



ACT
Government

Closing the Gap

Jurisdictional Implementation Plan



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Opening statements

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

Gulanyin dhuniang, ngalawirinyin, dhunayinyin, Ngunnawal dhawra

The ACT Implementation Plan has been reviewed and updated in partnership with the Elected Body, in their role as the ACT Members of the Coalition of Peak Organisations. This is in line with the phases of the ACT Agreement which serves as a regular review point over 10 years.

During Phase One implementation, our Agreement partners voiced the need to produce more transparent reporting when measuring impact against the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028* (ACT Agreement). The ACT Government is listening and enforcing action along the way to effect meaningful and timely change.

Our recent Impact Statement under the ACT Agreement shows meaningful progress and where change must occur in government business. This particularly relates to governments inclusion of the four Priority Reform Areas from the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (National Agreement) into the ACT Agreement. For the next phase, our government has aligned four Focus Areas in the ACT Agreement to support this action.

Priority Reform Areas are central to implementing the ACT Agreement and how our government works with and alongside our Community partners. We are making every effort to hear the Community and action our commitments on time, to ensure we successfully deliver our goals and continue to innovate change in the future.

Setting priorities with the ACT Agreement partners offers a strong voice to government decision-making, providing in-depth knowledge of areas most important to Community to ensure we are Closing the Gap.

We are progressing our commitments into the next phase and life of the ACT Agreement to ensure quality outcomes, such as establishing a governance structure under the Healing and Reconciliation Fund and a Treaty process for the ACT.

We have a lot to look forward to in the next phase of the ACT Agreement which will support our jurisdictions efforts to drive change at a national level. Some expected achievements include:

- access and use of nature and cultural resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be available and controlled by Traditional Custodians;
- increase of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples representation on boards and committees and employed across government;
- increase funding for services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations;
- increase participation in activities that showcase, and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, culture and history;
- improve cultural proficiency and cultural safety across all areas of the ACT Public Service; and
- improve our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in the Canberra region, to support the design of better services, policies and wellbeing initiatives.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside our Agreement partners to focus our efforts on improving our partnerships and achieving success by Closing the Gap.

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Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

26 September 2022

Tanya Keed and Paula McGrady, Chair and Deputy Chairpersons of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (also the ACT Coalition of Peaks representative)

On behalf of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (Elected Body), I congratulate the ACT Government for the commitments made under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Phase Two Focus Area Action Plans.

The Elected Body is committed to working constructively with the ACT Government in ensuring the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples remain at the heart of the Phase Two Focus Area Action Plans, including through genuine partnership in achieving the ten quality life outcomes they represent.

For children and young people to grow up safely in their families and communities, we all need to work together to build a society that is respectful, equitable, and sustainable. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination must be at the heart of an inclusive and racism free community, a community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a voice in the decisions that impact us so that we can achieve positive life outcomes for ourselves and our children.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples understand the importance of strong family connections. This has been passed down through generations and remains integral to our diverse and multifaceted cultures. Within this, we know that social and support networks must provide the foundation for community leadership, lifelong learning and economic participation.

Access to quality health care and housing are basic human rights for all people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Equity and affordability must drive the delivery of services and supports so that no Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is left behind.

Culturally safe restorative justice, prevention and diversion programs that are trauma informed are critical to addressing the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the justice system around Australia. There is much work to be done, but these Phase Two Focus Area Action Plans set us on the right track to achieving positive quality of life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here in the ACT.

Over the next three years, the Elected Body will be working closely with the ACT Government to account for delivering on these commitments. We will do so in the spirit of genuine partnership, ensuring the community always has a voice at the table.

Tanya Keed

Chair

26 September 2022

Paula McGrady

Deputy Chair and ACT Coalition of Peaks Representative

26 September 2022

Working in partnership

The ACT Government's contribution to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap is demonstrated through its commitment to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Canberra region and in establishing, under legislation, the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (Elected Body).

More recently, this commitment was further reflected in the ACT Agreement which commits the ACT Government and community partners to self-determination as the guiding principle in the delivery of programs and services; and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to address matters that are important to them.

