



Australian Government

National Commission for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

Corporate Plan 2024–25

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Acknowledgement of Country

The National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continued care of and connection to land, water, culture and community. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Note on language

The terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, First Nations, and Indigenous are used respectfully and interchangeably throughout this document when referring to First Nations peoples of Australia. These terms are used to respectfully encompass the diversity of cultures, identities, and preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Statement of Preparation

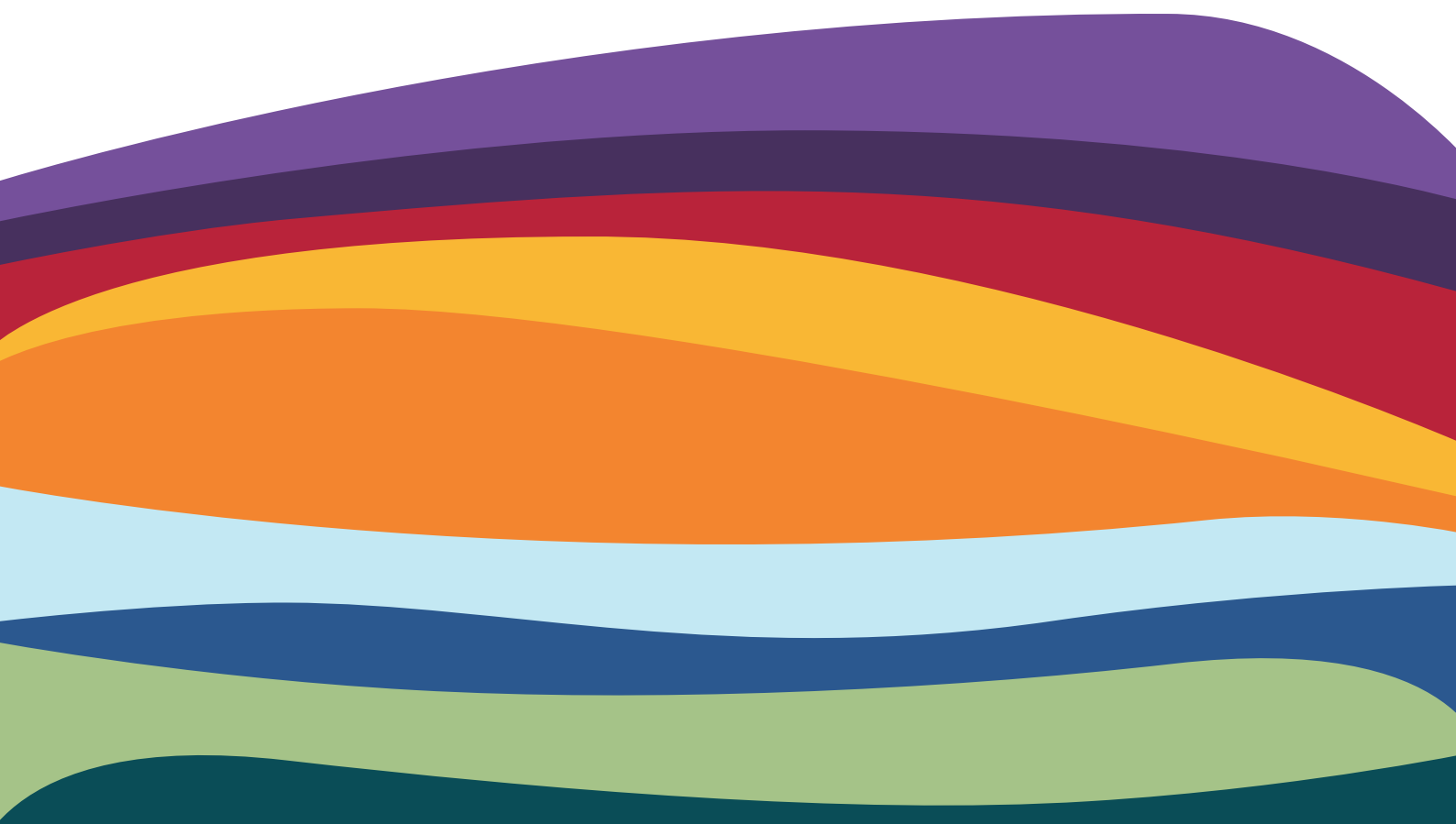
I, Lillian Gordon, as the accountable authority of the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People, present the 2024–25 National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People corporate plan, which covers the periods of 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under paragraph 35(1) (b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.



