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# Appendix 2 Implementation of the framework

## **Jurisdictions' comments**

This appendix provides comments by the Australian, State and Territory Governments, summarising the implementation of the framework in each jurisdiction:

- Australian Government
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Queensland
- Western Australia
- South Australia
- Tasmania
- Australian Capital Territory
- Northern Territory.

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## Australian Government comments

The Australian Government continues its strong commitment to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It does so by undertaking important policy reforms and committing significant expenditures to find solutions to the complex problems which underpin the disadvantage faced by many Indigenous Australians.

The Australian Government's agenda to close the gap is driven by three key imperatives: to overcome past under-investment, to encourage and support personal responsibility, and to build new understanding and respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Closing the gap is an issue of national importance which will require sustained effort over many years, as well as ongoing collaboration between all levels of government working together with Indigenous Australians, the corporate sector and community organisations.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has agreed to six ambitious close the gap targets. COAG has also identified a strategic platform with seven key 'building blocks' addressing specific areas of Indigenous disadvantage in early childhood, schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities, and governance and leadership.

The targets and building blocks are brought together in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) which sets out the objectives, outcomes, outputs, performance indicators, and performance benchmarks that will be used to assess progress in closing the gap. COAG has also tasked the independent COAG Reform Council (CRC) to monitor and report annually on the progress achieved nationally and in each jurisdiction on the closing the gap targets.

In February 2011 COAG agreed to a set of annual trajectories for each state and territory jurisdiction to measure progress on achieving the closing the gap targets. These trajectories provide the required annual progress points that the CRC will compare with the actual outcomes in their annual reports. The reports will assess whether progress at the national level and in the state and territory jurisdictions are at a sufficient pace to meet the targets within the specified time periods.

The Prime Minister reports annually to Parliament on the Government's closing the gap agenda. The 2011 Report noted progress was being made against the closing the gap targets and highlighted the significant improvements seen in child mortality. It stated also that meeting the targets will continue to be a major

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challenge for the nation. The report also noted the unprecedented levels of public investment committed to actions under the seven building blocks to improve life outcomes and opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

A significant portion of these investments is provided through several Indigenous-specific National Partnerships (NP) agreed to by COAG. For instance, the NP on Remote Indigenous Housing commits \$5.5 billion over ten years (to 2017-18) to build and refurbish homes and related infrastructure. Another \$1.6 billion is committed over four years (to 2012-13) through the NP on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes. The NP on Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory, agreed to between the Australian and Northern Territory governments in July 2009, provides \$807 million over a three year period (to 2011-12). Other Indigenous-specific NPs cover Indigenous Early Childhood Development, Indigenous Economic Participation, and Indigenous Remote Service Delivery.

Additional public investments in closing the gap are made through funding for mainstream programs with a significant connection with Indigenous Australians. For instance, the NP on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities, designed to improve student learning outcomes in schools with high numbers of disadvantaged students, will impact upon many Indigenous students.

The Australian Government has also reaffirmed its commitment to closing the gap in the 2011-12 Budget by maintaining its focus on structural reforms across all policy sectors and by providing \$526.6 million over the next five years.

The first *Indigenous Expenditure Report*, commissioned by COAG, was released in February 2011. It estimates the total expenditure on Indigenous Australians made in 2008-09 by the Australian and state and territory governments. These estimates incorporate attributed shares of Indigenous persons in all mainstream spending (including programs not related to closing the gap, such as defence expenditure) as well as Indigenous-specific spending. The total Indigenous expenditure of the Australian government in 2008-09 was estimated at \$13.5 billion, of which \$4.0 billion was spending on Indigenous specific programs.

In November 2009, the Australian Government committed \$29.2 million over five years to support the establishment and initial operation of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. The National Congress is expected to play a key role in engagement between the Australian Government and Indigenous peoples. The first meeting of the National Congress occurred in June 2011.

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## New South Wales Government comments

The NSW Government is acutely aware of the current gaps that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in NSW. To date, Governments efforts have done little to decrease the gaps in outcomes of life expectancy, child mortality, child abuse and neglect, employment, imprisonment and juvenile detention, overcrowding and alcohol and tobacco consumption.

While there have been some improvements in Aboriginal development, they have been limited at best. Given that NSW is home to the largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, the need to address this gap is more pressing than ever and our approach must be re-vitalised.

