

2025

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

Tabling Statement

**ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028
Annual Impact Statement 2024-25**

and

National Agreement on Closing the Gap – ACT Annual Report 2024

**Presented by
Suzanne Orr MLA
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
June 2025**

Page Left Intentionally Blank

Mr Speaker, I rise today to table two significant reports, the 2024-25 ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement Impact Statement, and the 2024 ACT Annual Report on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The 2024–25 Annual Impact Statement under the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement represents the collaborative efforts of government, community, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (the Elected Body) to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT. I also note a refreshed Agreement dashboard is now live on the ACT Government website.

As we progress from Phase Two to Phase Three of the ACT Agreement greater emphasis will be placed on aligning the work of both the ACT Agreement and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The Annual Report on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap provides an indication of the Territory's progress in relation to Priority Reform Areas, Sector Strengthening Plans, and our Jurisdictional Implementation Plan and forms a critical component of reporting requirements under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

In the spirit of both agreements and under Priority Reform One, the ACT is continuing to support the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in government decision making, including through existing partnership arrangements with the Elected Body, the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee, and through our relationship with the independent United Ngunnawal Elders Council. I also acknowledge the work of the ACT

Reconciliation Council that helps to advise and inform how we move forward together in the spirit of reconciliation.

While there are positives to note in both reports it would be disingenuous to say that everything is progressing as well as it could.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Led Review of the National Agreement was released last week and like the Productivity Commission Review, has raised concerns that governments at all levels have not yet fully grasped the level of change required to deliver on our commitments under Closing the Gap.

The ACT Government will engage through the Joint Council on Closing the Gap on the responses to both reviews. As we work through the next phase of our own efforts, it is important to note the national trend will not always reflect the ACT experience and making this distinction will be important to ensure the things that are showing progress for us are not discontinued out of a belief based on the national trend that they are not working.

Mr Speaker, to elevate and drive the next phase of the ACT's work on Closing the Gap I am pleased to advise the Assembly today that the ACT Government has established a Select Policy Subcommittee of Cabinet on Closing the Gap.

The Committee will be established initially for 12 months with all Ministers being Members and Members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and Senior Public Servants having standing invites.

The Closing the Gap Subcommittee will provide a forum for all voices to come together to share in informing the Government response to its commitments under Closing the Gap.

In the first instance the Closing the Gap Subcommittee will focus on delivery of a Government Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations transition and support strategy in line with Priority Reform Two, and an ACT Government Transformation Strategy in line with Priority Reform Three and progressing data development in line with Priority Reform Four.

These areas of focus will also deliver against the outstanding Productivity Commission Essential Actions.

The Closing the Gap Subcommittee will also inform whole-of-government work on other matters relevant to Closing the Gap, including youth justice and strengthening our work in this area.

Over the next 12 months I will also be working with the Elected Body to respond to the Independent Review of the Elected Body ensuring that our independent mechanism is fit for purpose and can best support the next phase of our journey in walking together to Close the Gap.

END.