focused alcohol and other drugs treatment services; enable overdue repairs of AOD infrastructure and some new services, strengthen the capacity of the AOD workforce and improve data collection and reporting.	New	Existing funding for AOD services under the IAS will be bolstered by around \$66 million over the forward estimates This ongoing funding for AOD services and support will ramp up from around \$13 million administered in 2022-23 to an average of around \$20 million administered per year from 2023-24	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)



The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-31	Existing	\$780 million through the 2021-22 Budget, to increase and improve access across the health and aged care systems This is in addition to the \$4 billion (over four years) already being provided through the IAHP	2021-31	Minister for Health and Aged Care	All-cause mortality Leading causes of death Potential avoidable mortality rates Prevalence rates of health risk factors Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
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Continue to strengthen the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) Sector Additional funding is being provided to expand ACCHS' ability to address areas of critical health needs through targeted investment that is expected to accelerate progress in reaching the Closing the Gap outcomes. The IAHP Primary Health Care Funding Model is also being delivered. Approximately \$23 million per annum is also being delivered for the Sector Support Network through the Network Funding Agreement with National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and state and territory affiliate organisations.	Existing	In 2020-21, \$518 million is being provided for the delivery of comprehensive primary health care under the IAHP, the majority of which is going to ACCHS This includes the \$90 million in funding provided through the IAHP Primary Health Care Funding Model, over three years from 2020-21 to 2022-23 A further \$36.5 million has been made available over three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) for the Primary Health Care Service Expansion Funding Approximately \$23 million per annum is being invested in the Sector Support Network through the Network Funding Agreement with NACCHO and state and territory affiliate organisations	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	All-cause mortality Leading causes of death Potential avoidable mortality rates Prevalence rates of health risk factors Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
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Improve access to primary health care The development of the Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan identifies improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a priority. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Assessment is temporarily able to be provided face-to-face or via telehealth until 31 December 2021. Access to primary health care is being further improved through the Practice Incentives Program - Indigenous Health Incentive. From November 2021, new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items will also be created to reimburse allied health professionals for participating in multidisciplinary case conferencing. The Primary Health Network's (PHN) After Hours Program will also receive additional funding in the 2021-22 Budget to commission after hours services and improve integration in communities around the country.	Existing	A further \$22.6 million has been provided in the 2021-22 Budget for improved access to primary health care through the Practice Incentives Program - Indigenous Health Incentive \$71.9 million is being provided for the PHN's After Hours Program to commission after hours services	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
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Prevention and early intervention Additional funding to treat and prevent acute rheumatic fever/rheumatic heart disease and trachoma, to be implemented through a partnership approach. Enhancing the National Cancer Screening Register. This will facilitate the direct distribution of bowel screening kits to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care centres.	Existing	\$12 million to continue the Rheumatic Fever Strategy, and \$19.1 million to continue and improve the trachoma elimination program, which supports screening and treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families \$12 million to continue to enhance the National Cancer Screening Register	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Potential avoidable mortality rates Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)
Chronic disease care coordination and management Funding is being provided to Primary Healthcare Networks to manage the Integrated Team Care Program, which aims to provide access to coordinated care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with complex, multidisciplinary chronic care needs.	Existing	\$72.376 million is being provided in 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	All-cause mortality Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)



Reduce rates of smoking among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people The Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program has been providing funding since 2010 (in different forms) with the aims to improve life expectancy among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by reducing tobacco use. The next National Tobacco Strategy is currently being developed and will include actions focusing on reducing tobacco use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Existing	\$183.7 million is being provided from 2018-19 to 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)
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Research that benefits Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led research Through the Indigenous Health Research Fund (IHRF), \$35 million has been awarded for research into ending rheumatic heart disease, and an additional \$14.4 million for research on ending avoidable deafness and blindness, improving outcomes from chronic kidney disease, and improving adolescent mental health. Furthermore, up to \$7.4 million has been provided under the Medical Research Future Fund funding (2020-21 FY) for research focusing on the following priority areas: 1. Improve health outcomes during the first 2000 days 2. Support community-based chronic disease prevention 3. Strengthen culture as a determinant of health 4. Improve the quality, research capabilities and impact of interventions within primary health care. Under the National Health and Medical Research Centre Targeted Call for Research, four grants have been provided to research into nutrition in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.	Existing	\$160 million is being provided over 10 years (2019-20 to 2028-29) through the IHRF NHMRC research grants into nutrition in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People are receiving approximately \$6 million over five years, commencing in 2019	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
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Increase access to and quality use of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines Major reforms to Closing the Gap PBS Co-payment measure will commence on 1 July 2021. There are currently 162 AHS approved to participate in the RAAHS Program.	Existing	In 2019-20, approximately 1.6 million PBS items were supplied to approved RAAHS and expenditure was \$41.3 million In 2019-20, more than 7 million CTG annotated PBS prescriptions were dispensed for more than 380,000 people, and expenditure was \$54.2 million In 2019-20, there were 26 pharmacies receiving the Pharmacy Support Allowance to provide support to 129 approved RAAHS and 70 outstations, at a total cost of \$1.9 million Expenditure on the QUMAX program in 2019-20 was \$2.5 million	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	All-cause mortality Potential avoidable mortality rates Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
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Grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce A new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031 will be released in 2021. Expansion of the Allied Health Rural Generalist Pathway. The Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeships (IHWT) program Funding under the Stronger Rural Health Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professional Organisations (ATSIHPOs).	Existing	\$9.6 million for 90 workplace training packages to attract and retain allied health professionals in rural and remote communities, expanding the Allied Health Rural Generalist Pathway, including up to 30 packages for ACCHS \$13.6 million over three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) for the IHWT Program \$33.4 million is being provided over four years (from 2018-19 to 2021-22) to the ATSIHPOs	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services
Improve cultural safety across the health system National Health Reform Agreement - Addendum 2020-25 Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2016-26 Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training (RHMT) Cultural safety is a whole of health system responsibility.	Existing	N/A	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Rates of accessing/utilisation of health services



National Palliative Care Strategy and Implementation Plan The Department of Health funds a range of palliative care initiatives and programs, which focus on education, training, quality improvement and advance care planning.	Existing	N/A	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
Data access and sharing Department of Health partnership with the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services.	Existing	The Department of Health provides resources to support the collection and reporting of OSR and KPI data	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Treatment Services under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) currently assists around 75 providers with over 90 activities.	Existing	Funding of around \$70 million per annum is provided under the IAS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AOD treatment and support services	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)
Increase Primary Health Networks Service availability alcohol and other drugs treatment services Funding for PHNs to increase service availability of alcohol and other drugs treatment services.	Existing	\$20.067 million is being provided in 2021-22 for drug and alcohol treatment services through PHNs	2021-22	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)



Prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations in preventing communicable diseases COVID-19 vaccines to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, including through partnerships with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services. Enhanced Response to the outbreak of infectious syphilis in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia, which includes funding for ACCHs for workforce supplementation, training and syphilis point-of-care-testing. Blood Borne Viruses (BBV) and Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) Research Program to develop evidence-based policy for managing and preventing BBV and STIs, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a priority population.	Existing	\$18.2 million was announced in the 2021-22 Budget to support a successful rollout of COVID-19 vaccines to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations The Enhanced Response is receiving \$21.1 million from 2017-18 to 2020-21 and approximately \$24 million from 2021-22 to 2023-24 from the Indigenous Australians Health Programme	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Potential avoidable mortality rates Prevalence rates of health risk factors (smoking, alcohol and drug use, overweight and obese, dietary factors, physical activity)
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Outcome 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong

Target 2: By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mothers and Babies	New	\$45 million over four years	2021-22 to 2024-25	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy Proportion of mothers who consume alcohol during pregnancy Proportion of pregnant mothers with a pre-existing health condition Use of antenatal care by pregnant women Proportion of pre-term births



Investment in delivery of comprehensive primary health care through Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services, including antenatal care A new funding model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care (PHC) grant funding under the IAHP is also being delivered.	Existing	In 2020-21, over \$518 million has been provided for the delivery of comprehensive primary health care under the IAHP, the majority of which is going to ACCHs. This includes the \$90 million in funding provided through the IAHP Primary Health Care Funding Model, over 3 years from 2020-21 to 2022-23 A further \$36.5 million has been made available over three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) for Primary Health Care Service Expansion Funding	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Proportion of pregnant mothers with a pre-existing health condition Use of antenatal care by pregnant women
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Investment in targeted antenatal and maternal health Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) Investment in growing the health workforce and redesigning maternity services to reach more pregnant women and support them for longer. The 2021-22 Budget announced a measure to remove the employment criteria that excluded some privately practicing midwives from the Commonwealth's two medical indemnity schemes, the Midwife Professional Indemnity Scheme (MPIS) and the MPIS Run-Off Cover Schemes.	Existing	Up to \$50 million from 2020-21 to 2021-22 from the IAHP	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy Proportion of mothers who consume alcohol during pregnancy Proportion of pregnant mothers with a pre-existing health condition Use of antenatal care by pregnant women Proportion of pre-term births
Preventive health National Information and Awareness Campaign for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women to raise awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol and awareness about foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). The Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program.	Existing	The National Information and Awareness Campaign for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women receives \$25 million from 2019-20 to 2022-23. An additional \$2.4 million allocated through 2020-21 Budget measure in 2023-24 \$183.7 million is being provided from 2018-19 to 2021-22 from the IAHP for the TIS program	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy Proportion of mothers who consume alcohol during pregnancy



