
Appendix 2 Implementation of the framework

Jurisdictions' comments

The following jurisdictions provided comments on the implementation of the framework:

Australian Government

New South Wales

Victoria

Queensland

Western Australia

South Australia

Tasmania

Australian Capital Territory

Northern Territory

Australian Government comments

The focus of the Australian Government's new arrangements in Indigenous affairs is on ensuring effective and coordinated service delivery based on partnerships with Indigenous Australians. These arrangements are built on an integrated whole of government approach at all levels.

Responsibility for strategic direction and high level coordination of policy development and government investment is the responsibility of the Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs. The Ministerial Taskforce is responsible for preparation of a coordinated budget process for Indigenous affairs that allows resources to be targeted more effectively as priorities and circumstances change. Currently the Ministerial Taskforce has identified three key priorities which encapsulate the seven strategic areas for action under the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework:

- early childhood intervention, a key focus of which will be improved mental and physical health, and in particular primary health, and early educational outcomes
- safer communities (which includes issues of authority, law and order, but necessarily also focuses on dealing with issues of governance to ensure that communities are functional and effective)
- building Indigenous wealth, employment and entrepreneurial culture, as these are integral to boosting economic development and reducing poverty and dependence on passive welfare.

Policy development in the Ministerial Taskforce priority areas is informed by the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework, the COAG National Framework of Principles for Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians and advice from a range of sources, including the National Indigenous Council.

Coordinated delivery of Australian Government services and programmes to Indigenous Australians is through the thirty Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs) in urban, regional and remote locations. The Australian Government is working in partnership with Indigenous communities and families and State and Territory governments to shape service delivery and respond to community priorities. The partnership is captured through Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) which set out the contributions of each of the partners in achieving change.

SRAs include performance measures to allow all partners to monitor implementation and outcomes. It is intended that, as far as possible, SRA local level performance indicators will mirror the strategic change indicators in the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage reporting framework. To date, 208 SRA's have been signed. A number of other Australian Government initiatives such as the collection of Baseline Community Profiles in strategic communities and the Whole of Government Evaluation Framework are also based on the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework.

New South Wales Government comments

The NSW Government has undertaken a number of significant measures in recent years to reduce the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, across the seven strategic areas in the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework.

A New Direction for NSW: the NSW State Plan (2006–2016)

The Government's 10 year strategic plan for improved service delivery contains priorities and targets for action that will result in improved outcomes for residents of NSW. It also includes targets that are specific to Indigenous people, with a focus on improved health and educational results. This plan builds on commitments made under existing plans such as *Two Ways Together*.

Two Ways Together

Two Ways Together, the Aboriginal Affairs Plan 2003–2012, is the NSW Government's 10 year plan to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities. Through *Two Ways Together*, the NSW Government has established a framework for coordinating whole of government action across the key national strategic change areas. The framework incorporates the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* (OID) indicators as well as NSW-specific measures.

Under *Two Ways Together* a funding boost of \$40 million in funding over four years is being provided by the NSW Government for practical initiatives to:

- reduce incarceration and break the cycle of family violence
- improve year 3 to 5 literacy and numeracy and school retention rates
- minimise the impact of otitis media on school children up to six years old
- increase Aboriginal employment
- improve living conditions in Aboriginal communities.

These programs respond to areas of need identified for NSW in the 2003 OID report, and are improving Aboriginal wellbeing by:

- providing 2000 children with assistance for learning in primary school
- providing 640 scholarships to assist Aboriginal students in years 9 to 12 to remain in school
- testing over 65 000 children for middle ear infections
- providing 80 new teaching and nursing positions through Aboriginal cadetships

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- improving electrical and plumbing safety and functionality in 670 homes.

In recognition that the needs of Aboriginal clients are the responsibility of all agencies, under *Two Ways Together* the CEOs of NSW Government agencies are required to report on requirements to increase the representation of Aboriginal people in the public service, increase the representation of Aboriginal people on agency boards and committees, increase Aboriginal participation in agency planning, and develop partnerships with Aboriginal people in service delivery.

