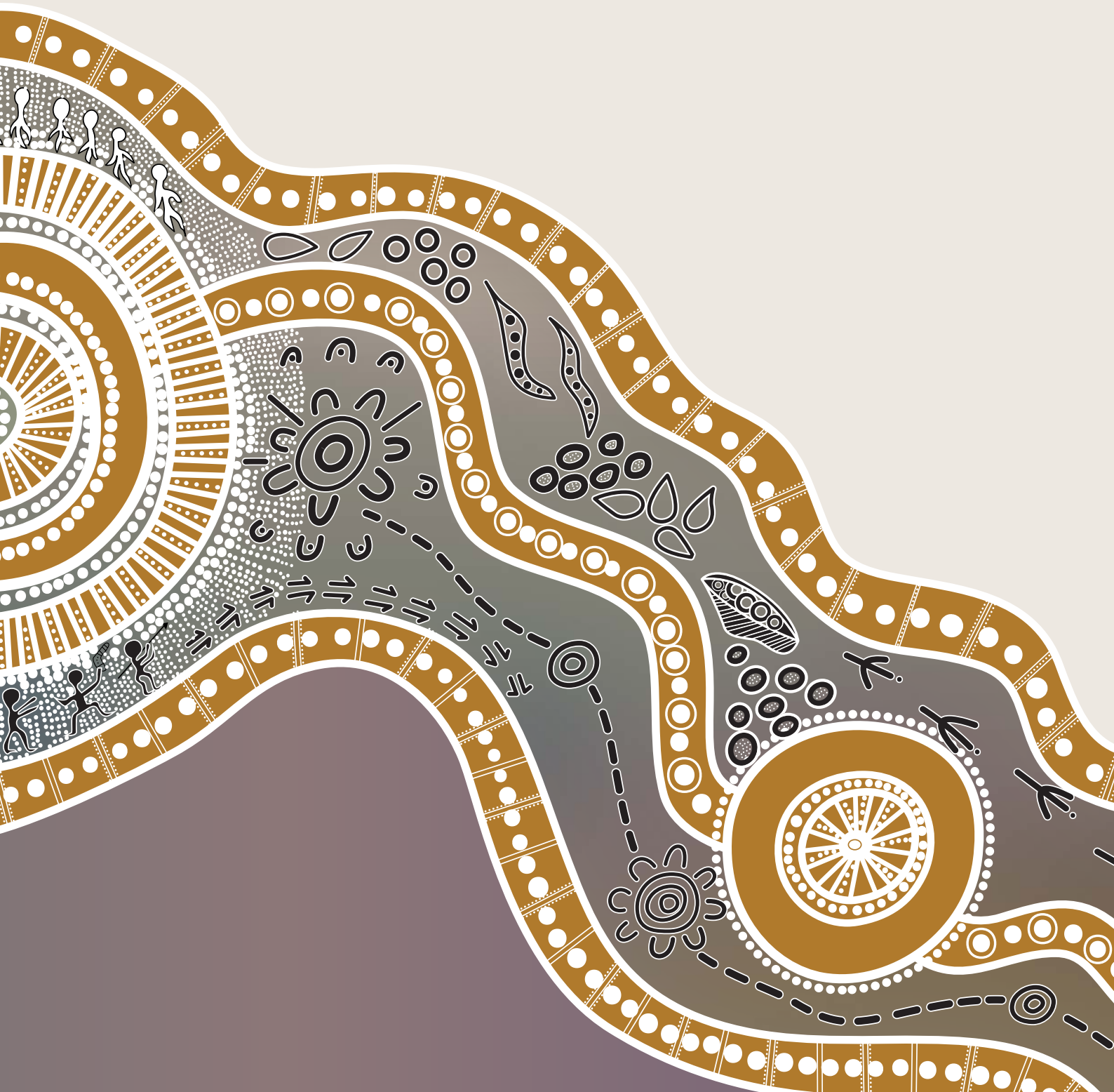




GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

.....  
Closing the Gap



## Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Western Australia's Aboriginal Communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

## A note about language

In this document, the term Aboriginal people is used in preference to "Indigenous" or "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" people, in recognition that Aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of Western Australia.