Sexual health The Enhanced Response to the outbreak of infectious syphilis in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities includes support for a rapid point of care testing program across 40 ACCHSs and funding for an expanded sexual health workforce in 23 ACCHSs. Fifth National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander BBV and STI Strategy 2018-2022	Existing	The Enhanced Response is receiving \$21.1 million from 2017-18 to 2020-21 and approximately \$24 million from 2021-22 to 2023-24 from the IAHP \$20.169 million is being provided from 2019-20 to 2021-22 to support implementation activities under the Fifth National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander BBV and STI Strategy 2018-2022,	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
Investment in research Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Preventive and Public Health Research Initiative includes funding for research focussing on maternal health and the first 2000 days (conception to age 5). MRFF Primary Health Care Research Initiative includes funding research focussing on comprehensive primary health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The NHMRC Targeted Call for Research into Improving Maternal and Child Health in the Early Years is under development and expected to open in late-2021. Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mothers and Babies Grant Opportunity.	Existing	\$260.4 million is being provided over 10 years for the MRFF Preventive and Public Health Research Initiative \$45 million is being provided over 10 years for the MRFF Primary Health Care Research Initiative \$15 million is being provided from 2021-22 for the MRFF Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mothers and Babies Grant Opportunity	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	



Outcome 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years

Target 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%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?*
Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Expand the CCCF Restricted program to help reduce barriers to accessing childcare to support child care services to address barriers to participation, in particular in Aboriginal and Torres Strait children, with the expansion supporting up to 3,500 children.	New Existing	Additional funding of \$29.9 million to expand the CCCF Restricted Program Around \$55 million per year for the CCCF Restricted program with a further \$44 million per year for the CCCF Open program	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	
Connected Beginnings Expand the Connected Beginnings program. The expansion to 50 sites will increase the number of children benefitting from the program from 8,550 to 13,860.	New Existing	Additional \$81.8 million over 4 years (2021-22 to 2024-25) for expansion to 50 sites Philanthropic Partnership (up to \$2.7 million over 3 years) Approximately \$12 million per year	New sites will be progressively rolled out from November 2020 to June 2025, taking total participant sites to 50	Minister for Education and Youth, Minister for Health and Aged Care	



Early Years Education Program Expansion Support four replication sites for the Early Years Education Program with the aim of lifting school readiness, including cognitive skills, resilience, and socio-emotional development for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The Early Years Education Program is a multi-disciplinary model that offers high quality early education and care, infant mental health and family support, in partnership with families and local community organisations and agencies. A co-design process will be undertaken with local communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders on an Indigenous-specific site.	New	\$9 million from 2021-22 To be supplemented by philanthropic funding and state and territory support	Five years	Minister for Education and Youth	
Early Learning Teaching Model Trial The Commonwealth is committing \$1.9 million to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of a trial of an early learning teaching model, in two selected early childhood education and care services, with a focus on the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	New	\$1.9 million from 2021-22	Two years	Minister for Education and Youth	

Preschool funding arrangements through the Preschool Reform Agreement. Commitment to ongoing funding will facilitate access to quality preschool services through a new Preschool Reform Agreement to be finalised with states and territories. This provides funding for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, to access 15 hours of preschool in the year before school. Work will also focus on improving participation and outcomes for children under the Agreement.	Existing	\$2 billion available across 2022-25 \$33.6 million to improve the quality and transparency of preschool data and to develop a new Preschool Performance Framework	End 2025	Minister for Education and Youth	
Children's Education and Care National Workforce Strategy All governments, in partnership with the early childhood sector, are working to finalise a new Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy. This will include a focus on building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.	Existing	Strategy to be finalised in 2021. All governments and sector to identify potential actions	Ongoing Implementation to begin in 2021	All relevant jurisdictional Ministers	
Develop and deliver the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy. This Strategy will include a whole of government coordination approach to support children to access and benefit from early childhood development and care services.	Existing	No	Mid-2021 for delivery of the Strategy	Minister for Education and Youth, Minister for Health and Aged Care, Minister for Families and Social Services	
Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)	Existing	Around \$27 million per year	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services	



Indigenous Advancement Strategy Program 1.2 - Children and Schooling, Early Childhood Projects This delivers a range of early childhood development and enabling activities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to engage in quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education.	Existing	IAS, Program 1.2 - Children and Schooling - approx. \$48 million over 2020-21	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Inclusion Support Program (ISP) Available to CCS-approved early childhood education and care services nationally, to deliver more inclusive environments for children with additional needs. The ISP aims to give the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children a strong start, while supporting parents into work.	Existing	Targeted funding (general) \$133 million per year	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	
See Outcome 4 Table for more actions					

*Under the National Agreement, Target 3 does not have any indicators/drivers identified. Further work to develop indicators is being considered through the Data Development Plan to be considered by the Joint Council on Closing the Gap by July 2022.

Outcome 4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years

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%.

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Expand the CCCF Restricted program to help reduce barriers to accessing childcare and support child care services to address barriers to participation, in particular in Aboriginal and Torres Strait children. The expansion is expected to benefit an additional 3,500 children.	New Existing	Additional funding of \$29.9 million to expand the CCCF Restricted Program Around \$55 million per year for the CCCF Restricted program with a further \$44 million per year for the CCCF Open program	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Connected Beginnings Expand the Connected Beginnings program.	New Existing	Additional \$81.8 million over 4 years (2021-22 to 2024-25) for expansion to 50 sites Philanthropic Partnership (up to \$2.7 million over 3 years) Approximately \$12 million per year	New sites will be progressively rolled out from November 2020 to June 2025, taking total participant sites to 50	Minister for Education and Youth, Minister for Health and Aged Care	Preschool attendance and enrolment



Early Years Education Program Expansion Support four replication sites for the Early Years Education Program with the aim of lifting school readiness, including cognitive skills, resilience, and socio-emotional development for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	New	\$9 million from 2021-22 To be supplemented by philanthropic funding and state and territory support	Five years	Minister for Education and Youth	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Early Learning Teaching Model Trial The Commonwealth is committing \$1.9 million to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of a trial of an early learning teaching model, in two selected early childhood education and care services, with a focus on the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	New	\$1.9 million from 2021-22	Two years	Minister for Education and Youth	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Place-Based Responses Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families to engage with early years programs and support to meet the developmental needs of the children, through improving cultural safety, place-based responses and integration of services within communities.	Existing	NIAA IAS, Program 1.2 - Children and Schooling - approximately \$48 million over 2020-21	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians Minister for Education and Youth Minister for Families and Social Services; and Minister for Health and Aged Care	Preschool attendance and enrolment



Indigenous Advancement Strategy Program 1.2 – Children and Schooling, Early Childhood Projects Delivers a range of early childhood development and enabling activities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to engage in quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education.	Existing	NIAA IAS, Program 1.2 - Children and Schooling - approximately \$48 million over 2020-21	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Child Care Subsidy (CCS) The CCS supports disadvantaged and vulnerable children attend quality early childhood education and care; families will receive an additional 30% subsidy (up to a maximum rate of 95%) for their second and subsequent children aged six years and under. The CCS annual cap of \$10,560 per child per year for families with incomes between \$189,390 and \$353,680 (2020-21 terms) will also be removed. State and territory governments can contribute to the out of pocket fee on behalf of the family.	Existing	\$9 billion budgeted for 2020-21 Additional \$1.7 billion in 2021-22 for families with multiple children in care	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) The ACCS is part of the Child Care Safety Net, to give the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, as well as those from regional and remote communities, a strong start through access to quality early childhood education and care.	Existing	Targeted funding (general – demand driven)	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Preschool attendance and enrolment
Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services	



Investment in research MRFF Preventive and Public Health Research Initiative includes funding for research focussing on maternal health and the first 2000 days (conception to age 5). MRFF Primary Health Care Research Initiative includes funding research focussing on comprehensive primary health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The NHMRC Targeted Call for Research into Improving Maternal and Child Health in the Early Years is under development and expected to open in late-2021. The 2021-22 Budget announced a new MRFF grant opportunity focusing on Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Existing	\$260.4 million over 10 years for the MRFF Preventive and Public Health Research Initiative \$45 million over 10 years for the MRFF Primary Health Care Research Initiative \$15 million from 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
See Outcome 3 Table for more actions.					