NSW Interagency Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities 2006–2011

Tackling the high incidence of child sexual assault in Aboriginal communities is a challenge that confronts all States and Territories, including NSW. The NSW Government launched its *NSW Interagency Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities 2006–2011* in January 2007. The Plan contains 88 actions aimed at reducing the incidence of child sexual assault through a range of measures spanning law enforcement, child protection, early intervention and prevention and Aboriginal leadership and support. A key element of the plan focuses on improving the way the NSW Government works with Aboriginal communities as partners to address the problem of child sexual assault.

Schools in Partnership Program

The Schools in Partnership and associated programs are targeted at schools with significant Aboriginal student populations. These programs focus on improving literacy, numeracy and participation outcomes of students through school communities forming genuine partnerships with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and the Aboriginal community, establishing targets in school planning and reporting to improve the performance of Aboriginal students, and developing Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students with their parents.

NSW Aboriginal Justice Plan

The Aboriginal Justice Plan aims to reduce Aboriginal overrepresentation in the criminal justice system and develop safer communities for Aboriginal people. The plan focuses on achieving outcomes negotiated between government and Aboriginal communities, establishing mechanisms to achieve greater cooperation and resource sharing at state, regional and local levels, and developing ways to empower Aboriginal communities to devise local solutions to local problems.

Victorian Government comments

In October 2006, following further consultation with Victoria's Indigenous community, the Victorian Government released the final *Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework* (VIAF).¹ The VIAF comprises four elements, which are designed to achieve the Government's overarching goal to raise life expectancy and quality of life for Indigenous Victorians.

1. Principles for Reform

The VIAF Principles for Reform guide practice and implementation. They describe the spirit in which government departments will work together and with Indigenous communities, and include government coordination principles and government-community partnership principles.

2. Strategic Policy Framework

The VIAF Strategic Policy Framework sets in place the goal, priority outcomes and Victorian strategic areas for action. Focused effort on the strategic areas for action in the short to medium term will lay the ground work for achieving sustainable, long term improvements in the three priority outcomes:

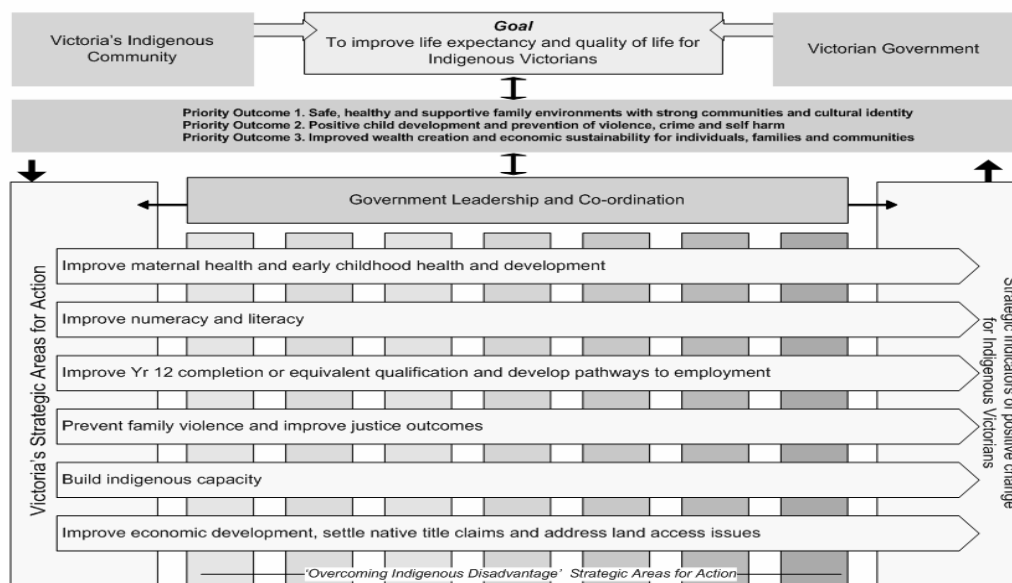
- safe, healthy and supportive family environments with strong communities and cultural identity
- positive child development and prevention of violence, crime and self-harm
- improved wealth creation and economic sustainability for individuals, families and communities.