Together, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders make up the First Nations of Australia; however, Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia have unique cultures, identities and histories, distinct from those of Aboriginal people. On average, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders have different socioeconomic profiles and face different challenges, despite sharing a number of common experiences, including a history of racial discrimination. Some families have both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, and this rich diversity is acknowledged and celebrated.

Please be aware this publication may contain the names and/or images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be now deceased.

# Malga Garrimanha

## Standing Strong

This painting is about teaching our future kids about their Culture before they take the path of Education, Employment, Lifestyle and fitting into Community.

This painting also represents going back to bush, On Country and practising our culture. It's about taking our kids back to the rivers on a fishing trip and having a big cook-up together as a family.



### About the artist – Leeann Kelly-Pedersen

I am a Wajarri/Nhanda woman from the Midwest of Western Australia. My parents are Wajarri woman Dawn Flanagan/Hamlett, who is a recognised artist of the Midwest & has won many Art Awards that was exhibited in the Morawa/Mullewa/Geraldton/Perth Galleries. My father is Steven Kelly who is a Nhanda man from Carnarvon. His family are from the Kalbarri/Northampton area whose ancestors lived along the Murchison River near Kalbarri. My father has worked on most Midwest Cattle/Sheep Stations & Farms as a Labourer.

My love of Art came to me quite early as a child. My favourite subject at school was Art. I am known in the Geraldton community for my artwork and my past position in the Irra Wangga Language Centre involved in reviving & maintaining Aboriginal

languages in the Midwest Region. I tell my grandchildren my stories & teach them about my culture. They are turning into excellent little artists with their artwork being sold in the Gwoonwardu Mia Cultural Centre Carnarvon where I currently have some artwork for sale. My artwork consists of my life experiences, places I have been to, things I have seen during my lifetime and my cultural experiences. I love collecting quondong & the bush pear. I make jewellery from the quondong seeds. My inspiration from my artwork comes from my mother who is a recognised artist. She tells stories about “old aboriginal” stories from her life & stories from her elders about special places and things from what she has experienced during her life. I also am inspired by my sisters Carlene & Vanessa Kelly who are also great artists.



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# Acronyms

AACWA	Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA
ACCOs	Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations
ACCHO	Aboriginal Community-Controlled Housing Organisation
AEDC	Australia Early Development Census
AEEP	Aboriginal Employment Enabling Program
AER	Aboriginal Expenditure Review
AHCWA	Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
AHPs	Aboriginal Health Practitioners
AIEO	Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers
AMGP	Aboriginal Maternity Group Practice
AMS	Aboriginal Mediation Service
APP	Aboriginal Procurement Policy
ARO	Aboriginal Representative Organisations
ARP	Aboriginal Ranger Program
BSS/PIR	Bail Support Service/Prison In-Reach Legal Service
BBY	Binarri-binyja yarrawoo Aboriginal Corporation
BCYR	Baby Coming You Ready?
CASWA	Council of Aboriginal Services WA
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CPC	Child and Parent Centre
EIFS	Earlier Intervention and Family Support Services
ERC	Expenditure Review Committee
EYP	Early Years Partnership

ILUAs	Indigenous Land Use Agreements
KJJS	Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy
LCF	Local Capability Fund
MOSAC	Men's Outreach Service Aboriginal Corporation
OOHC	Out of Home Care
PAHA	Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance
PC	Productivity Commission
PCSF	Police Community Services Fund
PfOP	Plan for Our Parks
PRIS	Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing
RCP	Regional Connectivity Program
RSM	Regional Service Model
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
RVAG	Regional Vocational Education and Training Advisory Group
SEWB	Social and Emotional Wellbeing
SIDE RTO	School of Isolated and Distance Education Registered Training Organisation
TCP	Transitional Care Program
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WA	Western Australia
WNHS	Women and Newborn Health Service

# Message from Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

It is a central priority for this government to deliver on the commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement). I am very pleased to deliver the 2024 Annual Report on the Western Australian (WA) Government's progress.