The ACT Agreement includes five Relationship Principles aimed at strengthening the relationships between the community, service partners and the ACT Government including to improve the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples using services. This includes working collaboratively across government and with other jurisdictions to deliver tangible results.

Relationship Principles

- **Respectful interaction with the community.** People appreciate being recognised, listened to and understood. Relationships develop when we interact.
- **Work with different communities differently.** Avoid one size fits all solutions. Tailor a response that meets the needs of the individual.
- **Increase value for the community.** Building relationships increases value for the community, ACT Government and service providers.
- **Continuously improve the level of service delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.** Seek and follow up on both positive and negative feedback we receive from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Enable information sharing and interaction across the ACT Government and service partners.** Simplify the experience for the community by developing a holistic view of each client's relationship with government, organisations and services.

Purpose of this Implementation Plan

ACT's contribution to the National Agreement is led by this Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan is a local response that drives impact at a national level through the ACT Agreement. Specifically, this Implementation Plan supports a whole of Government approach to meeting the objectives and achieving the outcomes under the National Agreement by outlining existing ACT Government commitments and actions developed in the context of Phase One of the ACT Agreement.

The ACT Agreement has four phases of implementation and these align with the Elected Body (also the ACT Coalition of Peaks representative) elections. This allows for the incoming Elected Body to work together with the ACT Government in setting priorities for the next phase. The ACT Agreement supports generational change, and the phases allow government to keep pace with changing priorities that reflect the growth in Community. The Implementation Plan works with and aligns itself to these phases.

Closing the Gap Partnership

As active partners in Closing the Gap, the ACT Government acknowledges equal participation in the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the National Agreement is essential to accelerate improvements in the life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2019, the ACT Government increased the support provided to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to participate in shared decision making and performing their role on the Coalitions of Peaks at national meetings on Closing the Gap.

Under Priority Reform Area One, the ACT commits to regular reviews of resourcing levels that are available to the Elected Body and other representative groups, where required, to shift and level the power imbalances between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. This embeds our commitment to self-determination.

Partnership on this Implementation Plan

The Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap Clause 36 states *“The Parties will endeavour in the spirit of co-operation, good faith, and mutual trust to resolve any difficulties or misunderstandings with respect to the Partnership Agreement.”* It is this spirit of partnership that is important going forward on progressing the outcomes set out in the ACT Agreement.

Working across government and in partnership with the Elected Body is critical to achieving outcomes under both the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. An important element of a positive partnership between the Elected Body and directorates is trust, built through integrity and visibility of genuine efforts to improve outcomes. Strengthening reporting with a line of sight to intent and outcomes will support an authentic and genuine partnership with the Elected Body and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The ACT Government is taking this approach to the Agreement Phases commencing with the extension to Phase One to June 2022.

The ACT Implementation Plan was developed in partnership with the Elected Body in its role as the ACT Member of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations. The Elected Body is represented at the Strategic Board Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inter-Directorate Committee. These are whole of government senior officials committees with responsibility for providing strategic leadership on all aspects of both the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement.

As a government and member of the Closing the Gap Joint Council we are listening and learning from our existing work in the current governance/advisory group and co-design processes. Directorates are being guided by these groups and the Elected Body on better understanding the barriers to embedding self-determination in the way we engage with Community.

The parties to Closing the Gap recognise that working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments will evolve and mature over the life of the National Agreement. This is also an important consideration for parties to the ACT Agreement. ACT Government is in a good position in realising the Priority Reform Areas due to its partnership with the Elected Body and the strength of the ACT Agreement framework.

Accountability, monitoring and reporting on progress

The Elected Body conducts at least two public hearings during every three year term, providing an opportunity to directly question senior executives on the progress being made on commitments under the Agreements. The Elected Body produces a Hearings Report following each of these hearings and the Government publishes a response to recommendations made.

Elected Body representatives also meet regularly with the Director-General of each directorate to discuss issues related to the Agreements.