The three priority outcomes mirror the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework outcomes and link to the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage headline indicators to guide effort over the longer term.

3. Performance Framework

The VIAF Performance Framework commits the Victorian Government to achieve improvements against a series of strategic change indicators, which have been selected as markers of progress towards the longer term objective of reducing Indigenous disadvantage. The strategic change indicators match the Victorian strategic areas for action against which improvements can be made over a five, ten, and fifteen year period.

¹ http://www1.dvc.vic.gov.au/aav/docs/Vic_IndigenousAffairsFramework.pdf



4. Partnership Coordination and Management Framework

The Partnership Coordination and Management Framework creates the authorising environment for community and government policy leadership. From the Government’s perspective this leadership is centred with the Premier and the Ministerial Taskforce for Aboriginal Affairs. Whole of government coordination is overseen by the Secretaries Group for Aboriginal Affairs. From the community perspective, the establishment of local Indigenous networks, linked to Regional Indigenous Councils and through them to the Premier’s Aboriginal Advisory Council, is a graduated three tier structure for Indigenous Governance to be implemented by 2008-09.

A Fairer Victoria — Progress and Next Steps

In June 2006, the Victorian Government released *A Fairer Victoria — Progress and Next Steps*, providing an update on initiatives funded as part of the Government’s promise to build a new partnership with Indigenous Victorians.² The report announced additional investment of \$61.7 million to implement further practical steps to build stronger communities, support healthy families, respect cultural heritage and deliver jobs and justice for Indigenous Victorians.

² <http://www.communitybuilding.vic.gov.au/cms/items/2006/08/00646-upload-00001.pdf>

Queensland Government comments

The Queensland Government remains committed to improving social, health and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and to addressing the disadvantage identified by the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) framework.

In September 2005, the Queensland Government launched Partnerships Queensland, an initiative to deliver lasting improvements to the quality of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. The Partnerships Queensland policy framework has four key goal areas:

- strong families, strong cultures
- safe places
- healthy living
- skilled and prosperous people and communities.

There is a close relationship between these goal areas and the priority outcomes of the OID framework.

Since the launch of Partnerships Queensland, the Queensland Government has developed a comprehensive performance reporting framework that includes, and expands on, the OID performance management framework. The Queensland Government released its first Baseline Report against the framework in February 2007. The report provides a comprehensive dataset to inform future policy and program development in Queensland and can be accessed online at: <http://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/partnerships/partnerships-baseline-report.cfm>.

A strategic overview of current Queensland Government activity to address Indigenous disadvantage is provided in the companion document to the Baseline Report, the *Partnerships Queensland Implementation Progress Report 2006*. This report is also publicly available and can be accessed at: <http://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/partnerships/partnerships-progress-report.cfm>.

The Queensland Government is focused on actions that deliver results. The implementation of Partnerships Queensland is designed to drive coordination and cooperation between governments and Indigenous communities and enable sound decision-making and effective service delivery to happen at all levels.

To ensure change is driven at the local level, and to further strengthen its existing place-based approach, the Government established the Government Coordination Office in late 2006. The office is led by a senior executive officer — the

Government Coordinator, Indigenous Service Delivery — with responsibility for: identifying required changes in service delivery approaches, with a particular focus on child well-being, alcohol management and family violence; driving those changes across-government; finding solutions to barriers in effective service delivery; and applying and communicating learnings on an ongoing basis.

Partnerships Queensland recognises, that to achieve and sustain improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' quality of life, there must be a concerted and coordinated effort across all levels of government and from the non-government and private sectors. However, to achieve significant and lasting change, a key feature of Partnerships Queensland implementation will be to ensure that future initiatives embed a significant level of mutuality and shared responsibility at a government, community, family and individual level.