I would like to acknowledge the essential role that the WA Government's strategic partner, the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA, and our Coalition of Peaks partners, the Aboriginal Health Council of WA and the Council of Aboriginal Services WA, have played over 2023 and 2024 in implementing the National Agreement.

I congratulate the Council of Aboriginal Services WA on becoming the second WA member of the Coalition of Peaks in December 2023. Strong partnership between governments and our Aboriginal partners is fundamental to the success of Closing the Gap, and I welcome more local Aboriginal voices in the Closing the Gap partnership.

The findings of the Productivity Commission's Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap made for challenging reading. I am pleased that Joint Council on Closing the Gap agreed to implement all four recommendations of the report, and 15 of the 16 essential actions. This commitment provides a valuable opportunity for WA to reinvigorate our approach to implementing the National Agreement.





During 2025, the WA Government will refresh its approach to implementing the National Agreement. Government agencies will focus on embedding the foundational strategies essential to improving outcomes for Aboriginal Western Australians, such as the Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy.

Government agencies will refocus on building capacity and capability to implement the Priority Reforms set out in the National Agreement, monitor outcomes, and identify and respond to factors affecting progress against the socioeconomic targets. The results will be enhanced accountability system-wide underpinned by measurement-driven delivery and strengthened reporting mechanisms.

We must continue to listen to Aboriginal people, organisations and communities to understand how our government policy can be improved so Aboriginal people and communities can determine and own their futures. I am confident that by working in partnership, our continued efforts will bring about the change required to improvement in outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.





# Message from Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA (AACWA) is the WA Government's key strategic partner in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement), providing advice and guidance on key initiatives that support implementation and embedding of the Priority Reforms into all of WA Government's business.

AACWA is in full agreement with the findings of the Productivity Commission's first three-yearly review of the National Agreement (PC Review). By proactively focusing on Priority Reforms One and Three, Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision-Making and Transforming Government Organisations, real and tangible changes for Aboriginal people can be achieved.

A key achievement in 2024 is the release of the Whole-of-Government Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation Strategy. AACWA have advocated for building on the strengths of a resilient ACCO sector which is sustainable and supported by an ACCO peak body. We look forward to seeing WA Government agencies' implementation of the Strategy and their commitment to partnering with ACCOs on the delivery of services to Aboriginal people.

AACWA has continued to provide high level advice to government including a number of Ministerial engagements including the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs who has demonstrated his commitment to working with AACWA by meeting with council members on a regular basis.

In August 2024, AACWA welcomed nine new members and two re-appointed members from various regions across WA. With a refreshed and reinvigorated membership, AACWA are excited to continue to build on the foundational work we have stewarded over the last few years, and to finalising our Strategic plan and priorities for the year ahead, aligned to the Priority Reforms and Productivity Review recommendations.

The PC Review provides a clear path forward for the WA Government to reset its approach to implementing the National Agreement and AACWA is committed to continuing to work with and provide quality advice to the WA Government to accelerate, deepen and strengthen its implementation and accountability to the Agreement and in turn create a better future for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.



# Message from Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia


The Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) is the peak body for 23 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) in Western Australia (WA), and one of two peak body representatives on the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations.

AHCWA exists to support and act on behalf of its Member Services, actively representing and responding to their individual and collective needs.

The 2024 WA Annual Report on Closing the Gap highlights the progress made by the Western Australian Government toward the commitments of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement). This year's report outlines notable advancements, as well as areas where further dedicated action is essential to meet the needs of Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

A significant accomplishment this year has been the establishment of the Council of Aboriginal Services of Western Australia (CASWA), a major step in strengthening the capacity of ACCOs across the state. CASWA now serves as a unified voice, advocating for Aboriginal-led solutions and expanding the role of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) sector in service delivery. The development and launch of the WA Whole-of-Government ACCO Strategy represents another major advancement, providing a framework to ensure that Aboriginal organisations are central in planning and delivering services for Aboriginal people. These achievements underscore important progress in advancing the National Agreement's Priority Reforms, especially Priority Reform Two – building a strong, sustainable ACCO sector to deliver services by, and for, Aboriginal people.