Outcome 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential

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%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
City-Country School Partnerships to Improve Remote School Outcomes \$26 million to incentivise and support large, high performing independent schools to engage in new formal partnerships with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools.	New	\$26 million	2021-24	Minister for Education and Youth, Minister for Indigenous Australians	At or above National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) minimum standards in reading, writing and numeracy for Years, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Mean scores of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 15-year olds in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test
Scaling Up Success Up to \$25 million for evidence-based approaches to address key drivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student education outcomes. This will focus on expanding access to programs that have already proven to be effective in improving primary school reading outcomes.	New	\$25 million	2021-25	Minister for Education and Youth, Minister for Indigenous Australians	At or above National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) minimum standards in reading, writing and numeracy for Years, 3, 5, 7 and 9



Building On Country Boarding Schools Commonwealth investment will provide more options for local secondary education in remote communities. Funding will be provided in line with community partnerships and aspirations to support the construction of three facilities through Studio Schools Australia.	New	\$75 million over four years	2021-25	Minister for Education and Youth Minister for Indigenous Australians Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	School attendance School retention rates
The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) project to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency in the Australian teacher workforce will be implemented in schools Culturally safe classrooms will support students to remain in school for longer.	Existing	Mainstream funding of \$1.6 million over 2018-19 to 2021-22 has been committed to AITSL from the National Schools Reform Fund to undertake this work	Ongoing to June 2022	Minister for Education and Youth	School attendance School retention rates



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Loading element of school recurrent funding This loading provides additional support for students who tend to experience higher levels of educational disadvantage, to help deliver quality teaching and learning. It provides extra funding on top of the base amount for each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student. The amount of extra funding for each student depends on the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the school. It is estimated the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student loading accounts for 1.7% of Commonwealth recurrent school funding expenditure in 2020.	Existing	Targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander funding includes the base schooling resource standard per student amounts, plus loadings for additional needs, such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading which is estimated to provide \$5.6 billion over the same period	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth Delivered jointly with states and territories.	School retention rates At or above National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) minimum standards in reading, writing and numeracy for Years, 3, 5, 7 and 9 Mean scores of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 15-year olds in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test
Working in Partnership Support formal establishment/incorporation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Council (NATSIEC). NATSIEC will provide a collective and representative voice on education matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Existing	\$100,000 (establishment and initial projects)	June 2021	Minister for Education and Youth	School retention rates



Research, tools and strategies to boost Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages education Supporting the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages to boost the long-term uptake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australian school classrooms, through: • research into best-practice implementation of the Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages; • development of resources to promote best-practice implementation of the Framework; and • development of a culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language education workforce strategy.	Existing	\$565,000	2019-20 to 2021-22	Minister for Education and Youth	School attendance School retention rates
Schools and Youth Through the IAS, this funding will assist boarding providers with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote and very remote areas to remain financially sustainable during the COVID 19 recovery period.	Existing	\$16.6 million	2021-22	Minister for Education and Youth Minister for Indigenous Australians	School attendance School retention rates
Girls Academy Through the IAS, support an additional 2,700 places in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls' academies. These places will provide culturally appropriate support to girls and young women to graduate Year 12.	Existing	\$63.5 million	2021-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	School attendance School retention rates



Outcome 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways

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%.

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
VET data The Commonwealth will work with National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and states and territories to improve data collection and sharing including: • Undertaking a quality study to understand the extent of underreporting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status in VET data, through analysis of linked VET data to other data sets through the Multi-Agency Data Integration Project. • Improving the quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data being reported through the implementation of the New VET information standard, drawing on findings of the quality study.	Existing	No	Conduct the quality study in Q2 and Q3 2021 Work progressively with the implementation of the new VET information standard from 2022	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Cert III and above VET commencements, attrition and completion rates



Job-Ready Graduates Package - New Indigenous, Regional and Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) Attainment Fund (IRLSAF) Funds universities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from low SES and regional backgrounds allowing universities to use funds flexibly to best serve their local communities. The IRLSAF combines the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), regional loading and enabling loading. Funding for these programs will be distributed according to existing policy guidelines until 2023. The Government will work with the sector to design the IRLSAF model to support equity outcomes. This model will be implemented from 2024.	Existing	Targeted equity funding with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander component	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years)
Job Ready Graduates package for Universities Demand Driven Funding From 2021, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who live in regional and remote Australia are guaranteed a Commonwealth supported place at a university of their choice, when accepted into their chosen course of study. An eligible university place is a non-designated, bachelor level course at an Australian public university.	Existing	\$17.1 million (2020-21 to 2023-24) in funding approved under the Job-ready Graduates higher education package - targeted funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)



Job-ready Graduates The Job-ready Graduates package will deliver more job-ready graduates in the disciplines and regions where they are needed most, Including: • 50,000 university short courses (2020-21 Budget). This is an additional 50,000 short course places for eligible students in Australia, as part of Higher Education reforms in the October Budget. • 12,000 additional university undergraduate places in 2021 (2020-21 Budget). This is additional university places for Australian students, as part of Higher Education reforms in the October budget.	Existing	\$903.5 million over four years	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)
National Skills Reform Agenda Quality reforms, including revising the Standards for RTOs and developing a VET Workforce Quality Strategy, have been agreed by Commonwealth and state and territory skills ministers. These reforms will lead to enhancements in the quality of training and the quality of RTOs and will help create an environment within the sector which is more supportive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners.	Existing	No	2022	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business This action is delivered jointly with states and territories.	Cert III and above VET commencements, attrition and completion rates



Mission Based Compacts for Universities The Mission-based compacts provide an opportunity for the Commonwealth to focus universities' attention on the Closing the Gap target and articulate how they will contribute to its achievement. The compacts are published annually and universities are required to report against them, providing a level of accountability.	Existing	No	To be renewed 2021	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years)
Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017-2020 As Universities Australia refreshes its Indigenous Strategy during 2021, the Commonwealth will encourage it to consider how the Strategy's targets and reporting could more closely align with the Closing the Gap framework.	Existing	No	From 2021	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)



Australian Apprenticeships programs Current Australian Government funded programs include: - the national Australian Apprenticeships Support Network (AASN), providing support services for employers, apprentices and trainees, including mentoring. - incentives and subsidies for employers of apprentices and trainees, including the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program (AAIP), and the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) wage subsidy. - Trade Support Loans (TSL) for apprentices and trainees. This action is delivered jointly with states or territories.	Existing	\$232 million (administered) budgeted for 2021-22 (\$898 million total budgeted from 2020-21 to 2023-24) for AASN \$1.3 billion (administered) budgeted for 2021-22 (\$5.6 million from 2020-21 to 2023-24) for AAIP \$2.3 billion (administered) budgeted for 2021-22 (\$2.7 billion from 2020-21 to 2023-24) for BAC	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Cert III and above VET commencements, attrition and completion rates
Foundation Skills for Your Future – Remote Community Pilots The pilots aim to test ways to improve access to and development of English language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-people in remote community.	Existing	\$9.9 million to 2022-23 - targeted funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	2020-23	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Cert III and above VET commencements, attrition and completion rates

Foundation skills programs Current programs: - Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program – for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers registered with jobactive. Changes to the SEE, announced through Budget, will deliver more training through flexible place-based models in remote Australia, from July 2023. - Foundation Skills for Your Future program for currently employed or recently unemployed people not registered with job services; includes option for employers to arrange tailored LLND support for their employees.	Existing	\$117 million (administered) budgeted for 2021-22 (\$490.3 million total from 2020-21 to 2023-24) Foundation Skills For Your Future Program: \$14 million (administered) budgeted for 2021-22 (\$50 million total over forward estimates from 2020-21 to 2023-24)	SEE: Ongoing FSFYF: To June 2023	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Cert III and above VET commencements, attrition and completion rates
Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) The HEPPP funds universities to provide support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from low SES and regional backgrounds in accessing and succeeding in higher education. As part of the Job-ready Graduates package, from 2021 the HEPPP is now a component of the Indigenous Regional Low SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF) and has been refocused to support regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as well as those from low SES backgrounds (see above, Job-Ready Graduates Package).	Existing	\$580.3 million over 4 years (2020-21 to 2023-24)	Ongoing commencing 1 January 2021	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)



Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP) Universities use the to provide targeted support services, including scholarships, tutorial assistance, mentoring, providing safe cultural spaces and other personalised support services.	Existing	\$72 million in 2021, Higher Education Support Act 2003	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)
Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding Funding to higher education providers to subsidise tuition costs for higher education students.	Existing	\$7.1 billion in 2019-20 - no targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander funding	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)
Higher Education Loan Program Financial assistance to students which removes up front cost barriers to tertiary education. Repayment of the loans is required once debtor's income reaches the repayment threshold (i.e. income contingent loans).	Existing	\$67 billion total outstanding debt from \$87 billion total debt incurred as at 30 June 2019, 3 million total debtors with outstanding HELP debt as at 30 June 2019 No targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander funding	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)
Regional Partnership Project Pool The Regional Partnership Project Pool will support outreach, raising the aspiration of school students in regional and remote areas, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to attend university.	Existing	\$7.1 million over four years - targeted funding for regional and remote students	Ongoing commencing 1 January 2021	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)