In addition to enhancing its approach to partnerships, the Queensland Government will continue to place a priority on improving Indigenous social and economic policy, addressing Indigenous governance and land issues and building confidence in the justice system.

Within that context, the Queensland Government continues to actively look at new ways to improve its response to Indigenous disadvantage. It is currently partnering with the Commonwealth Government in the design phase of the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership's welfare reform project. The project's objective is to rebuild basic social norms in four Cape York communities through the provision of rational incentives that encourage people into work and study and ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to support people in that endeavour. A decision on whether to proceed to a trial of the project is expected later in 2007.

The Queensland Government is also an active participant in the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Indigenous Generational Reform (IGR) Working Group, which was established by COAG to develop a strategy in line with the OID framework and to develop specific reform proposals.

The Queensland Government will continue to place a priority on initiatives and programs that are directed to achieving the goals of Partnerships Queensland. A sustained and coordinated approach is required across governments, along with partnerships with the private and community sectors and, most importantly, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. Only such an approach can make a real and lasting difference to the life outcomes and opportunities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

Western Australian Government comments

In the past 5 years the Western Australian Government has supported three major pieces of work that have independently changed the way in which government has responded to issues facing Indigenous people, families and communities. Not only are these pieces of work independently significant but have the collective potential to provide a solid basis for the development of the State Indigenous Services Framework and Action Plan.

- **‘Putting People First’** *The Western Australian Governments Action Plan for Addressing Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities* in response to the Gordon Inquiry provided a conceptual framework for agencies to work together in providing improved services to Indigenous families. The implementation of the Action Plan commenced in 2003 and is ongoing with an evaluation due to be completed in 2007.
- The Western Australian Government and the Australian Government joined with the Institute for Child Health Research to enable the collection and analysis of data to assist in understanding policy issues in relation to the needs of Indigenous people in Western Australia.

The *Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey* (WAACHS) has produced 4 volumes in which the State Government and the Institute for Child Health Research have worked closely to ensure that the analysis for this ground-breaking data can be utilised by policy makers in government agencies:

Volume 1 *The Health of Aboriginal Children and Young People*

Volume 2 *The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young People*

Volume 3 *Improving the Educational Experience of Aboriginal Children and Young People*

Volume 4 *Strengthening the Capacity of Aboriginal Children, Families and Communities.*

The WAACHS volumes draw attention to the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework as an ‘important advance in which both form and content of policy are directed at improving Aboriginal circumstances’.

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- In 2005 the Western Australian Government provided the first State Report based directly on the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework. This report entitled *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage in Western Australia* provided the basis for government to have a useful tool to support actions that can deliver positive outcomes for Indigenous People.

‘It offers a sound basis for the development of a whole of government state strategy for Indigenous Affairs that is based on well grounded research and evidence on what works, so that improvements can be achieved and measured in the coming years’.

Western Australian priorities

1. The Western Australian Government and the Australian Government signed a *Bilateral Agreement on Indigenous Affairs* in 2006 that provides a framework and establishes priorities for the governments to work together to deliver improvements for Indigenous children, families and communities.

The work undertaken by both governments in negotiating a way forward under this bilateral is fundamental to delivering better outcomes for Indigenous families and communities. Although one aspect of this bilateral addresses the transference for some responsibilities from the Australian Government to the State the overarching intent is based upon achieving better outcomes.

The OID Western Australian Report provides an important baseline through which the Western Australian, Australian Government and Indigenous stakeholders can measure the effectiveness of those strategies that both governments agree to embark upon.

A specific example is the use of the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework as the basis for the development of performance indicators for the Ngaanyatjarra Regional Partnership Agreement.

2. *State Early Years Strategy* is being developed by utilising the basic framework of the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage as a basis to tease out the key outcomes, indicators and strategic areas for action. Whereas the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework looks to the multiplicity of issues involving Indigenous persons the framework has application when addressing part of the lifespan dimension as with the early years.