Lillian Gordon

Acting National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

3 June 2025



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National Commissioner's Foreword

As the Acting National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People (National Commissioner), I am pleased to present the inaugural corporate plan for the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People (National Commission), which covers the periods of 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.



The National Commission commenced operations on 13 January 2025 as a separate and independent entity within the Social Services portfolio. In the early stages of our establishment, we are setting the administrative and corporate foundations of a functioning independent non-corporate Commonwealth entity and consulting with key stakeholders to identify actions to enable each function outlined in our executive order.

Our first corporate plan sets the foundations for robust governance, meaningful partnerships, and a program of work that will define how the National Commission develops into the strong, effective entity needed to make real progress for, and with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. This plan sets out our purpose, key activities, and how we will measure our performance in this early phase.

The National Commission has been established in recognition of a simple truth: that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people have the right to grow up safe, connected to culture, supported by community, and empowered to thrive. At our heart is a commitment to ensuring that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are central to our ways of working. We will be determined in our efforts to ensure that their interests, their needs, and their stories are represented and prioritised in the decisions that affect their lives.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, advocates, and young people themselves have always shown up with courage and determination to fight for what is right and just. Leaders in this space have long called for a role like the National Commissioner to hold governments and systems to account. The National Commission is here today because of their staying power, tenacity, and unwavering commitment to put forward solutions that honour the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and their families and communities.

It has been a privilege to serve as the Acting National Commissioner at this pivotal time. I extend my deepest gratitude to those who fought for this role to be established and who have supported and engaged with us as we find our feet. I thank the young people I have met with in my capacity as the National Commissioner – many of whom are breaking new ground and stepping up as leaders on the issues that affect them. And I recognise all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people across the country. They are the hopes and dreams of our ancestors, the here and now, the vision of the future, and the reason I am here.

I look forward to listening to their perspectives, collaborating with them, and amplifying their voices on what matters to them. With optimism, deep responsibility, and a sense of urgency – we will connect and collaborate with government and non-government organisations to invest in meaningful change. Because all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people deserve to grow up strong in their identity and culture, in a future of boundless opportunities.

Lillian Gordon

Acting National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

About the National Commission

Our purpose

Our purpose is to protect and promote the rights, interests, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people by amplifying their voices, aspirations, and strengths; embedding their perspectives and priorities in advice to Government; and collaborating with key stakeholders to enhance collective impact and drive systemic reform.

Our Story

The National Commission was established on 26 September 2024 as an executive agency in accordance with section 65(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*. It commenced operations on 13 January 2025 as a separate and independent entity within the Social Services portfolio.

The establishment of the National Commission follows longstanding calls from First Nations leaders and organisations for a fully empowered and legislated National Commissioner to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care and youth detention. The role was also recommended by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2012 to ensure the effective monitoring of child rights in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Throughout the years, community leaders and advocates have not given up on securing representation and accountability for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Outcome Statement

As documented in our Portfolio Budget Statement for the Social Services portfolio, we are responsible for the outcome:

Amplifying the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, by providing strategic, independent and impartial advice about policy, reforms and services, and promoting and enhancing coordination on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Functions

The National Commission's current functions are set out in the Order to Establish the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People as an Executive Agency:¹

- promote and protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people through strategic policy advice and reports to Government on matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, and their families
- provide advice to Government on and inform the implementation of key policy frameworks which seek to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and their families
- promote and enhance coordination across Commonwealth and state and territory governments, commissioners, guardians and advocates and non-government organisations on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- undertake consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and their families, relevant Commonwealth and state and territory governments, commissioners, guardians and advocates and non-government organisations
- ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and their families are reflected in advice to Government.

The establishment of the National Commission under the executive order with the functions outlined above is an important first step in the realisation of an independent, ongoing, fully legislated and empowered National Commissioner.

Key Activities

In the National Commission's early phases of work, we are establishing the administrative and corporate foundations of an independent non-corporate Commonwealth entity, including accountability systems and processes to ensure compliance with all legislative and governance requirements under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

This early work includes identifying and establishing our key activities. These are informed by our purpose, intended outcomes, ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, and functions as outlined in our executive order (see *About the National Commission*).