Regional University Centres Regional University Centres help students in regional and remote areas access higher education without having to leave their community. Two of the current Centres, Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation and the Wuyagiba Study Hub Aboriginal Corporation, are located in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory. These centres primarily support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access higher education, and also provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Existing	\$74.2 million since 2018 - targeted funding for regional and remote students	Ongoing	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years) Higher education application, offers and acceptance rates (by gender, SES and ATAR levels)
Rural/regional enterprise scholarship Scholarships are available to eligible students studying from six months full-time up to eight years part-time, for on campus or for online/distance education.	Existing	\$62.6 million since 2016 - targeted funding for regional and remote students	2022-23	Minister for Education and Youth	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years)
Away from Base mixed mode program The Away from Base (AFB) funding program provides financial support and assistance to around 3,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to study via mixed mode or distance education.	Existing	\$14 million per year (NIAA component), Services Australia also run a program that is part of a student's ABSTUDY entitlement - targeted funding for regional and remote students	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians Minister for Families and Social Services	Higher education commencement (university component), attrition, and completion rates (time series, cohort analyses - 4, 6 and 9 years)



Outcome 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people engaged in employment or education

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%.

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
jobactive jobactive is the Australian Government's mainstream employment service that connects job seekers with employers through a network of providers across Australia (excluding remote areas) and helps them find a job.	Existing	jobactive is a demand driven program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2020-21 - \$1,863.2 million 2021-22 - \$2,003.9 million 2022-23 - \$2.8 million	Ongoing Current jobactive deed is due to terminate on 30 June 2022, to be replaced by the New Employment Services Model	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



Disability Employment Services (DES)	Existing	DES is a demand driven program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2020-21 - \$1,417.5 million 2021-22 - \$1,514.9 million 2022-23 - \$1,530.2 million 2023-24 - \$1,514.3 million (note: these amounts also include Employment Assistance and other services)	Ongoing Current DES Grant Agreements is due to expire on 30 June 2023	Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Transition to Work Transition to Work is a demand driven program that provides intensive pre-employment assistance to disadvantaged young people aged 15-24 who are at a high risk of becoming long term unemployed.	Existing	Transition to Work is a demand driven program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2022-23 - \$309.8 million 2023-24 - \$343.9 million 2024-25 - \$320.1 million	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



Youth Jobs PaTH Youth Jobs PaTH is a flexible approach to youth employment that supports young people and employers through three elements— Prepare (Employability Skills Training), Trial (Internships), Hire (Youth Bonus Wage Subsidies).	Existing	Funding for Youth Jobs PaTH is included in the jobactive/New Employment Services Model/ Transition to Work appropriations	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by main reason for not studying in last 12 months
ParentsNext ParentsNext is a pre-employment program that aims to help parents plan and prepare for employment before their youngest child starts school. Parents receive personalised assistance to help them identify their education and employment goals, improve their work readiness and link them to activities and services in the local community.	Existing	ParentsNext is a demand driven program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2020-21 - \$101.6 million 2021-22 - \$107.2 million 2022-23 - \$112.3 million 2023-24 - \$92.6 million	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Time to Work Employment Service The Time to Work Employment Service (TWES) is a national, voluntary in-prison employment service that assists sentenced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access the support they need to better prepare them to find employment and reintegrate into the community upon their release from prison.	Existing	TWES is a capped program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2020-21 - \$3.4 million 2021-22 - \$3.4 million	TWES delivered in non-remote prisons is due to end on 30 June 2022	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



Yarrabah Employment Services	Existing	\$1.3 million each year. Funding for Yarrabah Employment Services Pilot is included in the jobactive/New Employment Services Model appropriation	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
New Business Assistance with New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) NEIS supports all job seekers (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) to gain the skills they need to start a new small business.	Existing	Funding for New Business Assistance with NEIS is included in the jobactive/New Employment Services Model appropriation.	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Community Development Program (CDP) Community Development Program (CDP) is the Australian Government's remote employment and community development service.	Existing	\$296.5 million spent in 2019-20. (Note: This is expected to be higher in 2020-21 in light of increase to CDP caseload)	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Tailored Assistance Employment Grants (TAEG) – Employment Employment is designed to respond flexibly to local employment conditions, and provide training and post-placement support for job seekers to reach 26 weeks sustainable employment.	Existing	Close to \$16 million spent in 2019-20 through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



Tailored Assistance Employment Grants (TAEG) – School Based Traineeship School Based Traineeships are an educational and employment pathway, combining employment as an apprentice or a trainee with vocational training and senior secondary school studies.	Existing	Close to \$4.5 million spent in 2019-20 through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Tailored Assistance Employment Grants (TAEG) – Cadetships Cadetships support university students to complete their studies, while at the same time providing practical work experience to improve employment prospects	Existing	Close to \$3.8 million spent in 2019-20 through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Vocational Training and Employment Centres (VTEC) VTEC is a Commonwealth program that directly places Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers into employment through providing job-specific training, a guaranteed job and post-placement mentoring.	Existing	\$10 million spent in 2019-20 through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Employment Parity Initiative (EPI) EPI aims to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees working in large Australian companies supported by culturally appropriate recruitment, retention and career advancement practices.	Existing	Close to \$11 million spent in 2019-20 through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



The new Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) ISEP will contribute to closing the gap in employment by supporting pathways to meaningful and sustainable employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, through flexible, place-based investment. The ISEP will replace TAEG/Vocational Training and Employment Centres/Employment Parity Initiative from July 2022.	Existing	Annual funding commencing at \$42.8 million in 2022-23 will be available through the IAS	Commencing in July 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Indigenous Business Sector Strategy (IBSS) IBSS will help more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people build sustainable businesses that will support themselves, their families and their communities.	Existing	Likely up to \$200 million over ten years but final amount TBC - through the IAS	The IBSS is a 10-year strategy being implemented from 2018-28	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Indigenous Business and Employment Hubs Under the Indigenous Business Sector Strategy, the Government is delivering three Indigenous Business and Employment Hubs. The Hubs are for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs and job seekers to access the support they need to connect to commercial and employment opportunities.	Existing	Over \$20 million combined to help establish the first two Hubs - Yarpa and Wirra - through the IAS	Two Hubs already operational - in Western Sydney (Yarpa Hub) and Perth (Wirra Hub). Third Hub TBC	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) The IPP facilitates employment opportunities by requiring high value Commonwealth contracts in selected industry sectors to meet targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation (either employment or supplier use, or a combination of both).	Existing	No	N/A	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work



The Indigenous Employment and Supplier-Use Infrastructure Framework This aims to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and stimulate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business participation in the delivery of co-government funded land transport infrastructure projects.	Existing	No	NPA expires 30 June 2024	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
The Indigenous Employment and Supplier-Use Water Infrastructure Framework This aims to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and supplier-use in the delivery of water infrastructure projects funded or co-funded by the Australian Government.	Existing	No	Ongoing (from 1 July 2021)	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
Indigenous Local Employment fund (ILEF) ILEF grants will enable innovative and short-term responses to barriers to local employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly where COVID-19 may have had a significant impact on employment and job opportunities.	Existing	Initial cap of \$3 million, increased based on demand, from IAS	Time-limited to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of youth Not Engaged in Employment, Education or Training by disability, long term health condition, caring responsibility, looking for work
See Outcomes 6 and 8 Tables for more actions					



Outcome 8: Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

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

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Prison to Work Pilots The Commonwealth is working with states and territories to pilot innovative options to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners to transition to employment.	Existing	\$11.3 million committed to date	Pilots ending on different dates, last date 30 June 2023	Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Time to Work Employment Service - remote TWES is a voluntary, in-prison program for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners, which provides facilitated employment assessments, assistance with transition plan development and connects prisoners with post-release employment service providers.	Existing	\$667,798 spent as at 28 February 2021 for remote service delivery through the IAS	Funding committed to 30 June 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians – remote service delivery only	
Local Jobs Program The Local Jobs Program, which commenced in late 2020 in response to COVID-19, is being expanded from 25 employment regions to all 51 employment regions across Australia. The program is also being extended to finish on 30 June 2025.	Existing	\$209.6 million over 5 years	Ends 30 June 2025	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	



