

**Suzanne Orr MLA**

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water
Minister for Disability, Carers and Community Services
Minister for Seniors and Veterans

Member for Yerrabi

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**Questions on Notice Paper No 7****Friday, 16 May 2025****Question No. 464**

MS CLAY: To ask the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs —

1. How is the ACT Government tracking against the four Priority Reform areas of Closing the Gap, particularly in relation to

- a. PR1: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making, and
- b. PR2: Building the Community-Controlled Sector?

Suzanne Orr MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1. The ACT Government will be shortly releasing its progress reporting for a) the National Partnership or Closing the Gap and b) ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028 - Annual Impact Statement 2024-25, and I refer the Member to these for specific details.

The ACT Government publishes recent-year data only after the Productivity Commission updates the Closing the Gap dashboard. The next update to the Closing the Gap dashboard will include 2024 data and it is expected later in 2025. After this, ACT Agreement 2024 data will be collected for publishing online and will be included in the next Annual Impact Statement.

- a) The ACT Government continues to promote and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, knowledge, and culture in decision making including through existing partnership arrangements with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected



Body, the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the Our Booris, Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee, the ACT Reconciliation Council, and the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee.

The ACT Government also consults with a range of internally administered advisory groups with specific policy expertise or interest. These include:

- The Justice Advisory Group and Justice Caucus, which provides input and guidance on the development, implementation, and monitoring of progress against the Justice Focus Area Action Plan of the ACT Agreement.
 - The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group at Canberra Health Services (CHS), which works to ensure the community has input into services provided by CHS and information provided to the community.
 - The ACT Reconciliation Council, a forum to bring together community leaders for Reconciliation and promote the ACT's nation leading Reconciliation Day Public Holiday.
 - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate has established a Reference Group to guide the design of the dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Arts Space in the Kingston Arts Precinct and prepare for the independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led operation of the space.
- b) The ACT Government is continuing to support and work in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and new and existing Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) and government partners to deliver on various aspects of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-28 and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reform 2: Building the community-controlled sector.

The ACT Government is focussing on advocating for increased investment to support the ACT Aboriginal community-controlled sector. Advocacy is informed by local voices and has focused on dedicated funding to support ACCO establishment, capacity and capability building activities; and enabling more inclusive funding practices with the goal of achieving proportional funding for ACCOs across the human service priority areas.

In the 2024-25 Budget, the ACT Government invested \$3.86 million over 4 years to establish and deliver the ACCO Establishment and Expansion Fund (AEEF). The AEEF was designed with community as an alternative funding source for local ACCOs to support their growth and sustainability. Key partners and stakeholders shaped the AEEF Grant Program design, establishment and ongoing management underpinned by the principle of designed for community by community. Feedback has demonstrated the AEEF is accessible and valued, supporting improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Canberra.

Fostering more inclusive funding practices and supporting cross-directorate proportional funding approaches remains a key priority for ACT Government. Following on from the publication of the Commissioners Guide: Strengthening our understanding of impacts on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through each commissioning cycle, ACT Government has documented and promoted a practical application of setting and implementing meaningful funding targets. The case study outlines relevant ACT Government commitments, elements of success, system enablers, and key lessons learned. Documenting this approach has provided a strong foundation to learn from and progress.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Suzanne Orr MLA

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Date: 16/06/25

This response required 140 minutes to complete, at an approximate cost of \$279.61.