However, to truly honour the commitments of the National Agreement, further focus is needed across all four Priority Reform areas. Priority Reform One requires stronger integration of Aboriginal voices within decision-making structures across all government sectors. While initial progress has been made, AHCWA emphasises that all agencies must adopt shared decision-making practices to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives drive policies affecting their communities.



In addition, while CASWA's establishment represents important progress under Priority Reform Two, further investment is essential to support ACCOs in delivering culturally responsive services state-wide. Creating a robust community-controlled sector depends on funding that empowers Aboriginal organisations' self-determination to lead and develop initiatives that serve their people effectively.

Priority Reform Three remains a pressing area where more comprehensive reform is critical. It requires fundamental shifts within government departments to ensure they operate in ways that are culturally safe, responsive, and accountable to Aboriginal communities. This is about much more than cultural safety training; it calls for genuine structural change that embeds Aboriginal cultural perspectives in all aspects of policy-making, service design, and delivery. Government agencies must adopt transparent accountability measures, engage Aboriginal stakeholders in meaningful roles, and transform processes that have historically excluded Aboriginal voices. AHCWA calls for a stronger commitment to structural reforms that build trust and, through collaboration, create systems genuinely co-designed with Aboriginal people, thereby transforming the very nature of how government works with, and for, our communities.

Lastly, Priority Reform Four is crucial for informed decision-making and accountability. While strides have been made in Aboriginal data sovereignty, full access to relevant data for Aboriginal organisations, particularly at regional levels, remains limited. Ensuring ACCOs and other Aboriginal bodies have the information needed to drive community priorities is essential to Closing the Gap.

Beyond these Priority Reforms, addressing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the justice system also requires urgent, structural reforms. Recent progress is encouraging, but comprehensive, community-led approaches must be prioritised to reduce the underlying social and economic drivers that contribute to these disparities.

AHCWA is committed to working in partnership with the WA Government to ensure sustained progress across all Priority Reforms. Our goal is to build upon these foundations, hold all parties accountable to their commitments, and transform these efforts into lasting, positive outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.





# Message from Council of Aboriginal Services WA

As a newly established Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation (ACCO) Peak Body, and a member of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations, the Council of Aboriginal Services Western Australia (CASWA) is proud to be an advocate of and driver for ongoing work to close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal people.