New Employment Services Model The New Employment Services Model will replace jobactive in 2022. The new model will deliver a modern and sophisticated service, where job-ready job seekers can self-manage through Digital Services.	Existing	New Employment Services Model is a demand driven program funded under an Annual Appropriation 2021-22 - \$8.5 million 2022-23 - \$1,467.1 million 2023-24 - \$1,765.8 million 2024-25 - \$1,690.1 million	2022	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business	
Early Stage Social Enterprise Foundation Providing capacity building and financial support for enterprises that improve the economic security and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.	Existing (announced in 2021-22 Budget)	\$13.9 million to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to establish	2024-25	Prime Minister	
See Outcome 7 Table for more actions					



Outcome 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs

Target 9: By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Indigenous Home Ownership Program (IHOP) IHOP delivered through Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) supports long term wealth creation by providing access to finance for purchasing homes.	Existing	\$150 million capital injection via 2020-21 Budget measure	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Change in population by location
National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) While housing and homelessness service delivery is primarily a state and territory responsibility, the Australian Government improves housing and homelessness outcomes for all Australians through the NHHA, which provides around \$1.6 billion a year.	Existing	\$1.6 billion per year to states	State and territory bilateral agreements expire 30 June 2023	Minister for Housing/Minister for Homelessness, Social and Community Housing	Change in social housing dwellings by location
National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) Review The Productivity Commission will commence a review of the NHHA in 2021, which will help inform future policy arrangements beyond 30 June 2023, including housing and homelessness outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including those with disability.	Existing	No	2021	Minister for Housing and Minister for Homelessness, Social and Community Housing Treasurer	Change in social housing dwellings by location Change in population by location



Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) Provide financial support for the cost of renting for low income households.	Existing	Estimated \$5.3 billion in 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services	Change in population by location
The National Partnership for Remote Housing in the Northern Territory (NPRHNT) Delivered jointly with the Northern Territory (NT) Government and supports the construction of new and upgraded Indigenous housing in remote areas and provision of property and tenancy management services.	Existing	\$550 million over five years to 2022-23, matched by NT bringing total investment to \$1.1 billion	To 2022-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Change in social housing dwellings by location Change in population by location
Community-controlled housing in the Northern Territory As part of the current National Remote Partnership, the Australian and NT Governments will undertake a joint review of the leasing model, and through the Local Decision Making process, continue the work towards options for sustainable remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community housing models in the NT.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Change in social housing dwellings by location
Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) AHL provides safe, comfortable and culturally appropriate accommodation services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who must live away from home to access services and economic opportunity.	Existing	IAS funding agreement administered by the NIAA Annual appropriation, under Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio Other state and territory government funding	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	



National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHIFC) NHIF funds Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (AHBA) for low cost, long-term loans to registered community housing providers (CHPs) to support the provision of more social and affordable housing.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Housing/Minister for Homelessness, Social and Community Housing	Change in social housing dwellings by location
Barkly Regional Deal Includes a key outcome to address overcrowding by addressing housing supply.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories	Change in social housing dwellings by location Change in population by location



Outcome 10: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

Target 10: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Justice Policy Partnership Support the establishment of a Justice Policy Partnership, with an accelerated establishment date of 2021.	New	\$7.6 million, over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24)	Established in 2021	Attorney-General and Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) to provide legal assistance to families of deceased individuals in coronial inquiries, and to support clients involved in complex and/or expensive criminal cases. Appropriate legal representation in these matters supports the identification and resolution of systemic issues which drive deaths in custody and over-incarceration.	New	\$9.3 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25)	2021-25	Attorney-General	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence) Proportion of prisoners by legal status (sentenced vs unsentenced); and by sentence length



Implementation of the <i>Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment</i> (OPCAT) Funding to jurisdictions to support their implementation of the OPCAT which mandates regular inspections of places of detention, including prisons and youth centres in all states and territories and facilities under the control of the Commonwealth.	New	N/A	2021-23	Attorney-General	
Support Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations Assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families resolve post-separation parenting and property disputes through culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution.	New	A total of \$8.3 million over three years	2021-22 to 2023-24	Attorney-General	Mental health, substance abuse issues, family history of incarceration, employment post release, history of victimisation Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence)
Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) and Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs) Increase funding for DVUs and HJPs, including dedicated funding for outreach in rural, remote and regional areas in all jurisdictions other than the ACT.	Existing	A total of \$17.1 million over four years from 2021, \$4.2 million of which is dedicated outreach funding	The measure is due to commence 1 July 2021 and is ongoing	Attorney-General	
Funding for additional Indigenous Liaison Officers (ILOs) Support existing family law Specialist Indigenous Lists.	Existing	A total of \$2.1 million over four years from 2021, ongoing	Ongoing	Attorney-General	
Additional funding for Children's Contact Services Reduce safety risks to family law system users.	Existing	A total of \$101.4 million over four years from 2021, ongoing	Ongoing	Attorney-General	



Funding provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS) Legal assistance through the National Legal Assistance Partnership Agreement 2020-25.	Existing	More than \$440 million over five years	2020-25	Attorney-General	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence) Proportion of prisoners by legal status (sentenced vs unsentenced); and by sentence length
Indigenous Advancement Strategy Safety and Wellbeing Program Funding provided to complement efforts by states and territories to improve justice outcomes.	Existing	\$261.3 million in 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence) Proportion of prisoners by legal status (sentenced vs unsentenced); and by sentence length Proportion of prisoners previously incarcerated; number of unique episodes of incarceration Mental health, substance abuse issues, family history of incarceration, employment post release, history of victimisation Entry rate to incarceration – newly sentenced to prison



Continue to deliver actions in response to the Council of Australian Governments' Prison to Work Report. Funding for TWES in non-remote prisons administered by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment. TWES delivered in non-remote prisons has been extended to 30 June 2022.	Existing	\$21.492 million over five years (2017-18 to 2021-22)	2017-18 to 2021-22	Minister for Indigenous Australians, Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business	Proportion of prisoners previously incarcerated; number of unique episodes of incarceration Mental health, substance abuse issues, family history of incarceration, employment post release, history of victimisation
National Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategic Action Plan 2018-28 Continue work to improve justice system responses to those with a cognitive impairment through existing projects under the Plan.	Existing	\$7 million committed for FASD Action Plan (2018-28)	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care, Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence) Proportion of prisoners by legal status (sentenced vs unsentenced); and by sentence length Proportion of prisoners previously incarcerated; number of unique episodes of incarceration Entry rate to incarceration – newly sentenced to prison



Outcome 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

Target 11: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) in detention by at least 30%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Justice Policy Partnership Support the establishment of a Justice Policy Partnership, with an accelerated establishment date of 2021.	New	\$7.6 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24)	Established in 2021	Attorney-General and Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) Provide legal assistance to families of deceased individuals in coronial inquiries, and to support clients involved in complex and/or expensive cases. Appropriate legal representation in these matters supports the identification and resolution of systemic issues which drive deaths in custody and over-incarceration.	New	\$9.3 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25)	2021-25	Attorney-General	Un-sentenced detention rates Average time in detention for unsentenced youth Proportion of young people convicted and sentenced, by type of sentence (community supervision, detention) Entrant rate to detention – newly sentenced to youth detention



Implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment (OPCAT) Funding to jurisdictions to support their implementation of the OPCAT which mandates regular inspections of places of detention, including prisons and youth centres in all states and territories and facilities under the control of the Commonwealth.	New	N/A	2021-23	Attorney-General	
Support Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations Assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families resolve post-separation parenting and property disputes through culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution.	New	A total of \$8.3 million three years	2021-22 to 2023-24	Attorney-General	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people convicted and sentenced (by offence and type of sentence)
National Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategic Action Plan 2018-28 Continue work to improve justice system responses to those with a cognitive impairment through existing projects and under the Plan.	Existing	\$7 million committed for FASD Action Plan (2018-28)	Ongoing	Minister for Health, Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of young alleged offenders (10-17 years) involved in police proceedings including charges and summons, cautions, diversions Entrant rate to detention – newly sentenced to youth detention Proportion of young people first coming into youth justice system aged 10-13 (offending and courts data, first entry to detention)



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

Target 12: By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45%.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Improving multidisciplinary responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with multiple and complex needs Redesigning service models to effectively respond to multiple and interrelated issues in families (such as family violence, mental and physical health problems, substance use and disability), which may lead to child abuse and neglect. This includes embedding the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Child Placement Principle in the service model re-design	New	N/A	2021-22 to 2025-26	Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of children on care and protection order that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Developing an Outcomes and Evidence Fund It will be based on co-design and outcomes based funding, to incentivise service delivery and develop evidence of what works to facilitate transformational change.	New	\$38.6 million	2021-2022 to 2023-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	Proportion of children in out-of-home care (0-17 years old) that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Developing the cultural competency and trauma responsiveness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous child and family sector workforce engaged through the Department of Social Services (DSS) grant funding.	New	\$7.7 million over three years	2021-22 to 2023-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	



Assess the needs and increasing the involvement of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations in the child and family sector	New	\$3.2 million over two years	2021-22 to 2022-23	Minister for Families and Social Services	
Formalise Partnership Arrangements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners Formal partnership elements to be considered in progressing Commonwealth implementation actions for Outcome 12, where possible. There is \$2.6 million of ongoing funding available under the current National Framework, which may be used for establishing formalised partnership arrangements through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance structure.	Existing	No	Mid-2022	Minister for Families and Social Services Assistant Minister for Children and Families	
The new National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children The Framework is the key mechanism for the Commonwealth to address Target 12, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to be a focus. There is \$2.6 million of ongoing funding available under the current National Framework.	Existing	\$2.6 million	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services Assistant Minister for Children and Families	Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care Proportion of children in out-of-home care (0-17 years old) that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Proportion of children on a care and protection order that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Family and children Activity grants and ensuring progress against Closing the Gap.	Existing	Over \$290 million in 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services	

Outcome 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe

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%, as progress towards zero.