The National Commission currently undertakes key activities in three areas:

1. Amplifying the voices, aspirations and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
2. Providing advice to Government
3. Enhancing national coordination on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

Amplifying the voices, aspirations and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

Engagement with children and young people

A core function of the National Commission's work is to undertake consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and ensure that their voices are reflected in advice to Government. Listening to, and engaging with, children and young people therefore represents ongoing, critical work to inform the National Commission's priorities, approach, and messaging.

The National Commission will work with state and territory counterparts to access consultation and engagement opportunities without duplicating work or increasing the risk of consultation fatigue in jurisdictions. This may include a range of activities, such as consultation with children and their families, group consultations, or engagement at forums and events.

Youth engagement model

Alongside ongoing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, the National Commission is committed to supporting the development of a dedicated national youth engagement model to empower young people to elevate their voices on issues that affect them. The youth engagement model will be progressed in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and key stakeholders. Once established, the National Commission will support the youth engagement model to engage with governments and stakeholders according to young people's priorities and goals.

Enquiries and complaints

Although the National Commission is not able to investigate or advocate on individual matters, receiving enquiries and complaints is an important part of providing children, young people, and their families with an accessible avenue for making their voices heard and ensuring that the National Commission's key activities are aligned to their priorities and needs.

The National Commission receives enquiries by email, webform and mail. Strong principles, processes and procedures ensure that all enquiries are dealt with in a fair, consistent, and timely manner, and are managed in a respectful and productive way.

Providing advice to Government

Government, agencies, and other bodies

The National Commission engages with elected government officials, administrative bodies, statutory and non-statutory agencies, corporate Commonwealth entities, and research entities to provide expert advice on matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. This may include engaging with advisory councils, networks, taskforces, parties to partnerships and agreements, working groups, committees, and forums for sharing expertise and decision-making with non-government stakeholders.

We are considering how we will work with stakeholders associated with initiatives such as Safe and Supported, the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership, and the Justice Policy Partnership. In addition, the National Commission may also contribute to the work of other stakeholders providing advice to Government, such as youth and leadership groups, community controlled organisations, and peak bodies.

Advice about the National Commission

We will provide ongoing advice to Government about the National Commission's purpose and functions, as informed by the perspectives and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. This includes guiding the development of primary legislation to define the powers, functions, and operational independence required to protect and promote the rights, interests and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, as well as supporting their voices, goals and aspirations.

Public commentary

The National Commission makes public commentary to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people's rights, interests, and wellbeing. This includes giving interviews and making statements in the media or on the National Commission's website and social media accounts.

The National Commission may also contribute to parliamentary or public inquiries and engage with international committees, forums, and accountability mechanisms.

Enhancing national coordination on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

While state and territory governments have responsibility for child protection and youth justice systems, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap requires all governments to work together to implement the priority reforms and make real progress towards our shared targets.

State and territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's commissioners, children's commissioners, guardians and advocates are already undertaking this work on a jurisdictional level. The National Commission will help strengthen and coordinate that work across jurisdictions, as well as in conjunction with the work of the National Children's Commissioner and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. To this end, we have already commenced work with the Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners, Guardians and Advocates (ANZCCGA) group, through which commissioners, guardians, and advocates from Australia and New Zealand meet to collaborate, coordinate, and support one another's work.

We are building relationships across jurisdictions and internationally with stakeholders such as children's commissioners, guardians, and advocates; peak bodies; community-controlled organisations; and youth groups. This includes mapping work and priorities across states and territories and at a national level – allowing us to undertake our key activities with a view to enhancing national coordination on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

We will connect and collaborate with key stakeholders in carrying out the National Commission's key activities, including supporting youth initiatives, providing advice to Government, and public commentary – as well as in identifying and defining the core functions and powers required to fulfil its purpose. Engagement in each jurisdiction will take place in consultation and collaboration with the respective children's commissioners, guardians, and advocates.

Operating Context

Environment

Diversity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are diverse, representing hundreds of distinct Nations, languages, and cultural practices across the continent. Each community has unique ways of being that shape the identities and worldviews of their children – whether they grow up in urban, regional, or remote areas. Strong cultural identity and connection to community are powerful protective factors for children and young people. Work at a national level must recognise and respect this diversity and the vital role that culture and community play in supporting children and young people to thrive.