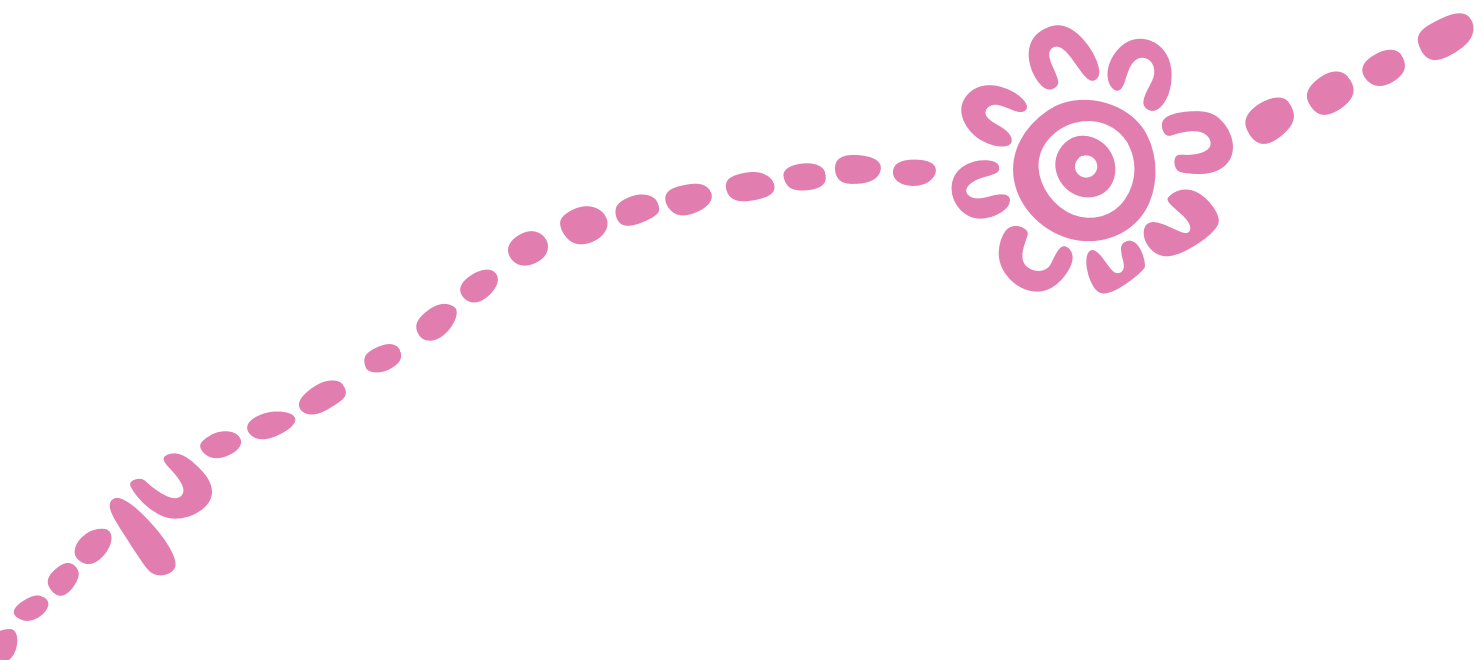
Established in 2023 in alignment with Priority Reform Two of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement), CASWA exists to unite all Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) under a strong and collective voice, supporting them to deliver place-based, community-led, culturally-appropriate services. Now with over 50 members, CASWA exemplifies the power of the National Agreement to support a strong and expansive ACCO sector into the future.

The path towards Closing the Gap is one that requires genuine and equal partnerships, based on Aboriginal self-determination in representation, shared responsibility and mutual respect. Alongside the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), CASWA stands ready to partner with the Western Australian (WA) Government to sharpen its focus and double-down on efforts to meet its commitments under the National Agreement.

This year's Annual Report details the work that has been done to enliven the National Agreement and drive enduring improved outcomes for Aboriginal people. CASWA welcomed the launch of the WA ACCO Strategy at its inaugural ACCO Gathering in May, and is committed to supporting WA Government agencies to harness the spirit of the Strategy which recognises the expertise, strengths, cultural safety and outcomes of the ACCO sector.

While the reality for Aboriginal Western Australians is that progress on too many of the National Agreement's socio-economic indicators is too slow and that early childhood development, adult incarceration and suicide indicators are worsening, CASWA is optimistic that the recommendations from the Productivity Commission's Review of the National Agreement will be the catalyst for change. In particular, over the next 12 months CASWA would like to see a renewed commitment to Priority Reforms One and Three to deliver innovative, results driven solutions in the youth justice, out-of-home care and family safety systems.

CASWA acknowledges the dedication of everyone involved in this journey—our ACCOs, government partners, and community leaders. Together, we are laying the foundations for a future where Aboriginal people and communities can thrive, our cultures are celebrated, and the Closing the Gap targets are not just aspirations but realities. We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal voices are not only heard but are driving the change needed to close the gap.