The ACT will also use governance and accountability mechanisms in place for the ACT Agreement to monitor progress and report on actions in this Implementation Plan. The Elected Body is represented on both the Strategic Board Committee Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inter-Directorate Committee and is a Co-chair of the latter.

The alignment between the reporting on the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement will be further strengthened in subsequent years.

Making a difference

The ACT Agreement Outcomes Framework will measure the impact actions in the ACT Agreement and National Agreements have on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the Canberra region.

The Outcomes Framework includes all targets in the National Agreement, some with increased aspirations reflecting baseline data in the ACT. Progress against the Framework will be reported annually by the ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

The ACT Government benefits from more than a decade of working in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and their advocacy on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the ACT. It is our shared responsibility to ensure our efforts are of value to the local ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The ACT Government recognises the need to continue to strengthen its focus on achieving outcomes that are of value to the community. This in turn enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to be heard at a national level, and again, confirms the importance of the ACT Agreement.

Priority Reform

The ACT Government is committed to developing long-term sustainable relationships based on trust, awareness and understanding of experiences with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and community partners.

The Government has reiterated its commitment to partnering with the Elected Body to achieve equitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Canberra region over the life of the Agreement. It is through this commitment to partnership and collaboration that reform can occur.

Embedding the Priority Reforms in the way government works

It is critical all partners in the National Agreement are focused on the systemic changes the Priority Reform Areas will deliver over the next 10 years. The Priority Reforms align with the ACT Agreement, support self-determination and contribute to the achievement of key outcomes across all Focus Areas. The strongest alignment between Priority Reforms and Focus Areas in the ACT Agreement are identified below:

National Agreement – PRIORITY REFORMS	ACT Agreement – FOCUS AREAS
<p>PR1 <u>Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making</u> 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.</p>	<p><u>Community Leadership</u> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a strong voice, are decision makers on issues that impact them and lead in the achievement of positive life outcomes</p>
<p>PR2 <u>Building the Community-Controlled Sector</u> 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 peoples across the country.</p>	<p><u>Connecting the Community</u> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members are connected to strong families, social and support networks building upon the foundation of community leadership.</p>
<p>PR3 <u>Transforming Government Organisations</u> 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 peoples, including through the services they fund.</p>	<p><u>Cultural Integrity</u> A society that supports the aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contributes to the building of respectful, fair and sustainable communities.</p>
<p>PR4 <u>Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level</u> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 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.</p>	<p><u>Inclusive Community</u> A self-determined and inclusive society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are valued, respected, and experience a life free of racism and systemic discrimination.</p>

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Priority Reform One: Partnership and shared decision-making

Outcome: 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 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.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a strong voice within government decision making, including through the Elected Body, the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the ACT Reconciliation Council and other representative bodies.

In the co-design of initiatives that address the need for systemic reform, the sharing of cultural knowledge and a commitment to learning more culturally appropriate and responsive ways of working occur. This is central to improving the delivery of government services that support building strong and sustainable communities.

An important factor for government to recognise is the responsibility Traditional Custodians have to care for Country and the role they play sharing knowledge and practices. The ACT Government is implementing a range of initiatives that seek to listen, learn and improve approaches to shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Partnership Actions

The ACT’s contribution to supporting Priority Reform One Partnership Actions is reflected in the ACT Agreement under one Core Focus Area of the ACT Agreement:

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

The ACT Government will continue to engage with the Elected Body in shared decision-making and review the support government provides the Elected Body in performing its national role on the Coalition of Peaks.

Jurisdictional Actions

The ACT Agreement demonstrates the shared commitment and partnership of the ACT Government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to work together to improve life outcomes and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT.

The ACT is committed to working with the ACT’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to ensure priorities are developed and driven by community. The ACT Government recognises the need for a shared and collective approach to achieving quality life outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

ACT Government is applying the Partnership Health Check model to the ACT Agreement governance to provide accountability and a mechanism for continuous improvement.

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The Healing and Reconciliation Fund has been established and the ACT Government is working in partnership with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to deliver on the priorities identified in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028. Further work is being undertaken to develop the governance structure.