The NSW Government is committed to assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to meet their aspirations, seize opportunities and share in the State's prosperity.

The NSW Government will make decisions hand in hand with Aboriginal communities, in accordance with the following principles: strong political leadership and accountability; evidence based programs; locally driven solutions; early intervention and prevention; economic and cultural strength; greater opportunity and individual responsibility and a long term vision. These principles will help to improve outcomes across all seven strategic areas in the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* framework.

NSW is a signatory to the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation* and we will continue to implement key elements of the Agreement. Following an evaluation of current programs and their effectiveness, the Government will also create opportunities for economic development and increased employment participation.

NSW is also a signatory to the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Education, Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes and Closing the Gap Indigenous Early Childhood Development*. The Government is committed to intervening early to improve the educational and health outcomes for Aboriginal people, whilst assisting Aboriginal people and communities to attain academic and cultural excellence in education.

NSW is currently revising its Aboriginal Affairs strategic framework as the *Two Ways Together* NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan comes to a close. While the biennial *Two Ways Together* Report has facilitated greater awareness of the extent of

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disadvantage; the Report highlights the lack of program evaluation and evidence based decision making. The Auditor-General's report chiefly acknowledges that *Two Ways Together* '...has not delivered the improvement in overall outcomes for Aboriginal people that were intended' (NSW Auditor General's Report 2011, *Two Ways Together — NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan*, p.3).

This report provides a platform from which the NSW Government can work with local Aboriginal people to reform our approach to closing the gap.

### *Local Partnerships with Aboriginal Communities*

At the local level, 21 Aboriginal Community Engagement Groups have been locally established under the Partnership Community Program (PCP). The PCP is a place-based program supporting the development and recognition of a community engagement group in each of the 40 Partnership Communities.

The program is based upon the principle of recognising that Aboriginal people know best the needs of their communities, and that government agencies need to work in partnership with them, so that their individual needs can be targeted in a culturally appropriate way.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs NSW will continue to work with all other stakeholders within the targeted communities, including the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (ALC) network. The role of the non-government sector in the NSW Governments approach will be fundamental to delivering locally driven solutions.

### *Partnering Regionally*

The NSW Government is committed to working together as equal partners with Aboriginal people and the Australian Government through *Regional Partnership Agreements* (RPAs). There are currently four RPAs in place in NSW: Murdi Paaki; Many Rivers; Illawarra and the Northern LALC. The evaluation of these RPAs is critical to their future and will occur as soon as practicable.

### *Partnering with the Commonwealth*

The NSW Government will continue to work closely with the Australian Government through the *Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan* to close the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage.

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## **Victorian Government comments**

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the quality of life of Indigenous Victorians and closing the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians.

Closing the gaps will require sustained effort from all governments, Indigenous communities and their organisations as well as the private and philanthropic sectors and the broader Victorian community.

From late 2010 the Government has commenced building on previous efforts in areas such as maternal health, early childhood development, education and economic participation to improve outcomes. Actions in these areas by both the State and the Commonwealth Governments will be decisive in helping individuals, families and communities breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

There are areas highlighted in this and in other national and State reports that reinforce the message for Victoria that more needs to be done across the board but particularly in areas such school retention rates, smoking, alcohol abuse and child protection.

In February 2011 Victoria recommitted to the updated COAG National Indigenous Reform Agreement and is working with the Commonwealth Government to ensure better coordination of effort by both Governments.

### *Partnership with Indigenous Victorians*

Victoria has well established consultative and engagement arrangements with Victorian Indigenous communities and their organisations. Victoria's Local Indigenous Networks (LINs) established across the State provide a critical focus for work and priority setting in local areas. Around 1600 community members have participated in the LINs to date. This accounts for around eight per cent of Victorias Indigenous adult population.

Statewide engagement processes are also in place at the program or issue based level in areas such as justice, health and education.

Partnerships are vital in both identifying priorities and in implementing measures. on the ground.

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### *Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework*

The present Framework has six Strategic Areas for Action that, consistent with the NIRA, adopts a lifecourse approach to closing the gaps. This approach gives strong emphasis on providing a healthy start to life and ensuring better access to and outcomes from early childhood development, education and participation in the economy.

Other Areas for Action focus on achieving better justice and family safety outcomes, improved health and well being and on building the capacity of Indigenous communities.

The Victorian Government has commenced a review of policy settings. This review is designed to strengthen the performance of government programs in contributing to closure of the gaps.