Similarly, intersections with factors such as disability, gender identity, and socio-economic status mean that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up with a diverse range of experiences, strengths, and challenges. Communities require flexibility in tailoring and implementing initiatives that reflect the unique priorities and needs of their children and young people. The National Commission's work must pursue outcomes that honour and accommodate this diversity.

National initiatives and partnerships

The establishment of the National Commission follows longstanding calls from First Nations leaders and peak bodies for a fully empowered and legislated National Commissioner to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care and youth detention. This is closely related to the work of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Safe and Supported, the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership, and the Justice Policy Partnership, as well as aligned with Australia's international human rights obligations.

First Nations children are 12 times² more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-First Nations children and 27 times more likely to be in youth detention.³

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It identifies 4 priority reforms to improve the way governments work and 19 socioeconomic targets across 17 outcome areas that have an impact on life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The National Commission will play an important role in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap – particularly outcomes 11 and 12, which aim to end the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the criminal justice system and the child protection system.

All Australian governments have committed to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, but inconsistent actions, attitudes, and approaches to implementing the priority reforms and reaching the targets creates a dynamic, complex, and changing environment at a national level.

The Closing the Gap priority reforms are integral to the National Commission's values, priorities, and ways of working. The National Commission will have a role in promoting transformational change in government organisations and will remain closely tied to the broader work of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

First Nations children aged 0–17 make up 6.9% of their age group in the general population but 44.5% of those in out-of-home care.⁴

Safe and Supported

Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031 (Safe and Supported) is a ten-year blueprint for ensuring Australia's vulnerable children have the right frameworks, systems, and supports to thrive. It is governed by a partnership agreement between the Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group,⁵ the Commonwealth Government, and state and territory governments. The Department of Social Services represents the Minister for Social Services for the purpose of administering the Safe and Supported Partnership Agreement.

The Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023–26 focuses on achieving safety and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability and commits to urgent action to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in child protection systems.

Action 7c commits to establishing advocacy and accountability roles, including the National Commission, in all jurisdictions to amplify the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, drive systemic reforms to support their rights and wellbeing, and hold governments and services accountable.⁶

Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership

The Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership (ECCDPP) was established in August 2022 under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap to drive transformative action to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The partnership comprises representatives from peak organisations and governments, with SNAICC and the Department of Education acting as co-chairs and sharing secretariat duties.

The Partnership supports shared decision-making between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and Australian governments under Priority Reform One of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, in recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a right to self-determination and are the experts on matters concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. In 2023, ECCDPP identified the establishment of a fully empowered and legislated National Commission as a priority action.⁷

First Nations children aged 10–17 make up 6.6% of their age group in the general population but 65% of those in youth detention.⁸

Justice Policy Partnership

The Justice Policy Partnership was established in 2021 under Priority Reform One of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Co-chaired by the Attorney-General's Department and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Legal Services, it focuses on a national approach to Outcomes 10 and 11, which aim to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, children, and young people in the criminal justice system.

The Justice Policy Partnership has members representing Australian Government, state and territory governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice experts. The National Commission will also work in this space with the goal of reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the criminal justice system.

Human Rights

Australia's human rights obligations under international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples define the National Commission's operating environment. These frameworks require Australia to uphold and protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. Other international instruments reinforce their intersectional rights and outline the protections that governments and systems are obliged to provide them.

In line with these agreements, the National Commission strives for a world in which children's best interests are prioritised, their right to be heard is recognised, and their cultures, languages, and traditions are passed down by self-determining communities.

States and Territories

As child protection and youth justice are primarily the responsibility of jurisdictions, state and territory government agendas and election cycles influence commitments and reforms in these areas. Jurisdictional policy, legislation, programs, and outcomes may align more closely with changing local contexts than with national agreements. Additionally, a large number of reviews and inquiries have investigated and made recommendations for specific jurisdictional circumstances, and the respective governments have taken unique approaches to responding to those recommendations.

Each jurisdiction also has its own youth initiatives, peak bodies, non-government organisations, community-controlled organisations, and service providers, which receive various amounts of funding according to different structures and cycles, and which advocate for reforms most relevant to their circumstances.