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Deliver the next National Plan to End Violence against Women and their Children (the National Plan) The National Plan will be delivered in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence to design strategies and measures under the next National Plan. In the 2021-22 Budget, the Australian Government announced an investment of \$1.1 billion in women's safety measures, as a down payment on the next National Plan. Future funding under the next National Plan will take into account feedback received through consultation including the National Summit on Women's Safety.	New	\$1.1 billion under the National Plan	Next National Plan to commence in July 2022.	Minister for Families and Social Services and Minister for Women's Safety Minister for Women	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women reporting family violence is common in their communities Rate of community attitudinal support (acceptance) of violence against women and children (justifying, excusing, minimising, hiding or shifting blame for family violence)
Developing an Outcomes and Evidence Fund This will be based on co-design and outcomes based funding, to incentivise service delivery and develop evidence of what works to facilitate transformational change.	New	\$38.6 million	2021-2022 to 2023-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	Rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community awareness of what constitutes family violence Rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection substantiations related to family violence



National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse A 10-year whole-of-nation framework to establish a coordinated and consistent approach to prevent and better respond to child sexual abuse in Australia. This includes \$10.9 million in new funding to co-design place-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing approaches to support survivors of child sexual abuse.	Existing	\$146 million over four years for all measures announced (noting all these measures will include specific consideration of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their implementation) As part of the \$146 million package, \$10.9 million in new funding to NIAA	2023-24	Prime Minister	Rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection substantiations related to family violence Rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering out-of-home care and receiving protection orders, where family violence is indicated
Develop resources that aim to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls with a disability, and improve service responses when violence occurs.	Existing	\$9.3 million	2021-22 to 2023-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	Rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community awareness of what constitutes family violence Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people identifying certain behaviours as forms of family violence
Women's Safety Better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children who have experienced or are experiencing family violence.	Existing	\$26 million (includes \$17m to expand the FVPLS sector, and \$6m to build the capability and quality of family safety services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients)	2021-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women self-reporting physical violence experience, by relationship to perpetrator Rates of hospitalisation for family violence assaults for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children; by relationship to perpetrator



Improve information sharing between the family law and the family violence and child protection systems To achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families interacting with the family law system, including managing risk to family safety.	Existing	\$29 million over four years from 2021-22, and then \$5.3 million per year ongoing	Framework to be agreed by the Meeting of Attorneys-General by the end of 2021, and then ongoing	Attorney-General	
Funding for the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS)	Existing	\$75 million over 2020-23	2020-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women self-reporting physical violence experience, by relationship to perpetrator Rates of hospitalisation for family violence assaults for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children; by relationship to perpetrator
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence	Existing	\$1 million over three years from 2021-22	2021-24	Minister for Families and Social Services	
Establish the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personal Safety Survey It will be conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).	Existing	\$31.6 million over five years commencing 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services	
Establishing a comprehensive data and reporting system on family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV)	Existing	\$11.6 million over four years commencing 2021-22	2024-25	Minister for Families and Social Services	



Linking Crime and Justice Data This funding will enable the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW), in collaboration with ABS, to undertake a pilot to assess the feasibility of linking crime and justice data with other strategically important datasets.	Existing	\$2.4 million	2021-25	Minister for Housing	
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Outcome 14: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

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

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme	New	\$378.6 million over five years	2025-26	Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Indigenous Advancement Strategy - 1.3 Safety and Wellbeing Program - Alcohol and Other Drugs services (AOD) and Low Aromatic Fuel (LAF) activities The Safety and Wellbeing Program is about making communities safer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and enabling them to enjoy similar levels of physical, emotional and social wellbeing as those enjoyed by non-Indigenous people. Additional investment in alcohol and other drug treatment services will increase access to enhanced outcomes-focused alcohol and other drugs treatment services; enable overdue repairs of AOD infrastructure and some new services, strengthen the capacity of the AOD workforce and improve data collection and reporting	Existing New	Under the IAS, NIAA currently provides around \$70 million funding per year in support of around 75 organisations to provide culturally safe AOD treatment and related support services The Australian Government has committed \$36.25 million through the IAS over three years to June 2023 for the production, transport and storage of low aromatic fuel through BP Australia and Viva Energy Australia to reduce petrol sniffing in	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Non-fatal hospitalisations for intentional self-harm Intentional self-harm mortality rate (suicide) Hospitalisations for mental health-related disorders



		regional and remote communities. Through the IAS the NIAA also supports a range of other harm reduction and diversion measures targeted at harmful volatile substance use (\$3.6 million in 2020-21) Existing funding for AOD services under the IAS will be bolstered by around \$66 million over the forward estimates. This ongoing funding for AOD services and support will ramp up from around \$13 million administered in 2022-23 to an average of around \$20 million administered per year from 2023-24 Through IAS Safety and Wellbeing Program 1.3, NIAA is also investing over \$52 million (2020-21) to deliver social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) services and workforce development.			
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The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013 (NATSISPS) The NATSISPS is being refreshed, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and will support the development of community integrated regional suicide prevention plans to ensure crucial local suicide prevention services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes: • \$27.3 million to implement and evaluate culturally-sensitive, co-designed aftercare services through regionally-based organisations, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations being preferred service providers; • \$23.8 million to support the establishment of regional suicide prevention networks and a lead commissioning officer in each jurisdiction • \$16.6 million to establish and evaluate a culturally appropriate 24/7 crisis line to be governed and delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; • \$6.1 million to support national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership for suicide prevention; • \$1.5 million to support a review to examine the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector delivering	Existing	The 2021-22 Budget announced an additional \$79 million to implement key initiatives under the renewed Strategy \$12 million is also being provided to maintain local initiatives across Australia at the former National suicide prevention trial sites, including two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific sites.	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	Non-fatal hospitalisations for intentional self-harm Intentional self-harm mortality rate (suicide) Hospitalisations for mental health-related disorders
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mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and \$1.1 million to the Black Dog Institute to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience Centre to support the inclusion of people with lived experience in the co-design, implementation and evaluation of suicide prevention activity.					
The National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing The Framework is being refreshed and an implementation plan developed.	Existing	Funding for this will be determined following receipt of advice to Government and agreement to what is proposed.	Gayaa Dhuwi commenced work in early 2021 with advice to Government anticipated in 2021-22	Minister for Health and Aged Care and Minister for Indigenous Australians	
Strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners The Commonwealth will continue to partner at the national level with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in mental health, suicide prevention and social and emotional wellbeing. This includes through Gayaa Dhuwi, the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national leadership body for social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention.	Existing	\$4.5 million from 2019-20 to 2021-22 Gayaa Dhuwi will receive \$6.1 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to continue to be supported as the national leadership and governance body and to provide oversight and implement the NATSISPS	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care and Minister for Indigenous Australians	



Mental health workforce National Mental Health Workforce Strategy is currently under development. This work is in line with calls from the Productivity Commission's Inquiry Report on Mental Health (Recommendation 16). The Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme (PHMSS) is being boosted by 20 more scholarships over 2 years for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying mental health related disciplines in a university or a TAFE.	Existing	\$8.3 million to support greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the mental health workforce through 20 additional mental health specific scholarships, and providing training to support healthcare workers to deliver culturally safe care	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
Increasing the research and evidence-base National survey to measure, for the first time, the prevalence of mental health in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Five research grants have also been funded through the NHMRC Targeted Call for Research into Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples from Early Life to Young Adults.	Existing	\$30.5 million for a national survey to measure, for the first time, the prevalence of mental health in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population Approximately \$6 million over five years, commencing in 2018, of NHMRC grants	Grant completion expected in 2023	Minister for Health and Aged Care	
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan – Mental Health Funding from the Health Plan for Primary Health Networks to administer the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health program.	Existing	For the period of 2016-17 to 2022-23 a total of \$201.6 million has been allocated to this activity		Minister for Health and Aged Care	Non-fatal hospitalisations for intentional self-harm Intentional self-harm mortality rate (suicide) Hospitalisations for mental health-related disorders



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

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

Target 15b: By 2030, a 15% increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in the sea.