The Review to be completed by 2012 will respond to the real opportunities and challenges of:

- a demographic structure where the Indigenous population is growing and half the population is under the age of 22
- the significant gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians on key economic, social and health indicators.

Victoria will continue to publish an Annual Indigenous Affairs Report that outlines performance against the Framework.

### *Progress in Victoria*

There have been positive movements in some key areas. More three and four year old Indigenous children are accessing kindergarten and Indigenous student performance in NAPLAN is continuing to improve. Better outcomes in these areas are expected to have positive ‘downstream’ effects for individuals including their future participation in the economy.

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## Queensland Government comments

The Queensland Government works in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to provide services and support to Close the Gap, advance reconciliation and promote Indigenous cultures.

A key focus is reducing the gap in health outcomes. The *Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010–2033* aims to make health services and clinical practices more effective and culturally appropriate for Indigenous Queenslanders. Further, the Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence for Indigenous Primary Health Care, launched in 2009, will provide best practice health services, undertake research, and train health professionals to support improvements in Indigenous health outcomes.

Improving economic participation is another focus of effort. The Queensland Government is committed to increasing public sector employment to reflect Queensland Indigenous working age population share by 30 June 2013. The Skilling Queenslanders for Work program also includes a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and aims to help them obtain skills and training to compete for full-time jobs. The Jail to Jobs program will also support 200 Indigenous people leaving jail each year to be transitioned into employment.

Achieving at school is critical, as is supporting Indigenous students to transition from year 12 to further education, training and employment. To this end, the *Learn, Earn, Legend! Year 12 Destinations* initiative commenced late in 2010. It aims to case manage every Indigenous Year 12 student during the final year of schooling and then transition them into further education, training or meaningful employment for a minimum of 26 weeks post school.

These streams of work are brought together under *LEAP: a strategy for greater access to education, employment, health and housing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders in urban and regional areas*. This strategy targets the 78 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population living in urban and regional areas, and particular focuses on increased employment and economic participation, early childhood development, targeted sport and recreation activities and the delivery of local ‘closing the gap’ actions.

Recognising culture and moving towards reconciliation are also important. The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Policy 2009–2013* supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to preserve culture and develop sustainable arts and cultural industries. The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan

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aims to strengthen relationships; celebrate the achievements of Indigenous Queenslanders; and increase educational and economic opportunities.

Queensland has also implemented initiatives to respond to the particular issues and high level of need in rural and remote Indigenous communities. In Queensland, six communities have been designated priority communities under the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership and are benefitting from the increased focus on raising the quality of government services and facilities and better supporting Indigenous governance and leadership. Four of these communities are also Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) Trial communities.

The CYWR Trial is a collaboration between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments and the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership. It commenced in 2008, and aims to reduce reliance on passive welfare, re-establish positive social norms, restore local Indigenous authority, and create incentives for four Cape communities to engage in the real economy. The Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) is a key component of the Trial and appoints respected Elders to Local Commissioner positions, thereby rebuilding local authority. The FRC sends a consistent message about the expected behavior of individuals and families and, where appropriate, refers individuals to support services. The Trial has already contributed to positive changes in school attendance and increased commitment to education by parents.

Covering 19 communities, Queensland's strengthened alcohol reform laws came into effect on 1 July 2008, along with a range of support services. These initiatives aim to provide opportunities to rebuild social norms and healthy families by reducing alcohol consumption and associated violence. In many alcohol reform communities, violence has trended downwards and in the majority of communities school attendance has also been maintained or has improved.

The Bound for Success Pre-Prep Program commits to ensuring children aged two and a half to three and a half living in 29 Indigenous communities have access to high quality, consistent early childhood education programs.

In 34 remote Queensland Indigenous communities, the Remote Indigenous Housing capital works program will see more than 1100 new dwellings and upgrades to more than 1200 homes by 2018. To ensure Indigenous people benefit broadly from this investment, Queensland has committed to 20 per cent of the employment hours on government construction projects in Indigenous communities be dedicated to employing and training local Indigenous people.

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## Western Australian Government comments

The Western Australian Government is committed to addressing the unacceptable levels of disadvantage experienced by our Aboriginal people across the OID priority outcomes areas and COAG's six national Closing the Gap targets.

While fully supporting COAG related reforms and activities, it is also recognised that significant and sustainable change will only occur if there is strong state based leadership in tackling Indigenous disadvantage.