On a national level, the National Commission's work intersects with that of the National Children's Commissioner and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, who also work with jurisdictional stakeholders. States and territories have children's commissioners, guardians, and advocates with varying powers and functions, who set their own work programs and whose terms conclude at different times. The National Commission will form strong relationships across jurisdictions to enhance coordination and provide a focus on national priorities that promote and protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Capability

Our people

The National Commission comprises a small team with diverse experience in government, stakeholder engagement, communications, policy development, and service delivery. We are committed to fostering a culturally safe workplace and centring the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in everything we do.

The National Commission consists of the National Commissioner, who is the Agency Head and Accountable Authority, and employees engaged to assist the Agency Head under section 65(2) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Shared services and ways of working

Our health, safety and wellbeing, information and technology capability, staff training and support, property and building services, corporate services, and human resources support are provided under a shared services arrangement with the Department of Social Services.

In the establishment phase, the National Commission will operate under the Department of Social Services Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027. National Commission staff are afforded the same conditions as those of the Department of Social Services and are guided by the same human resources policies.

Our governance

As the Accountable Authority, the National Commissioner oversees our risk management, control, and compliance requirements. We will continue to improve our governance and management practices as the National Commission grows in our resourcing and capabilities.

The National Commission is supported by the Department of Social Services Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee will act as a source of advice to the National Commission on the appropriateness of our financial and performance reporting, system of risk oversight and management, and system of internal controls.

Capability and primary legislation

We are undertaking consultation on the roles, powers and functions required to fulfil the National Commission's purpose, which will be enshrined in primary legislation.

The establishment of the National Commission is the product of sustained advocacy from the sector. First Nations stakeholders engaged in extensive discussions with Government to secure a commitment that reflected the priorities and needs of First Nations people. This included a requirement that the National Commission be truly independent and have the powers, resources and funding needed to carry out its role.

The Australian Government has also highlighted the role that the National Commission is expected to fill, including as a critical factor in reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in youth detention and out-of-home care. This includes the expectation that the National Commission will facilitate greater action at a national level with states and territories to make meaningful progress on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Consultation will further determine the powers and functions required to productively engage with and influence state and territory governments, which have primary responsibility for youth justice and child protection. The National Commission will need to bridge the gap between jurisdictions and Australia's international human rights obligations, including affecting compliance with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as relevant national obligations such as child safe standards.

The Department of Social Services will lead the development of the primary legislation in consultation with the National Commission and other key stakeholders, including national and jurisdictional commissioners and peak organisations who will help determine the legislation required to ensure that the National Commission can effectively advocate for First Nations families, provide oversight of systems and services, and hold governments to account. This includes determining the staffing and resources needed to fulfil the National Commission's functions and obligations. For example, the National Commission will require multiple teams of staff to focus on areas such as corporate governance and operations; engagement with children, young people, families, and stakeholders; enquiries and investigations; research and strategy; media and communications; and advice to Government. This work will span both child protection and youth justice across all states and territories, as well as focusing on broader issues and amplifying the voices and priorities of children and young people themselves.

While the Department of Social Services is the policy agency responsible for progressing legislation and future budget submissions, it is anticipated that the National Commission will be involved in the consultation and advice to Government.

Risk

Our risk governance

The National Commissioner and the Governance and Government Relations team oversee the National Commission's risk management, control, and compliance requirements.

They are supported by an Audit and Risk Committee, which works independently to ensure the appropriateness of the National Commission's financial and performance reporting, system of risk oversight and management, and system of internal controls.

Our risk management

The National Commission operates in an ever-changing environment of strategic, operational, shared, and emerging risks in order to deliver on our purpose and objectives. Risk management strategies are embedded across the National Commission and support evidence-based decision-making. Risks are managed in accordance with the nine elements of the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.

We are working to establish a Risk Management Framework that outlines the National Commission's approach to effective risk management and provides a robust methodology. The Framework comprises:

- a Risk Management Policy
- a Risk Management Procedure
- an Issues Management Procedure.

Cooperation and collaboration

As a newly established agency, we are focused on building relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders. This includes connecting with a large network of state and territory, national, and international organisations already advancing the rights, interests, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

The National Commission will specifically work collaboratively with:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and their families
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders, advocates, and Elders
- Commonwealth and state and territory governments, commissioners, guardians, and advocates
- peak bodies, frontline services, and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
- national and international bodies and research institutes.

We recognise that these relationships are fundamental to delivering the National Commission's functions and key objectives of reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in Australia's youth justice and child protection systems.