South Australian Government comments

South Australia's Strategic Plan

The South Australian Government's Strategic Plan has been a key component in guiding government action and priorities. The headline indicators of the Plan for Aboriginal wellbeing are life expectancy, unemployment rates, school retention rates, and imprisonment rates. These are closely aligned to those in the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* report.

An independent Audit Committee was established to report on the progress against the plan's targets. Outcomes for South Australia's Aboriginal population have deteriorated relative to the rest of South Australia's population in relation to life expectancy and imprisonment and improved in school retention rates in 2003 to 2005. The committee was also of the view that the indicators are only likely to change in the long term and that for life expectancy generational change is required. This is recognized by the COAG Indigenous Generational Reform Working Group in developing strategies to impact Aboriginal wellbeing.

In developing the 2007 Plan a comprehensive, community engagement program was conducted in South Australia. An Aboriginal update group was established to review the indicators and suggest changes or identify new targets. A member of the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* secretariat was invited to a workshop to assist in the development of the plan.

The updated plan also gives increased prominence to Aboriginal people. This reflects the unequivocal call from the South Australian community to address Aboriginal disadvantage in all areas of life. It also reflects the positive contribution that the Aboriginal community makes to South Australia by including new targets for attaining sustainability and fostering creativity. Only comprehensive and coordinated effort sustained over many years will begin to narrow the gap between conditions experienced by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal South Australians. It requires policy and action to be informed by measurable results and community views, coordinated across all levels of government and monitored at the highest level.

One overarching target to improve Aboriginal wellbeing has been retained to provide a central focal point. In addition at least one target specific to Aboriginal South Australians has been included in each of the objective areas (as well as data from other targets that can be disaggregated on the basis of Aboriginality). The

data produced from these sources will provide the information on how Aboriginal populations are faring in the state, so that resources can be directed and responses tailored to ensure there is a positive and enduring impact.

Future Directions Paper and Aboriginal Strategic Plan for South Australia

The South Australian Government is developing a policy position paper which outlines the Government's agenda and priorities in Aboriginal Affairs. Some of these priorities include Aboriginal leadership, community safety and prosperity. The policy contained within the Future Directions in Aboriginal Affairs will underpin the way government implements the Aboriginal Strategic Plan. This Plan is being jointly developed by South Australian and Australian Government agencies to deliver on the targets within South Australia's Strategic Plan and targets aiming to improve overall Aboriginal wellbeing.

Aboriginal Economic Development

The South Australian Government is considering strategies to provide support to Aboriginal organisations, families or individuals to establish and manage viable enterprises. These strategies would be developed in collaboration with key Aboriginal groups and peak organisations and with relevant federal agencies.

Tasmanian Government comments

The Tasmanian Government's commitment to improving the well being of Tasmanian Aborigines is delivered through a mix of programs aimed at addressing both the fundamental causes and symptoms of Indigenous disadvantage with a focus on breaking intergenerational cycles. These programs address key elements of the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage framework and include:

Stolen Generation Legislation

The *Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act 2006* enables the Tasmanian Government to provide ex gratia payments to members of the stolen generations. The payments recognise that the State played a role in the removal of some Aboriginal children from their families and are an important part of acknowledging, apologising and making reparation for the wrongs of the past.

The return of Aboriginal land

The Tasmanian Government's *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995* provides for the return of land to the Aboriginal community. Title for the Crown land returned is held by the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT), whose members are elected by Aboriginal people. Since 1995 a number of culturally significant sites have been vested in the ALCT, including Cape Barren Island and Clarke Island. Currently the ALCT have title to a total of 55 597 hectares. The Tasmanian Government provides funding of \$223 984 per year to the ALCT for administration costs and to manage the land.