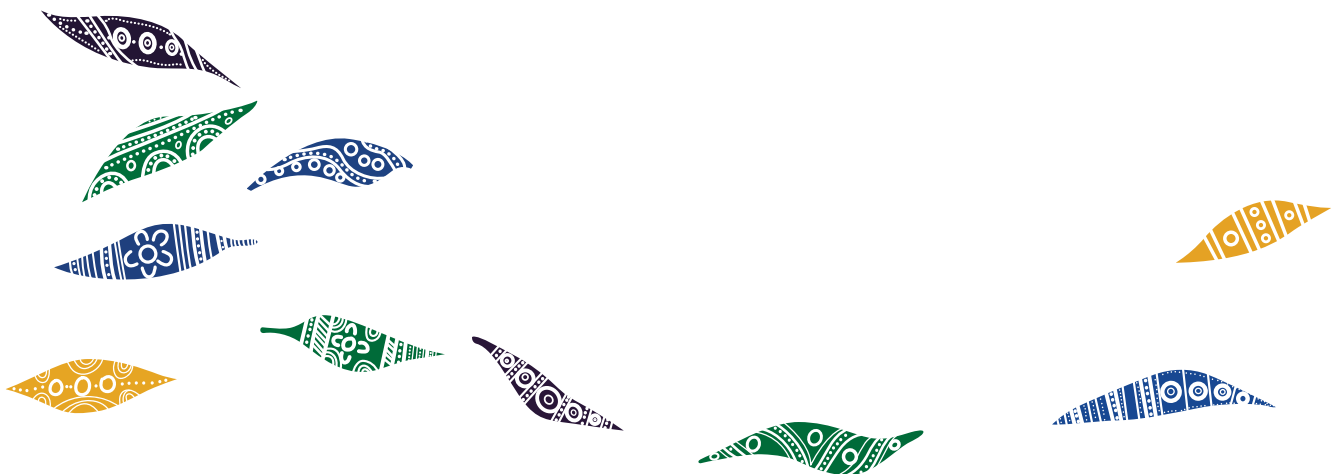
# Introduction

The Annual Report on Closing the Gap (Annual Report) details Western Australia's progress implementing the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) over 2023-24. The Annual Report meets the WA Government's commitment to publicly report on progress.

Since the National Agreement was signed in 2020, the WA Government has established foundational reforms to realise better outcomes for Aboriginal Western Australians. This year, these foundational settings were strengthened through new partnerships, recognition of the critical role of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, and efforts to enhance transparency and accountability.

A key milestone was the launch of the WA Government's Whole-of-Government Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations Strategy (ACCO Strategy). This foundational achievement supports implementation of the National Agreement's Priority Reform Two, Build the Community-Controlled Sector. Embedding the ACCO Strategy in WA will deliver genuine change in service delivery, with services designed and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

The Department of Treasury's Aboriginal Expenditure Review 2023-24 (AER), which provides transparent reporting of expenditure on Aboriginal programs and services across 23 agencies, will be released shortly. The AER is a valuable mechanism for improving transparency regarding government funding decisions.



Despite these achievements, more needs to be done. In February, the Productivity Commission released its first Review of the National Agreement (PC Review). The findings of the PC Review are critical reading and offer a roadmap for a refocused approach to the National Agreement. The WA Government is committed to implementing the recommendations of the PC Review in collaboration with our Aboriginal partners.

The WA Government recognises that additional investment is required. In the 2024-25 State Budget, the WA Government committed almost \$300 million in increased investment to support the empowerment and wellbeing of Aboriginal Western Australians. A summary statement is available here: [State Budget delivers support for Aboriginal Western Australians | Western Australian Government \(www.wa.gov.au\)](#).

## How to read the Annual Report 2023-24

This Annual Report is based on the WA Government's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2023-25 (Implementation Plan). This approach offers enhanced transparency and responds to advice received from the Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (AACWA) and the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA).

The Annual Report is structured in two main sections.

- Section One: Progress against the Priority Reform Areas; and
- Section Two: Progress against the 17 socioeconomic outcome areas and targets.





# Section One:

## Progress against Priority Reform Areas

Central to the success of the National Agreement is the embedding of the four Priority Reforms. The Priority Reforms have guided how the WA Government has developed and implemented activities to achieve the socioeconomic targets.

Over the past 12 months, the WA Government has implemented new actions and progressed a number of the Priority Reform commitments outlined in the WA Implementation Plan 2023-25.