Key engagements

The National Commissioner attends a range of Commonwealth Government committee meetings that focus on strengthening outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. These have included meetings of the Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group,⁹ the Education Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership¹⁰ and Supporting Quality Engagement for Children.¹¹

Through these meetings, the National Commissioner works closely with peak bodies, such as SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children, which advocate for the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. The National Commissioner and other staff also attend youth events, summits and conferences, and non-government policy forums to deeply listen and inform the National Commission's advice to Government.

We will continue to strengthen and expand our working relationships, particularly with national peak organisations and other state- and territory-based organisations.

Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners, Guardians and Advocates

The National Commission is a member of the Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners, Guardians and Advocates (ANZCCGA) group, which comprises national, state and territory children and young people commissioners, guardians and advocates.

ANZCCGA promotes and protects the rights, interests, and wellbeing of children and young people in Australia and New Zealand through collective advocacy and information sharing. It is committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people can participate in decisions that impact them, and that their voices are considered in the development of legislation, policy and programs. ANZCCGA commissioners, guardians, and advocates bring observations and perspectives from varied roles and functions to work together towards systemic improvement informed by evidence-based research.

Department of Social Services

The National Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Social Services. Under the MoU, the Department of Social Services delivers corporate services and systems to the National Commission, including office accommodation, human resources, financial, IT, security, and information management. The MoU will be reviewed six months after signing, and every two years after that, and will require the National Commission to retain a close working relationship with the Department of Social Services.

Performance

Performance Measures and Indicators of Success

We are currently focused on outputs that reflect the establishment and planning phase of the National Commission's operations, such as gathering information, initial engagement and collaboration activities, establishing relationships, and identifying opportunities to fulfil our core functions.

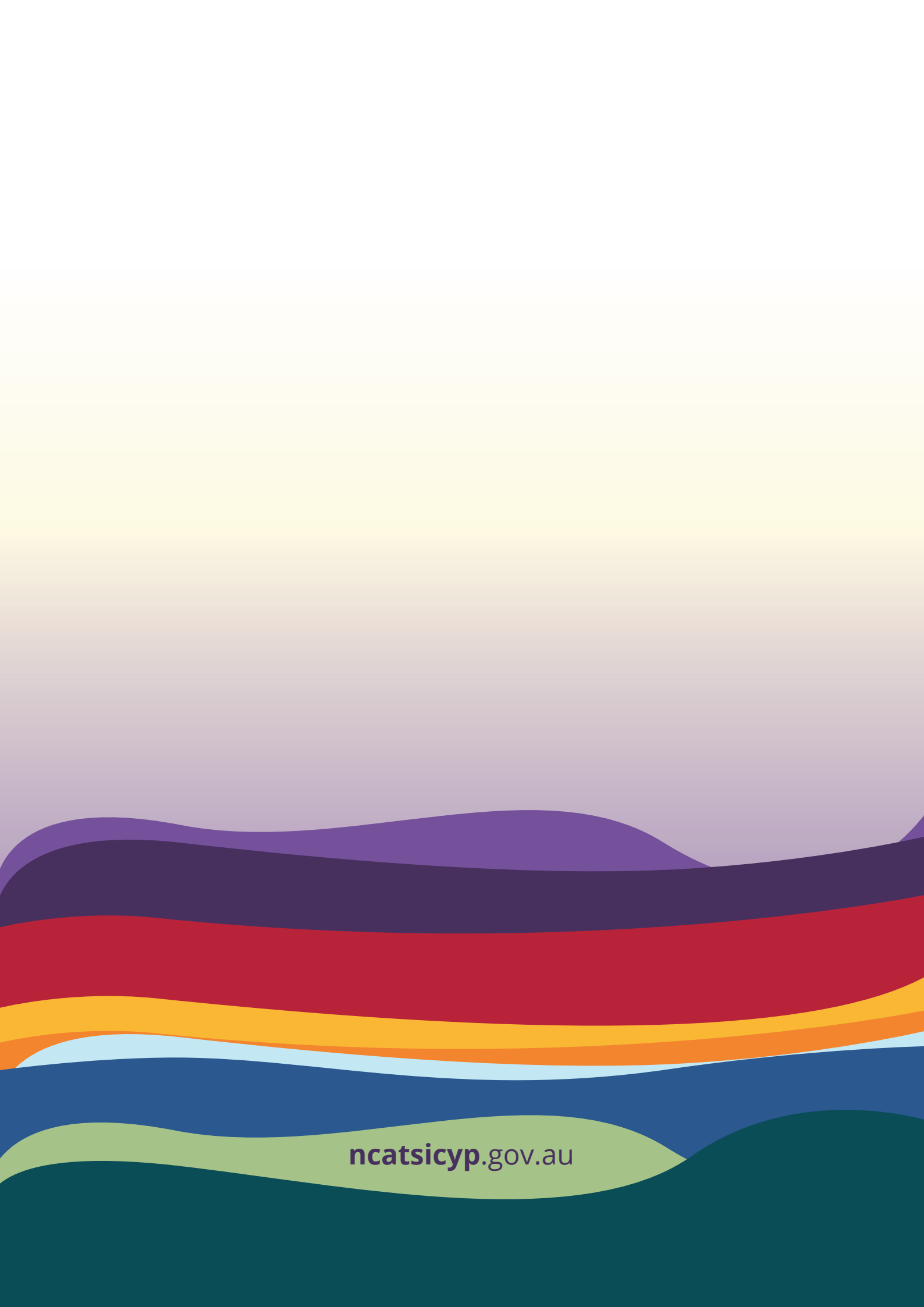
Achieving these actions from 13 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 will form the foundation for further work by establishing governance policies and frameworks to support engagement, developing positions on key issues to inform advice, and building stakeholder relationships to facilitate coordination.