There is need for a deep understanding and responsiveness to the unique challenges that exist in WA in relation to improving life outcomes for Aboriginal people.

WA has the third largest Indigenous population in Australia, which is projected to grow by 20 per cent in the next 10 years. A very high proportion (42.6 per cent) of our Aboriginal population is living in remote or very remote areas, within more than 280 town based and remote communities, posing complex challenges for service delivery. Furthermore, almost 80 per cent of Western Australia's Aboriginal population is under the age of 40 years and most significantly the life expectancy of our Aboriginal people is the lowest of all states and territories.

Responding to these attributes will require targeted and intensive state focus on the regional and local needs of our young and growing population, to strengthen their health, education and employment prospects, as well as on the service needs of Aboriginal communities in remote locations to ensure they receive the same amenities enjoyed by the broader community.

### *Way Forward*

In the past, crisis management in Aboriginal affairs has often diverted organisational focus away from the overall intent and strategic approach essential to improving Aboriginal outcomes. A more systemic and integrated approach is needed to ensure the maximum benefit is achieved from investment in programs and services.

A failure to change the way we operate will continue to result in the development of ineffectual solutions with unintended consequences. Some of the key issues and challenges include:

- a failure to learn from the past, resulting in a lack of real change

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- a history of reactive and ineffective crisis driven policy development in Aboriginal affairs and a tendency to focus on symptoms rather than underlying causes
  - an incomplete understanding of patterns and levels of expenditure on services for Aboriginal people to better identify areas for investment that can result in greater social and economic benefits
  - incomplete, skewed or fragmented intelligence relating to Aboriginal people and communities leading to service identification and delivery that is ill targeted and timed, duplicated, overcooked or insufficient to meet needs.

Consequently, the WA government is developing a framework for Indigenous affairs that will drive the coordination of action across government in tackling the challenges. The framework will take account of work being undertaken as a result of commitments under various National Agreements and National Partnership Agreements (NPAs), as well as incorporating additional effort by government across agreed focus areas. The framework will also link in to WA's Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan (OBIP), an agreement that brings together all COAG related activities aimed at Closing the Gap targets.

Work already underway includes a range of initiatives implemented through the Indigenous NPAs (such as commencement of construction of Children and Family Centres; new and refurbished housing in remote communities; and creation of 156 real jobs to replace positions previously existing in the Community Development Employment Program) as well as the continuance of long established and effective programs as presented in case studies interspersed throughout this report.

Authentic engagement with Aboriginal people will underpin the framework which will ensure that Aboriginal people and communities have a level of trust and capacity to be active participants in the identification of critical issues and sustainable solutions that will shape their destiny.

The framework will foster better connectedness across WA Government agencies, between State and Commonwealth governments, and with the non-government and private sectors. This will ensure that effort and investment is more clearly identified, coordinated and implemented.

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## **South Australian Government comments**

The South Australian Government is committed to building on the strengths of the Aboriginal community to improve wellbeing and close the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage

### *Strategic Policy Framework*

South Australia's Strategic Plan, through SASP T6.1 provides the overarching framework to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal South Australians. The framework comprises the seven COAG building blocks with the addition of reconciliation, culture and traditional lands, recognising the significance of these to Aboriginal South Australians. Twenty one indicators that align to the OID and COAG frameworks are reported annually.

The Chief Executives Group on Aboriginal Affairs (CEGAA) sets direction and monitors outcomes across the strategic framework.

### *Engagement and Partnership*

The South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council is the peak advisory body for the South Australian Government. The ten members are appointed by the Minister following a public nomination process. This forum provides strategic advice to government across all departments and has met with CEGAA to drive the government policy agenda.

### *Urban and Regional Initiative*

Over 2010 CEGAA, with advice from SAAAC, developed new government coordination and community engagement mechanisms for two locations in South Australia, northern Adelaide and Port Augusta. Over 2011 these mechanisms will be implemented, resulting in community driven action agreements that outline commitments on behalf of Government and community to close the gap in Aboriginal Disadvantage in each location. Improved co-ordination across the three tiers of government is also being implemented – to make better use of existing resources in these locations – to improve accessibility, accountability and sustainability.

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### *Urban and Remote Service Delivery*

Local Implementation Plans for Amata and Mimili were developed in partnership with communities and the Commonwealth Government. These plans are now being implemented.