'Safe at Home' and ya pulingina kani

Enacted in 2005, *Safe at Home* is Tasmania's whole of government initiative aimed at reducing the level of family violence. It is concerned with improving the safety of adult and child victims in their own homes and also changing the behaviour of perpetrators. *Safe at Home* is a mainstream service and applied universally. Consisting of Aboriginal women, the *ya pulingina kani* Working Group was established as an advisory group on *Safe at Home*.

Aboriginal Employment in the Tasmanian Government

The Tasmanian Government operates an Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Program aimed at improving the recruitment, retention and career development of Aborigines in the public sector. This program includes identifying particular positions for Aborigines throughout the public service.

Aboriginal Early Years Program

The Tasmanian Government employs four Aboriginal Early years Liaison Officers (AEYLOS) to promote families' engagement with early childhood education through the delivery of culturally appropriate services. The AEYLOs conduct home visits and provide families with teaching and learning resources, books, activities and cultural excursions.

Aboriginal Students Retention Program

The aim of this program is to increase the participation rate and attendance of students in Years 7 to 10 and to support Aboriginal students in the key transitions from primary to secondary school and from secondary school to years 11 and 12. The program is implemented through eight full-time Aboriginal Education Officers (AEOs) based in a number of schools across the state. The AEOs are identified Aboriginal positions.

'pakana tunapri' — Cape Barren District High School

In 2005, an education facility for secondary students was erected at the site of the Cape Barren Island Primary School on Cape Barren Island. Secondary students can now stay living on the island and have access to quality education that is delivered within a culturally appropriate school environment. *pakana tunapri* was officially launched in March 2007. It caters for students from kindergarten to year 12.

'ningina tunapri' — Aboriginal perspectives through the educational curriculum

In 2007, the Tasmanian Government will be implementing a set of Aboriginal perspectives through the Tasmanian curriculum for students from kindergarten to year 10. *ningina tunapri* is aimed at deepening all student's awareness of Aboriginal culture, as well as encouraging positive participation and improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Women's Karadi Aboriginal Corporation

The Tasmanian Government funds the Women's Karadi Aboriginal Corporation to provide neighbourhood house services. Some of the activities provided by *Karadi* include cultural awareness sessions, a school holiday program, literacy and numeracy programs, mutual obligation programs and information sessions from government departments and job search assistance providers.

Australian Capital Territory Government comments

The ACT Government is continually refining an ACT Framework that covers the overriding national reporting frameworks for Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, reconciliation, service delivery and prevention of violence, as well as the ACT Government's reporting requirements relating to the Canberra Social Plan and the ACT Human Rights Act.

The ACT Government recently established a Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs to drive the delivery of improved services and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the ACT.

The Taskforce:

- co-ordinates the ACT Government's Indigenous policies and reports to the Minister for Indigenous affairs on directions and priorities
- is required to pay particular attention to the needs of children and young people throughout its deliberations
- will report to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs bi-monthly and in accordance with the ACT Government budget cycle requirements
- is currently examining options for mapping all ACT Government programs, policies and services against the national Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage key indicators framework, identifying gaps in service delivery and outcomes, and planning a framework for whole-of-government integrated service delivery for Indigenous residents of the ACT.

The outcomes to date include:

Health

- the implementation of: A New Way: The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing Plan 2006–2011 and the Cultural Respect Implementation Plan 2006–2009
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Improvement Program
- improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health data quality continues to be a priority
- working in partnership to develop an 'Integrated Indigenous Service Delivery Project'.

Education

- the implementation of a range of programs to meet the needs of Indigenous students.

Specific programs include:

- Koori Preschool program for Indigenous children aged 3 to 5
- The Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy initiative
- Indigenous Home/School Liaison Officer support
- Individual learning plans for each Indigenous child.

Housing

- the ACT government does not receive any funds specifically for Indigenous housing through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement
- the ACT does not have a discrete Indigenous housing program, however, it is committed to addressing Indigenous housing needs and disadvantage in a coordinated and integrated way. In this regard, public housing outcomes are achieved for Indigenous people under the *ACT Strategic Plan* and *Operational Plan for Indigenous Housing*.