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Capacity building funding to support Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and to the National Native Title Council (NNTC) to develop shared reform priorities.	Existing	IAS funding to the PBC Capacity Building program of \$47 million over 4 years available to support PBCs PBC Reform Project funding of \$300,000 per year over 3 years to NNTC	Consultations for PBC Reform Project to begin in 2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles
Funding a network of 15 Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers (NTRB SPs) for operational purposes and the performance of statutory functions under the <i>Native Title Act 1993 (NTA)</i> and to support PBCs.	Existing	Approximately \$100 million per year through the IAS	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles Number of positive Native Title Determinations



Establishing a new Aboriginal-controlled body to empower Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to invest in their communities for generations to come.	Existing	Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) funding of \$500 million initial endowment Around \$60 million per year for 3 years from 2021-22 to 2023-14, followed by ongoing funding set by the Minister for Indigenous Australians	Enabling legislation being prepared for passage in 2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles Number of land claims resolved under Government, state and territory land rights legislation
Funding the four Northern Territory Land Councils for operational purposes and the performance of statutory functions under the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976</i> (ALRA). Funding and supporting the operations of the Aboriginal Land Commissioner who conducts formal land claim inquiries under the ALRA.	Existing	ABA funding to Land Councils \$86.2 million in 2020-21 IAS funding to Aboriginal Land Commissioner funding of \$579,000 in 2020-21	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles Number of land claims resolved under Government, state and territory land rights legislation
Funding the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people acquire land and water related rights and manage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander held land and waters to provide economic, environmental, social or cultural benefits.	Existing	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land and Sea Future Fund of \$52 million per year	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles
Native Title Research Unit (NTRU) of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to undertake research and provide educational tools and resources to support the native title system.	Existing	IAS funding of \$1.37 million per year over 3 years, 2018-19 to 2020-21	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	



Funding for the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council for operational purposes and the performance of statutory functions under the <i>Aboriginal Land Grant (Jervis Bay Territory) Act 1986</i> .	Existing	IAS funding of \$1.44 million operational funding in 2020-21; and \$4.36 million in 2019-20 for operational funding and community housing construction and restoration	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's owned land and water titles Number of land claims resolved under Government, state and territory land rights legislation
Reform of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) to improve PBCs as community-controlled corporations.	Existing	No	To be determined by Government	Minister for Indigenous Australians	
National Native Title Tribunal and the Federal Court of Australia's native title practice area	Existing	Approximately \$294 million in 2020-21	Ongoing	Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General	Number of positive Native Title Determinations
Federal Court of Australia appointment of an Indigenous Registrar to co-mediate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disputes.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General	Number of positive Native Title Determinations



Federal Court of Australia to engage with external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediators to appropriately co-mediate disputes.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General	Number of positive Native Title Determinations
Native Title Anthropologists Grants Program	Existing	\$337,000 in 2020-21	Ongoing	Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General	Number of positive Native Title Determinations
<i>Native Title Legislation Amendment Act 2021</i>	Existing	IAS funding of \$7.1 million over 3 years, 2021-22 to 2023-24 to assist PBCs to implement reforms which affect PBCs	March 2021	Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General and Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of positive Native Title Determinations
Extending the funding of the Indigenous Ranger program	Existing	IAS funding of \$748 million over 7 years, 2021-22 to 2027-28	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	



Funding Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) program The Commonwealth has also committed to expanding and creating new IPAs over sea country.	Existing	IAS funding of \$87.8 million over 3 years, 2020-21 to 2022-23, plus \$11.6 million to June 2023 for sea country Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's Natural Heritage Trust funding of \$15 million over 6 years, 2016-17 to 2022-23 (existing)	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians and Minister for the Environment	
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Outcome 16: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing

Target 16: By 2031, there is a sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.					
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) program Increased investment in: - supporting existing ILA-funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres to expand their capacity to do more of the critical work that will meet Target 16 - establishing new Commonwealth-funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres - Augmenting existing projects that protect the most at-risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages New pilot program: place-based partnerships between Indigenous language centres and service delivery partners in health and early childhood	Existing New New	Approx. \$20 million existing investment Additional investment of \$18.5 million Additional investment of \$4.3 million in pilot program	Ongoing Ongoing from 2021-22 2021-22 to 2023-24	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language Number and age profile of the speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including children
United Nations (UN) International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-32	Existing	No	2022-32	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	



Indigenous Language Dictionaries Project	Existing	\$2.48 million (over five years)	2018-19 to 2022-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language
National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI)	Existing	\$3.2 million (over eight years)	2015-16 to 2021-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language
Kimberley Aboriginal Language Interpreting	Existing	\$1.8 million (over five years)	2018-19 to 2022-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language
Legal Interpreting Services NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet	Existing	\$4.788 million (over four years)	2018-19 to 2021-22	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language



Cross Border Indigenous Interpreting NT Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet	Existing	\$2 million (over five years)	2018-19 to 2022-23	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages categorised as strong Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language
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Outcome 17: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives

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

Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?	What indicator does this action impact?
Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan Consider Government investments to date to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander digital inclusion and identify priorities for further work, focussing on the three areas of access, affordability and digital ability.	Existing	No	2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet
Remote Indigenous Telecommunications activities Monitor and maintain network of up to 245 community payphones and 301 Wi-Fi telephones in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Existing	Approximately \$4 million per year under the IAS	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet
Indigenous broadcasting and media activities Provision of funding to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media activities nationally, mainly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community broadcasting.	Existing	Approximately \$21 million per year under the IAS	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians	Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in media

Regional Tech Hub This service provides assistance and resources to regional, rural and remote consumers to help them maximise the benefits of available telecommunications products and services.	Existing	\$916,000 in funding under the Regional Connectivity Program	2020-21	Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet
Universal Service Guarantee (USG) Telecommunications (including the Universal Service Obligation (USO) for voice and payphone services) - legislated funding mechanisms enabling all people in Australia to access baseline fixed telephone, payphone and broadband services on commercial terms.	Existing	\$230 million per year for basic telephony; \$40 million per year for payphones nationally, not specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	Ongoing under law but the current funding agreement with Telstra ends 30 June 2032	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	Levels of digital inclusion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as compared with other Australians
Mobile Black Spot Program A competitive grants program to improve mobile phone infrastructure in regional and remote Australia.	Existing	\$380 million over seven rounds. The rollout for Rounds 1-5 is underway \$80 million is available for Round 6	Announcement of Round 5A outcomes expected in July 2021 Round 6 will follow Round 5A	Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet
Regional Connectivity Program A competitive grants program targeting place-based telecommunications infrastructure that maximise economic and social opportunities in regional, rural and remote Australia.	Existing	\$90.3 million (GST inclusive) was provided to support 81 'place-based' telecommunications infrastructure projects across regional, rural and remote Australia	On 16 April 2021, the Government announced that 81 Projects had been funded under the Program. Round 1 Projects are scheduled for completion by 30 June 2022	Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet



Northern Australia - Regional Connectivity and Mobile Black Spot Programs – additional funding	Existing	As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Government committed a further \$84.8 million to the program In addition, \$68.5 million has been allocated in dedicated funding to improve telecommunications infrastructure in Northern Australia through the RCP and MBSP	Funding is allocated over 2021-22 and 2022-23	Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet
NBN Co's \$300 million Regional Co-investment Fund To improve broadband services over the NBN network to households, businesses and communities in regional areas - NBN Co has created this fund which it will use to invest alongside governments and local councils to improve broadband services where those investment would otherwise be sub-commercial.	Existing	NBN Co has an overall funding envelope which it may use in regional areas in partnership with governments and local councils	30 June 2024	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households accessing the internet
NBN Co initiative – connection Connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services-focus on regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander locations with low digital participation rates	Existing	No	2021-22	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the internet



NBN Co Initiatives – capability Develop and launch a capability framework and tool to assess and identify digital ability down to the individual and community level. Informed by the capability framework, develop and launch a digital literacy program to encourage safe and productive online participation, including access to Government services online. Promote and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business participation and innovation online through the Innovate with NBN Grants Program.	Existing	No	Capability Tool launched February 2021 Digital Literacy program - ongoing Innovate with NBN Grants Program 2020-21	Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts	Levels of digital inclusion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as compared with other Australians
Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander servicing in Services Australia Reconciliation Action Plan: Action item 26: Undertake trials into improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander servicing. Action item 27: Ensure the digital strategy considers the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Action item 28: Ensure online and mobile apps are culturally appropriate and supportive of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers Action 32: Develop digital content to help preserve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.	Existing	No	2018-22	Minister for Government Services and National Disability Insurance Scheme	