The Canberra Health Services (CHS) has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Steering Committee to ensure the community has input into services provided by the CHS and information provided to the community. This Steering Committee oversees the CHS Action Plan (Together, Forward) to meet Closing the Gap, National Safety and Quality in Healthcare Standards and the actions under the ACT Agreement.

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Action	Is this action: • existing, or • changed/new	Does this action include specific funding?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Jointly develop a co-management agreement with Traditional Custodians for Namadgi National Park.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Environment
Yarramundi Cultural Centre – Showcasing Canberra’s Aboriginal heritage Engage with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to: • understand the strategic vision, objectives and outcomes for the Yarramundi Cultural Centre that capitalises on the financial and cultural potential of cultural tourism in the ACT; • explore community governance models for Yarramundi Cultural Centre; • identify ambitions and opportunities for developing cultural tourism in the Territory; and • inform the development of a strategic investment plan to deliver a Precinct that showcases the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories and experience and forms the basis of a sustainable cultural tourism industry.	Existing	To be delivered within existing resources.	ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Establish a governance structure for the Healing and Reconciliation Fund and continue to implement the key priorities of the fund.	Changed	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
The ACT Government will seek to ensure decision-making processes, including through Budget and Cabinet, are informed by the impact of policies, projects, and programs on the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans including through seeking input from partners and the community.	Changed	To be delivered within existing resources	All Ministers

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Co-design and implement a Cultural Resource Plan to enable the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources by Traditional Custodians and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the ACT.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Environment
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Priority Reform Two: Building the community-controlled sector

Outcome: Building the community-controlled sector: 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.

The ACT Government recognises and respects the important contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in the ACT make to our community. In demonstration of this commitment, the ACT Government has invested in a range of community-led organisations and specialist services, while also strengthening recognition of new and emerging organisations, services, local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Priority Reform Two is strongly aligned with one Significant Focus Area of the ACT Agreement:

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

Partnership Actions

The ACT is contributing to the National Agreement partnership actions under this Priority Reform by investing in our emerging and existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

Jurisdictional Actions

Under the ACT Agreement, the ACT Government has committed to establishing community managed organisations and arrangements to support improved community organisations.

Through the \$20 million Healing and Reconciliation Fund, the ACT Government has committed to supporting the development of sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations in areas such as child and family services, justice, housing and disability – which meets the priorities of the local First Nations community and the priorities in Closing the Gap.

Canberra Health Services is working with Winnuga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service and ACT Health Directorate to review the model of care to provide culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the justice system.

The ACT Health Directorate is currently establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Rehabilitation Facility, allowing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples access to a residential AOD specialist rehabilitation facility.

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Action	Is this action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing, or • changed/new 	Does this action include specific funding?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community to ensure its cultural effectiveness and capacity to maximise opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises.	Changed	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister.
Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Action and Retention Plan, to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development. This will in turn provide greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to form and influence policy development and service delivery.	Existing	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister
Identify training to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander board members to perform effectively on government boards and committees. If suitable and appropriate training is not available, the ACT Government will explore development of new options.	Existing	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister
The ACT Government will incorporate the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans through conducting Wellbeing Impact Assessments for new budget, projects, and programs, with input from partners and community.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	All Ministers

Priority Reform Three: Transforming government organisations

Outcome: Improving mainstream institutions: 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: By 2031, reduce experiences of racism and discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within government systems by at least 80 per cent as progress towards zero (ACT Agreement).

Priority Reform Three is strongly aligned with one Core Focus Areas of the ACT Agreement:

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

Each phase of the ACT Agreement implementation provides an opportunity to strengthen outcomes across the life of the Agreement by focusing attention on the way we work, including improving collaboration across government.

Partnership Actions

The ACT Government recognises the importance of implementing the transformational elements from the National Agreement. These transformational elements will be embedded under the ACT Agreement Focus Area of Cultural Integrity. ACT Public Service Strategic Board Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee will drive this work and report to the ACT Public Service Strategic Board.

In recognition of this Priority Reform target, the ACT has moved to increase its own focus in this area and set a target to reduce experiences of racism and discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within government systems by at least 80 per cent by 2031 as progress towards zero.