Early childhood intervention and safer communities

Implementation of a number of Indigenous-specific services including:

- Indigenous Family Support Services
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foster Care Services
- Indigenous Supported Accommodation Service.

Providing funds to non-Government organisations for support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including:

- Indigenous Family Support
- funding has been provided for family support and community building to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Representative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Throughout 2005-2006 the ACT Government supported an initial consultation process involving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities around whether the community wanted a community-based body to represent its interests and, if so, what sort of body it should be and what it should do. Further work will be done during 2006-2007 in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop a structure and constitution for the new body that reflect priorities expressed during the initial community consultation process.

Northern Territory Government comments

The Northern Territory Government has a long-standing commitment to addressing Indigenous disadvantage in its myriad forms. By investing in Indigenous potential, the entire Territory will benefit from a stronger economy, more skilled and well-paid jobs, greater social cohesion, and a rich artistic and cultural life. The Northern Territory Government has developed and implemented a number of initiatives.

Office of Indigenous Policy

The Office of Indigenous Policy provides high level whole-of-government strategic policy advice on Indigenous issues. The primary focus of the Office is ensuring that the Government's commitment to overcoming Indigenous disadvantage is a fundamental consideration across government, and that capacity is built across the Northern Territory Public Sector to address Indigenous issues. The Office is also coordinating the development of policies and strategies to resolve outstanding and future land issues; communicating the Government's policies to the Indigenous and the wider community; and monitoring progress in overcoming Indigenous disadvantage.

Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs

The Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Northern Territory of Australia 2005–2010 (the Overarching Agreement) was signed in April 2005 by the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister. It sets out a collaborative approach by the Northern Territory and Australian Governments to working with Indigenous communities to improve government service delivery and achieve better outcomes for Indigenous people in the Northern Territory.

Bilateral schedules are being progressively attached to the Overarching Agreement to set out how the governments will work together. The first three schedules — 'Sustainable Indigenous Housing', 'Strengthening and Sustaining the Indigenous Arts Sector' and 'Regional Authorities' were attached at the signing of the Agreement. Two additional schedules — 'Boosting Indigenous Employment and Economic Development' and 'Healthy Country, Healthy People' were formally attached to the Agreement in March and September 2006 respectively and it is expected that further schedules will be developed. Information on the Overarching Agreement can be found at the following address:
<http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/dcm/people/agreement.html>

Agenda for Action

The Agenda for Action is a whole-of-government Indigenous Affairs policy for the Northern Territory. It sets out the Government's Indigenous affairs priorities for 2005–2009, and will coordinate policy development across all Northern Territory agencies. The Agenda also reflects the commitments made in the *Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs*.

The Agenda for Action reaffirms the Northern Territory Government's strong commitment to work with Indigenous communities in relationships built on mutual respect and confidence. Sharing responsibility for improving Indigenous education, health, employment, safety, housing and self-governing ability empowers Indigenous communities to develop their own solutions to social and economic issues, and to work more effectively with Government.

The Agenda for Action outlines the six main Indigenous affairs priorities of the Northern Territory Government. The six priority areas are to:

1. Establish and maintain a 'whole-of-government' approach — whereby all Government agencies work together to achieve good results for Indigenous Territorians.
2. Invest in the Territory's future by assisting young Indigenous Territorians to a good start in life, a strong education, and skills necessary to reach their full potential.
3. Foster further Indigenous economic development, by creating more local jobs for local people and using land rights to boost community economies.
4. Develop Indigenous peoples' ability to govern their own communities, and encourage other community-building activities.
5. Build on the strong progress made over the past four years to improve housing, roads, communications infrastructure (i.e. access to telephones and the internet), and other essential services in Indigenous communities.
6. Ensure all Indigenous Territorians feel safe living and working in their communities.

A copy of the Agenda for Action can be found at the following website:

<http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/dcm/people/pdf/200603AgendaForAction.pdf>