The table below provides a snapshot of Western Australia's progress against the four Priority Reform Areas in 2023-24.

### Priority Reform 1 - Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making

- Investment and support for the Early Years Place-Based Partnership in East Kimberley, including \$ 1.795 million funding for early years initiatives and actions, and to support Binarri-binyja yarrowoo, as the backbone organisation of the Partnership.
- Strengthened engagement with the WA Government's Coalition of Peaks partners, AHCWA, Council of Aboriginal Services WA (CASWA), and key strategic partner AACWA, to ensure the diverse views of Aboriginal communities are represented across government.
- Development by the Noongar Economic Participation Steering Group of a Noongar Economic Participation Framework draft three-year Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan will drive economic development opportunities for Noongar people through four key focus areas: strengthening governance foundations, enhancing government engagement, supporting connection to Country and promoting Noongar business and employment.

## **Priority Reform 2 – Building the Community-Controlled Sector**

- Launch of the Whole-of-Government ACCO Strategy (ACCO Strategy) in May 2024.
- Development of the second annual Aboriginal Expenditure Review (to be released in late 2024).
- Over 350 contracts awarded to more than 160 Aboriginal businesses (including ACCOs), totalling more than \$439 million in value (representing over 6.5 percent of all government contracts, surpassing the 4 percent target) in 2023/24.
- Updated the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy to include an ACCO definition (based on the National Agreement) and from 1 December 2023 an option for government agencies to directly engage and procure community services from ACCOs.

## **Priority Reform 3 – Transforming Government Organisations**

- Commencement of planning for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
- Commencement of Stage Two of the Wadjemup Project.
- Embedding transformational elements in government agencies

## **Priority Reform 4 – Shared Access to Data and Information at Regional Level**

- Introduction of the Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Bill 2024 into Parliament in May 2024.
- Partnership between the Office of Digital Government and the Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance to access deidentified data held by PeopleWA to create a State of the Pilbara report, initially focusing on key indicators reflecting Closing the Gap targets.
- Development of WA Health Aboriginal Data Governance Policy.

# Priority Reform 1 – Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making

**Outcome:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are empowered to share decision-making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress on Closing the Gap through formal partnership arrangements.

**Target:** There will be formal partnership arrangements to support Closing the Gap in place between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments in place in each state and territory enshrining agreed joint decision-making roles and responsibilities and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have chosen their own representatives.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Developing a three-year Noongar Economic Participation Framework Implementation Plan	Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered

## Key Updates

### The Noongar Economic Participation Framework (South West Native Title Settlement)

The Noongar Economic Participation Steering Group has developed a draft three-year Implementation Plan which lays the foundations for how Government will work in partnership with the Noongar Corporations to implement the Noongar Economic Participation Framework, a key component of the South West Native Title Settlement. The Plan sets out four key focus areas which will drive economic development opportunities for Noongar people: strengthening governance foundations, enhancing government engagement, supporting connection to Country and promoting Noongar business and employment.

## Other highlights

### Partnership Stocktake – Review of partnership between WA Government and Aboriginal partners

The WA Government undertook a stocktake and review of its partnership arrangements in 2024. The review identified 53 partnerships (an increase from 40 in 2023) with Aboriginal people, organisations and communities that feature the strong partnership element of decision-making by consensus. This approach to shared decision-making empowers Aboriginal people to work side-by-side with government.

In 2023-24 significant new formal and strengthened partnerships were established across the WA Government in the joint management of land and sea, water policy, and provision of equitable access to healthcare.

### WA Aboriginal languages partnership

Since June 2023, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries has engaged with the seven Commonwealth-funded WA Aboriginal language centres and other representatives of the WA Aboriginal languages sector to explore the development of a formal partnership with the WA Government.

### East Kimberley Place-Based Partnership

The WA Government and Empowered Communities East Kimberley, supported by Binarri-binyja yarrawoo Aboriginal Corporation (BBY) and Local and Australian Government agencies, have formally established the East Kimberley Place-Based Partnership to progress shared decision-making regarding the early years of childhood development.