### *Legislative Reform*

The Government is currently conducting comprehensive reviews of both the *Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 1966* (the ALT Act) and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (the AHA).

The reforms proposed for the ALT Act will enable Aboriginal South Australians that live in ALT residential communities to achieve increased investment in and long term security over where they live through long term leasing arrangements for housing. The reforms will also provide a platform for economic and commercial development of ALT held land, providing employment and income generation opportunities. Finally, the changes will empower communities and people with traditional and familial links (including native title links) to manage land for environmental and cultural sustainability.

The review of the AHA is not yet complete but current policy directions are to promote the management and protection of Aboriginal heritage through planning and agreement making. While employment opportunities are not (and should not be) a central focus of the review, building the capacity of Aboriginal people to participate in making decisions about the management and protection of Aboriginal heritage will enable Aboriginal South Australians to make the most of their cultural assets.

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## **Tasmanian Government comments**

The Tasmanian Government continues to address the causes and symptoms of Indigenous disadvantage through Aboriginal specific programs and services and services designed to address disadvantage in the wider community. Increasingly, mainstream services are adopting practices that consider cultural appropriateness, such as cultural competency training, cultural awareness training and the establishment of Aboriginal advisory committees and groups.

These activities build on the strong foundation for reconciliation set down by the *Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act 2006*, which allowed for ex-gratia payments to Aborigines who were forcibly removed from their families as children, due to the direct intervention of previous Government policies and practices.

### *National Agreements and Partnerships*

The Tasmanian Government has negotiated a number of general and Aboriginal specific National Agreements, National Partnership Agreements and National Strategies and Frameworks to progress Closing the Gap targets, including the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement, the Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes National Partnership Agreement and the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing.

### *Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan*

During 2010, the Tasmanian Government negotiated an Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan for the State. The first of its type between the Australian and Tasmanian Governments, the plan underpins Tasmania's commitment to the National Indigenous Reform Agreement — focussing effort on urban and regional service delivery and the improvement of data quality.

### *Early Childhood*

The Kids Come First project is a whole-of-government outcomes-based framework to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Tasmanian children. A database allows analysis of a number of indicators for children from birth to age 17, including health, wellbeing, safety, development and learning. During 2010, the project prioritised the collection and reporting of data for Aboriginal children.

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## *Education*

*Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes — A Tasmanian Strategy for Aboriginal Student Success through School Improvement* aims to Close the Gap in educational achievement. The strategy focuses on readiness for school; engagement and connections; attendance; literacy and numeracy; leadership; quality teaching and workforce development; and pathways to real post-school options.

## *Economic Participation*

During 2010, the Tasmanian Government facilitated a statewide tour of *Deadly Dollars*, a New South Wales performance based consumer rights and financial literacy program, with assistance from the Australian Government. Performances provided an entertaining, engaging and educational approach to avoiding debt, household spending, interest free deals, mobile phone bills and other credit matters.

## *Safe Communities*

During 2010, Colony 47 secured Australian Government funding to deliver the Healing Our Way (HOW) program in Tasmania, to assist the Aboriginal community and service providers to work effectively with incarcerated male Aboriginal offenders and their families through the delivery of a culturally-focused healing program — reducing re-offending while building community leadership capacity.

## *Governance and Leadership*

The Aboriginal Outdoor Recreation Program fosters Aboriginal community leadership through a partnership with Wilderness Therapy Programs. The partnership delivers tailored courses in facilitating wilderness therapy to the Aboriginal community topics that equip participants with the necessary skills to facilitate Wilderness Therapy Programs in Tasmania.

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## **Australian Capital Territory Government comments**

### *Building Block: Early Childhood*

On 2 May 2011, the new West Belconnen Child and Family Centre was officially opened. It is the first of 38 multi-purpose centres to be built across Australia through the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, providing a tailored range of children and family services. The centre caters for the needs of families in the local community, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and carers. The centre offers access to early learning activities, play group and parental courses, as well as other vital services such as maternal, child health and allied health services.

### *Building Block: Schooling*

The ACT Government has appointed two Indigenous Student Aspirations Coordinators who commenced work at the beginning of term 3, 2009. The coordinators work with ACT public primary schools, high schools and colleges in each school district.