National Agent and Access Point (NAAP) program in Services Australia To enable regional and remote customers to access government services without needing to travel long distances to visit a service centre.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Government Services and National Disability Insurance Scheme	Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people using internet to access government services for private purposes Frequency of internet access at home in last 12 months (daily, weekly, monthly, yearly)
2021 Regional Telecommunications Review Every three years the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee (RTIRC) examines the adequacy of regional telecommunications, consulting publicly including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Existing	No	Report is due by 31 December 2021	Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education	Levels of digital inclusion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as compared with other Australians



Cross-cutting Outcome Area: Disability

Cross-cutting area: Disability				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Continue to fund First Peoples Disability Network to provide systemic advocacy as the Disability Representative Organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability	Existing	\$0.32 million per year to 2021-22	Ongoing	Minister for Families and Social Services
Counselling and Advocacy Support Services: Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability	Existing	\$102 million (2019-22)	June 2022	Minister for Families and Social Services
Support an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individual community advocates	Existing	\$0.65 million	June 2022	Minister for Families and Social Services
Consultation and direct engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the design and delivery of disability employment supports , including reforms to the current Disability Employment Services (DES) program, which ends 30 June 2023.	Existing	No	Consultation process ends 2023	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business
Continue work to improve justice system responses to those with a cognitive impairment through existing projects the National Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Strategic Action Plan 2018-28.	Existing	\$7 million committed for FASD Action Plan (2018-28)	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care, Minister for Families and Social Services
Implement and monitor the National Disability Data Asset (NDDA) - pilot	Existing	\$15 million Commonwealth funding. (administered)	April 2020 - September 2021	Minister for Families and Social Services



Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability continue to be a priority cohort within the community under the current Information, Linkages and Capacity building (ILC) Investment Strategy 2018-22 and in the development of a new ILC strategy beyond 2024-25.	Existing	\$34.9 million for 36 grants specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	November 2019 to June 2022 2022-25	Minister for Families and Social Services
NDIS Ready: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Market Capability project	Existing	\$5.9 million from the NDIS Jobs and Market Fund	October 2020 - June 2022	Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Leverage the Younger People in Residential Aged Care (YPIRAC) Strategy 2020-25 to reduce the number of younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability living in aged care accommodation.	Existing	\$10.6 million from 2020–21 to 2022–23 (Department of Health) for System Coordinators to actively engage with younger people living in, or at risk of entering residential aged care, and help them navigate various state and federal government systems	2025	Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Minister for Health and Aged Care Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services
Identify new strategies to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with a disability in schools through the Allied Health in Remote Schools project.	Existing	\$2.2 million ending 2023	Dec 2023	Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability participating in the NDIS , through NDIA's implementation of the NDIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy.	Existing	\$20 million for national community connectors program from 2019-20 to 2020-21, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a priority cohort for this program	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business Minister for National Disability Insurance Scheme



Improve the hearing health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through additional and tailored hearing services under the Community Service Obligations component of the Australian Government Hearing Services Program provided by Australian Hearing.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care
Implement the NDIS Workforce Strategy – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Initiative.	Existing	No	2021-25	Minister for Families and Social Services Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Ensure NDIS thin markets projects are culturally appropriate	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for National Disability Insurance Scheme
Leverage the Indigenous Business Sector Strategy 2018–28 to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses delivering culturally relevant services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait-Islander people with a disability in the NDIS.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business
Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-31	Existing	No	2021-31	Minister for Families and Social Services
A National Early Childhood Program to provide information, linkages and community-based supports for young children (birth to school age) with emerging developmental concerns or disability outside the NDIS including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	Existing	\$17.9 million over 4 years	June 2025	Minister for Families and Social Services



Cross-cutting Outcome Area: Gender and Sexuality

Cross-cutting: Gender and Sexuality				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Explore options for the development of a mandatory APS wide culturally sensitive gender training to inform decision makers, policy, program and frontline-officers	New	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians
Stage Two Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's voices) project Support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Ms June Oscar AO to deliver the Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) Project.	Existing	\$2.97 million over 2017-2021 Stage 1: \$1.27 million (2017-18 to 2018-19) Stage 2: \$1.7 million (2018-19 to 2020-21)	April 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians, supported by ministers responsible for implementation of relevant recommendations



Cross-cutting Outcome Area: Aged Care

Cross-cutting area: Aged Care				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Improve access to aged care services The 2021-22 Budget announced a number of targeted measures to improve consumer experience by assisting older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive quality and culturally safe aged care services, can access advice to make informed decisions about their care, and are treated with dignity and respect. Indigenous Employment Initiative (IEI) program	Existing	\$106 million for a workforce of 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide trusted face to face support and assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people better navigate and access care \$396.9 million for aged services to upgrade existing infrastructure, including to connect residential facilities with communities On Country and provide essential staff housing. This funding will also assist ACCHS to expand into aged care \$61.6 million in for the 43 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Care Services (NATSIFCS) program	Ongoing	Minister for Health and Aged Care



		\$8 million to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with governance, business, training and leadership The IEL program funds up to \$86 million over three years (2020-21 to 2022-23)		
Targeted research to support healthy ageing The following grants are also being provided under the NHMRC Targeted Call for Research: • Six research grants into Healthy Ageing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples • Five research grants into Dementia in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Existing	The NHMRC research grants into Healthy Ageing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are receiving approximately \$6 million over five years, commencing in 2019 The NHMRC research grants into Dementia for Indigenous Australians Healthy Ageing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are receiving approximately \$14 million over five years, commencing in 2018	Research underway for five years	Minister for Health and Ageing



Further Actions: Local Regional outcomes

Local and Regional Outcomes				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Services Australia - Provision of Remote Service Continuation measures under the 2020-21 Budget to deliver government payments and services in remote locations, particularly in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Northern Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania.	Existing	\$99.3 million	from 2021-22 to 2025-26	Minister for Government Services
Our North, Our Future: 2021-2026 – Next Five Year Plan.	Existing	\$189.6 million	from 2021-22 to 2025-26	Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia and Assistant Minister for Northern Australia
Barkly Regional Deal	Existing	\$45.4 million	from 2019-20 to 2029-30	Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories
Hinkler Regional Deal	Existing	\$172.9 million	2020-25	Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories
Regional Recovery Partnerships	Existing	\$100 million	2020-21 to 2021-22	Deputy Prime Minister
Stronger Places, Stronger People	Existing	\$35 million	From 2018-19 over five years until 30 June 2024	Minister for Families and Social Services
Progress in Australian Regions Dashboard	Existing	No	December annual - ongoing	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development



Regional Data Hub through the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program	Existing	\$13.7 million to the Better Data Use to Support Delivery for Regional Australians program over 4 years from 2020-21	2020-21 to 2023-24	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
Regional Recovery Partnerships	Existing	\$100 million	2020-21 to 2021-22	Deputy Prime Minister



Further Actions: Other Actions

Other Actions				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Reduction and prevention activities to reduce the economic and environmental burden of established feral animals, pests and weeds	Existing	\$29.1 million	2022	Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management
Grants to improve the food security of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	Existing	\$5 million	2021-22	Minister for Indigenous Australians
Disaster resilience data \$15.1 million over four years from the Bureau of Meteorology.	Existing	\$15.1 million	2021-25	Minister for the Environment



Further Actions: Commitments in the National Agreement

Data Development Plan				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Establish a Data and Reporting Working Group to develop a Data Development Plan for endorsement by Joint Council in July 2022.	Existing	No	Data Development Plan to be provided to Joint Council in July 2022	Minister for Indigenous Australians
Joint Communications Strategy				
Action	Status	Does this action include specific funding?	What is the timeframe for this action to be completed?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Logo Co-develop an identifiable Closing the Gap logo for use by all Parties and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations engaged in activities under the National Agreement.	New	TBC	Joint Council to consider November 2021	Minister for Indigenous Australians
National Agreement Implementation Tracker On the Closing the Gap website, co-designed to enable identification of progress in each jurisdiction on each initiative committed to under the National Agreement.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians
Social Media Indigenous.gov, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook platforms are used to regularly update on events, decisions and meetings under Closing the Gap and to encourage feedback from the wider community.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Prime Minister Minister for Indigenous Australians



Website The Commonwealth manages the Closing the Gap website to ensure all key communications around Closing the Gap nationally are housed and easily accessible on the in one website.	Existing	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians
Productivity Commission Funding for the Productivity Commission to deliver reporting under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, including the data dashboard, annual data compilation report and three yearly review.	Existing	\$10.1 million over 4 years	Over four years from 2020-21 to 2023-24	The Treasurer
Communications Material Development of guidance material to support Commonwealth Government agencies to deliver on this Implementation Plan and communicate about the Commonwealth's role in delivering on Closing the Gap, including a potential eLearning module and training.	New	No	Ongoing	Minister for Indigenous Australians



www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/closingthegap