The National Commission's success indicators for 2025–26 and beyond are currently under consideration.

| Activity | Performance Measure | 2024–25 Indicators of Success |
|--|---|--|
| Key Activity 1 Amplify the voices, aspirations and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people | Engagement and collaboration activities progress the establishment of a youth engagement model to accommodate a diversity of voices | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreements are in place for engaging with existing youth advisory groups both nationally and across jurisdictions• Child safe framework policies are established• Enquiries mechanism is established |
| Key Activity 2 Provide advice to Government | Extent to which the National Commission engages with Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Database of engagements and policy themes is established |
| Key Activity 3 Enhance national coordination on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people | Extent to which the National Commission has engaged and collaborated on activities that support sharing of policy, knowledge, and practice across jurisdictions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The National Commissioner has met with national and state and territory commissioners, guardians, and advocates• The National Commission has published joint statements across jurisdictions |

Endnotes

- 1 Australian Government (2025), *Order to Establish the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People as an Executive Agency*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2024G00584/asmade/text>
- 2 Australian Government Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2025), *Child Protection Australia 2022–23*. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/child-protection/child-protection-australia-2022-23/contents/about>
- 3 Australian Government Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024), *Youth detention population in Australia 2024*. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2024/contents/first-nations-young-people/key-findings>
- 4 Australian Government Productivity Commission (2025), *Proportion of children in out-of-home care (0–17 years old) that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Closing the Gap Information Repository*. Available at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/dashboard/se/outcome-area12/out-of-home-care#:~:text=Nationally%20in%202024%2C%2044.5%25%20of%20children%20aged%200%E2%80%93%2017,of%204.5%20percentage%20points%20since%202019%20%28figure%20SE12b.1%29>
- 5 The Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group engages in shared decision-making with governments implementing Safe and Supported. More information available at: <https://www.dss.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-leadership-group>
- 6 Commonwealth of Australia (2022), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023–2026*. Available at: https://www.dss.gov.au/system/files/resources/final_aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_first_action_plan.pdf
- 7 Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership (2023), *Annual Report 2023*. Available at: <https://www.snaicc.org.au/resources/early-childhood-care-and-development-policy-partnership-annual-report-2023/>
- 8 Australian Government Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024), *Youth detention population in Australia 2024*. Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2024/contents/first-nations-young-people/key-findings>
- 9 The Safe and Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group engages in shared decision-making with governments implementing Safe and Supported. More information available at: <https://www.dss.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-leadership-group>
- 10 The Education Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to work in partnership with government to drive community-led, early childhood care and development outcomes. More information available at: <https://www.education.gov.au/closing-the-gap/closing-gap-early-childhood/early-childhood-care-and-development-policy-partnership>
- 11 Supporting Quality Engagement for Children is a consultation project run by the Australian Human Rights Commission, which aims to include the voices of children, young people and families in policies and services that directly affect them. More information available at: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/projects/supporting-quality-engagement-children>



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