Jurisdictional Actions

The ACT Government is committed to reducing experiences of racism and discrimination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples working within the public service or engaging with our services. An ACT Public Services (ACTPS) Framework for Addressing Systemic Racism is being developed and initially working on a common measure for identifying instances of systemic racism.

The Framework will address behaviours, identify, and address racism in processes and systems to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, customers and community feel safe when employed within the public service and interacting with our services.

The Canberra Health Services (CHS) has implemented “Yarning Circles” to capture and learn from patients’ journeys. The learnings from yarning circles inform service development, and ensure the service is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. CHS is incorporating recommendations from Our Boori’s, Our Way report in the review and update of CHS Child Protection Policy and Child and Prenatal Concern Guideline. The review will ensure the documents are culturally safe, consistent with legislation and also incorporate recommendations from the Community Services Directorate review of Child Protection Services.

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Action	Is this action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing, or • changed/new 	Does this action include specific funding?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Establish whole of government cultural standards and protocols, to build the cultural effectiveness of ACTPS staff to enable more impactful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members.	Existing	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister
Progress work to deliver a fit for purpose, culturally designed facility to enable the Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation ('Gugan Gulwan') to enhance delivery of services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and young people in the ACT and beyond.	Changed	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Further develop the <i>Strengthening Partnerships – Investing for Social Impact</i> (Commissioning Framework) to support delivery of services and new initiatives, including communication with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about these opportunities.	Changed	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Families and Community Services ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
ACT Public Service to develop general guidelines to identifying systemic racism in systems and processes, including expert input on barriers and governance to progress.	Existing	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister
Develop a Cultural Integrity 'best practice' guide including case studies that align with the ACT Public Service Cultural Integrity Framework to support all Directorates to develop their own Cultural Integrity Action Plans.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Chief Minister ACT Minister for Education
Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures into ACT Government infrastructure projects.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	ACT Minister for Planning and Land Management ACT Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction

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Priority Reform Four: Shared 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, 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.

Priority Reform Four is reflected in the Relationship Principles in the ACT Agreement: Enabling information sharing and interaction across the ACT Government and service partners. The goal is to simplify the experience for the community by developing a holistic view of each client's relationship with government, organisations and services.

Priority Reform Four is strongly aligned with one Core Focus Area of the ACT Agreement:

Inclusive Community: A self-determined and inclusive society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are valued, respected, and experience a life free of racism and systemic discrimination.

The ACT Government is committed to delivering equitable life outcomes through self-determination and understands the need to go beyond co-design processes. As a government and member of the Closing the Gap reforms we are listening and learning from our existing work in the current range of governance/advisory group and co-design processes. Directorates are being guided by these groups and the Elected Body on better understanding the barriers to embedding self-determination in the way we engage with Community.

Partnership Actions

The ACT recognises our current data issues as a small jurisdiction and will look for ways to share data with Community representatives in a way that keeps integrity and enables informed decision making. This will be the ACT Government's contribution to the partnership actions under Priority Reform Four.

Given the size of the ACT in comparison to other jurisdictions and our unique government structure, the ACT will explore opportunities to work with other jurisdictions to share the benefits that will flow from other place-based partnerships.

Jurisdictional Actions

The ACT is working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop partnerships to share data and information. Particularly important is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a seamless service model where they only need to tell their story once and all services are able to access the information they need.

The ACT is a single region for the purposes of the National Agreement.