The ACT performance against the 2010 NAPLAN indicated that the proportion of Indigenous students at or above the national minimum standard was not below the 2010 progress point in any year level or domain. In 2010, the participation rate of Indigenous students was higher than the Australian average for year 3 but below for years 5, 7 and 9. Apart from year 7 (a 5.6 percentage point increase) there were small changes to participation rates between 2009 and 2010.

### *Building Block: Health*

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is not of sufficient size to allow for calculation of life expectancy and child mortality rates in the ACT. ACT Health is committed to improving data collection on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the health sector. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit and the Pathology Unit at The Canberra Hospital agreed to introduce a new procedure to ensure all clients are asked if they identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The ACT Government committed \$200 000 per annum over four years to implement initiatives to decrease tobacco smoking rates amongst the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. A steering committee has been established to guide the implementation of the Strategy's recommendations.

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*Building Block: Economic Participation*

The ACT Government launched its Employment Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People that will aim to double its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce by 2015.

*Building Block: Healthy Homes*

Allocation of new tenancies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households increased by 19 per cent in 2009-10 with 69 new tenancies allocated. This exceeded the 10 per cent target set by Housing ACT. An increase has also occurred of self identified tenancies with 365 on 30 June 2009 to 434 on 30 June 2010, housing a total of 892 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

*Building Block: Safe Communities*

On 28 September 2010, the Attorney General, Simon Corbell and Chairperson of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, Terry Williams, signed the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement ensures a higher level of understanding and a mutual commitment to addressing the needs of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system.

The agreement recognises that supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and families into positive pathways requires a coordinated range of responses in the areas of health, housing, justice, education and employment.

*Building Block: Governance and Leadership*

The ACT has established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body. The Elected Body was established in 2008, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT have a strong democratically elected voice. It consists of seven people who are elected by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the ACT to represent their interests and aspirations.

The ACT Government as part of the whole-of-government Information System for Indigenous Data Project will continue the work to develop proxy measures to assist in service delivery reporting for this Schedule.

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## **Northern Territory Government comments**

The Northern Territory Government continues with its commitment to improve the lives of Indigenous Territorians and close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Territorians. Reform in the education and health sectors, balancing the housing market and making genuine progress in regional and remote areas are immediate priorities in the Territory 2030 strategic plan.

To make progress, joint effort occurs in partnership with agencies across government and non-government sectors to implement specific Indigenous programs and services in a range of key areas including governance, housing and infrastructure, health, education, safer communities and economic development.

### *Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan*

The Northern Territory Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan (OBIP) was negotiated as part of the National Indigenous Reform Agreement. The OBIP commits both the Northern Territory and Australian Governments to working collaboratively with Indigenous Territorians to take action to strengthen cultural identity and wellbeing and to address entrenched levels of disadvantage. The OBIP consolidates the key initiatives and commitments in the Northern Territory relating to each COAG building block — early childhood, schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities and governance and leadership.

### *National Agreements and Partnerships*

The Northern Territory Government has negotiated a number of significant National Agreements, National Partnerships and strategies that support effort to overcome Indigenous disadvantage in the Northern Territory. In particular, the Indigenous specific Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement (the NPA) aims to establish effective service delivery models to enable remote Indigenous communities in priority locations to receive and actively participate in government services, at a level broadly comparable with that in non-Indigenous communities of similar size, location and need elsewhere in Australia.

The Remote Service Delivery Framework, as set out under the NPA, emphasises:

- improving access to culturally sensitive services
- increasing the range and standards of services

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- increasing economic and social participation
  - promoting personal responsibility and engagement.

### *Working Future*

Working Future is the Northern Territory Government's plan for improving the lives of remote Territorians. This visionary plan is developing large service towns (Territory Growth Towns), setting a new path for outstations and homelands, and coordinating the delivery of infrastructure, services and development in remote regions of the Territory. As a key element of the Northern Territory Government's strategic plan for the next 20 years, Territory 2030, Working Future will strengthen services through a hub and spoke service delivery model. All parts of Working Future are critical for effective and efficient delivery of government services to remote areas of the Territory — Territory Growth Towns; outstations and homelands; remote service delivery; employment and economic development; remote transport strategy; and targets and evaluation.

### *Engagement*

The Indigenous Affairs Advisory Council (IAAC) was appointed by the Northern Territory Government in 2009. There are 16 members who have a wide range of experience in Indigenous affairs and come from a number of areas across the Territory. The IAAC meets four times a year to provide advice and make recommendations to the Northern Territory Government regarding the implementation of the Working Future initiative.