Canberra Health Services has developed a Data Dashboard to monitor a key suite of quality and safety measure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Action	Is this action: • existing, or • changed/new	Does this action include specific funding?	Who is the Minister/s responsible for this action?
Co-design Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data sovereignty principles with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and develop implementation guidance for use across Directorates.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	Special Minister for State
Develop an implementation-ready roadmap that will support an improved understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander demographic information at different statistical geography levels. The roadmap should support the improved use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander demographic information for service and policy design, and for wellbeing initiatives. The roadmap could consider data sharing or commissioning of survey collection activities.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	Special Minister for State
The ACT Government will collect wellbeing data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT and region, to help identify barriers experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and support self-determination in seeking solutions.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	All Ministers
Increase opportunities across the ACT Government to promote the public use and visibility of Aboriginal languages in the Canberra Region including through funding and grants. This will be undertaken in collaboration with the Winanggaay Ngunnawal Language Group.	New	To be delivered within existing resources	All Ministers

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ACT National CtG Agreement Implementation Plan

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Targets

The ACT Agreement incorporates socio-economic targets from the National Agreement grouped under the ten Focus Areas as detailed in the table below. These Focus Areas and related targets are interconnected and holistic in nature and together contribute to Strong Families, the central theme of the ACT Agreement. This interconnectedness between Focus Areas is reflected in the artwork commissioned for the Agreement.

The ACT Government will use policy levers available to the jurisdiction to achieve these targets recognising there are areas where the ACT and Federal Governments will need to work together to make progress. The Outcomes Framework identifies an annual reporting strategy for each target aimed at providing an indication of progress against each target.

The ten published Focus Area Action Plans detail the actions being taken by the ACT Government to achieve the Quality Life Outcomes and targets relevant to each Focus Area. Each directorate has an agreed implementation plan which reflects the actions and timelines appropriate to that directorate.

The Outcomes Framework underpins a strong focus on measuring impact for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the ACT and a clearer line of sight between the actions to be undertaken in each Phase, the Closing the Gap targets and community priorities advised by the Elected Body.

The table below maps National Closing the Gap Agreement Targets against ACT Agreement Focus Areas, indicating where targets have been raised to reflect the ACT context.

National Closing the Gap Targets by ACT Agreement Focus Areas

Focus Area (core): Children and Young People			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people growing up safely in their families and communities			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years.	Maintain parity between the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Indigenous children enrolled in Year Before Fulltime Schooling (YBFS) early childhood education.	3 Increased to parity for ACT	Minister for Early Childhood Development Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census to 55 per cent.	4	Minister for Early Childhood Development
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are not overrepresented in the child protection system.	By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care by 45 per cent	12	Minister for Families and Community Services.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe.	By 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero.	13	Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services Minister for Police Attorney-General
Focus Area (core): Cultural Integrity			
A society that supports the aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contributes to the building of respectful, fair, and sustainable communities			
<i>No socio-economic targets. PR 3 relate</i>			

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Focus Area (core): Inclusive Community			
A self-determined and inclusive society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are valued, respected, and experience a life free of racism and systemic discrimination.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing.	By 2031, there is a sustained increase in the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.	16	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives.	a: By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion.	17	Chief Minister
	b: Significant and sustained increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the media, in particular community-controlled media.		Chief Minister
<i>PR 4 relate</i>			
Focus Area (core): Community Leadership			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a strong voice, are decision makers on issues that impact them and lead in the achievement of positive life outcomes.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical, and economic relationship with their land and waters.	By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in Australia’s landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples legal rights or interests.	15 See target not included	Minister for Planning and Land Management Minister for Environment Minister for Heritage Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
<i>No socio-economic targets. PR1 relate</i>			
Focus Area (significant): Connecting the Community			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members are connected to strong families, social and support networks building upon the foundation of community leadership.			
<i>No socio-economic targets. PR2 relate</i>			

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Focus Area (significant): Life-Long Learning Respect is given to preserving the oldest living culture which enhances social inclusion and empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to fully engage in lifelong learning and positive generational experiences.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (aged 20-24) attaining Year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 per cent.	5	Minister for Education Minister for Skills
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-34 years who have completed a tertiary qualification (Certificate III and above) to 70 per cent.	6	Minister for Education Minister for Skills
Focus Area (significant): Economic Participation Equality of access to employment and growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and community services organisations which drives economic development across their communities.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are engaged in employment or education.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15-24 years) who are in employment, education, or training to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australian youth.	7 Increased to parity for the ACT	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs Minister for Skills Minister for Economic Development Minister for Business
Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25 – 64 years are employed to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australians.	8 Increased for the ACT	Minister for Skills Minister for Economic Development Minister for Business
Wealth is created through growth of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporate sector.	Increase the proportion of high value contracts awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	n/a	Minister for Economic Development

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Focus Area (significant): Justice			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families and communities thrive in a safe environment and have equitable access to justice and culturally safe restorative justice, prevention and diversion programs.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.	By 2031, reduce the rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve parity with the non-indigenous incarceration rate.	10 Increased to parity for the ACT	Minister for Police and Emergency Minister for Corrections Attorney General
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.	By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) in detention by at least 30 per cent.	11	Assistance Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services Minister for Police and Emergency Attorney General
Focus Area (significant): Health and Wellbeing			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equity in health and wellbeing outcomes as any other members of the community.			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives.	Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.	1	Minister for Health
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 per cent.	2	Minister for Health Minister for Early Childhood Development
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing.	Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero.	14	Minister for Mental Health
Focus Area (significant): Housing			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equitable access to affordable, secure, and appropriate housing suitable to their needs			
Outcomes	Targets	National Closing the Gap Target	ACT Minister Responsible
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need.	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to achieve parity with non-Indigenous Australians.	9 Increased to parity for the ACT	Minister for Housing Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services

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How this Implementation Plan will work in practice

Given the strong alignment between this Implementation Plan and the ACT Agreement, monitoring and reporting arrangements currently in place for the ACT Agreement will form a strong basis for accountability for commitments in the Implementation Plan.

Changes to this Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan will be reviewed and updated in conjunction with each phase of implementation of the ACT Agreement as follows:

Phase One	February 2019 – June 2022
Phase Two	July 2022 – December 2024
Phase Three	January 2025 – December 2027
Phase Four	January 2028 – December 2028

Annual Reporting

Going forward, the ACT Government will look at combining the Annual Report and Impact Statement, which will cover commitments under the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement. This includes a refresh of the ACT National Agreement Implementation Plan, as well as a focus on Priority Actions in the Focus Area Action Plans.

This reporting will focus on measuring impact on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Canberra region. Annual reports for each directorate will include information on the actions being taken under the ACT Agreement. All annual reports will be tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly.

The ACT Government will further strengthen the alignment between the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement, including in relation to reporting requirements.

Accountability

Existing accountability mechanisms for the ACT Agreement will be strengthened to ensure they are fit-for-purpose. In particular to support responsiveness to Joint Council feedback and consideration of outcomes from the Productivity Commission and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led reviews.

ACT Agreement Governance Bodies

Two governance bodies oversee the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement:

- The Strategic Board Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee provides strategic leadership and oversight across the ACT Public Service driving policy, program, and service delivery reform to enable self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the ACT.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inter-Directorate Committee (IDC) supports the Strategic Board Committee and drives the implementation of the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement.

Elected Body Hearings

The Elected Body will monitor progress against the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement through its Annual Hearings process. The annual Elected Body Hearings is an important accountability mechanism for Government and is an important way to keep Government focused on delivering the intent and measuring the impact of actions committed to in the Agreement.

Communicating about this Implementation Plan

The ACT National Agreement Implementation Plan will be published on the ACT Government’s Strong Families website and communicated to all internal stakeholders.

The ACT Government will work closely with the Elected Body to develop, promote and distribute materials (when required), including face to face community forums and community days to build awareness and engagement with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and broader Canberra region.

Meeting our commitments

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 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 (cl 21 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 Agreement (cl 104 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)	☒
Include information on how the states and territories will work with local government to implement this Agreement (state and territory Implementation Plans only) (cl108)	☒
Include data development actions identified in the Data Development Plan (cl106)	☒
Be published on the jurisdiction’s website (cl111)	☒

Glossary of terms

Abbreviation	Name
ACT Agreement	ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028
ACCOs	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations
ACTPS	ACT Public Service
Committee	Strategic Board Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee
Elected Body	ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body
Gugan Gulwan	Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation
IDC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inter-Directorate Committee
Minister	ACT Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
National Agreement	National Closing the Gap Agreement
WhoG	Whole of Government