In the 2024-25 State Budget, the WA Government announced \$1.795 million for the East Kimberley Place-Based Partnership. This includes \$495,000 over four years to support BBY as the local backbone organisation, and \$1.3 million over three years for early years actions and initiatives.

The WA Government, BBY and partnership parties are developing a formal Partnership Agreement and first Action Plan. This will formalise shared decision-making arrangements and support practical implementation of the Priority Reforms to achieve positive outcomes for Aboriginal children and families in the East Kimberley.



## Transport Portfolio partnership with South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council 2024-2034

In June 2024, a Partnership Agreement was endorsed between the Transport Portfolio and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. The Agreement has been designed to strengthen the Transport Portfolio's relationship with the Noongar community. It will include facilitation of meaningful and tangible economic outcomes for Noongar people, through the services, operations and infrastructure projects delivered by the Transport Portfolio and improve the focus on cultural safety across the Portfolio.



# Priority Reform 2 – Building the Community Controlled Sector

**Outcome:** There is a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

**Target:** Increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Operational funding for a new ACCO peak body	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Completed
Deliver a whole-of-government ACCO Strategy	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Completed
Ongoing annual Aboriginal Expenditure Review	Department of Treasury	Being delivered

## Key Updates

### Funding for a new ACCO peak body

The WA Government committed \$5.725 million in the 2023-24 budget to fund the Council of Aboriginal Services Western Australia (CASWA) over four years to support the WA ACCO sector, represent their interests and provide policy advice to the WA Government. The WA Government continued to support CASWA during its first year of operation.

CASWA formally became a member of the Coalition of Peaks in December 2023 and has over 50 member organisations. It is working with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and several other government agencies to progress work aligned to the Priority Reforms and ACCO Strategy.

## WA Whole of Government ACCO Strategy

In 2023-2024, in consultation with the ACCO sector and WA Government agencies, the WA Government released the ACCO Strategy. Throughout the year the Department of the Premier and Cabinet worked closely with Coalition of Peaks partners, the Aboriginal Health Council of WA and CASWA to ensure the diverse views of the sector were well represented in the ACCO Strategy.

The ACCO Strategy was released in May 2024 with CASWA at the inaugural ACCO Gathering, providing the foundation for a strong partnership with the WA Government and a commitment to working together to achieve greater involvement of ACCOs in planning, designing and delivering more culturally responsive and secure services to Aboriginal people.

## Annual Aboriginal Expenditure Review

The Department of Treasury implemented a number of the recommendations from the first Aboriginal Expenditure Review (AER), including that it be undertaken on an annual basis, and continuing engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders throughout the review and improvement cycle. Informed by learnings from the initial report, the second AER, which focuses on the expenditure in 2022-23 on programs that are targeted to, or used by Aboriginal people, will be released in late 2024.

## Other highlights

### Increasing number of ACCOs delivering services

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy (APP) mandates progressive targets for agencies to award contracts for Aboriginal businesses. In support of Target 8, the APP was updated in December 2023 to recognise ACCOs being contracted by State agencies to deliver a community service. These contracts now count alongside registered Aboriginal business contracts for the purpose of agencies meeting APP contracting targets.

## Strengthening the ACCO sector

Across 2023-24, the WA Government progressed actions to support and grow ACCOs across many sectors including:

- Funding the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) via the WA Government's Sector Transition Fund, for the delivery of targeted supports to ACCOs, enabling them to build their capacity to effectively operate in the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Establishing the Collaboration to Grow the Aboriginal Health Practitioners Pipeline which includes representation from Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Registered Training Organisations (RTO) to enhance enrollments and completion of Aboriginal health qualifications across the RTO sector to meet workforce demands.
- Collaborating with Shelter WA on an Aboriginal Community-Controlled Housing Sector Strengthening Project including engagement with Aboriginal Community Housing Organisations (ACCHOs) to gather insights on future ambitions, challenges, and barriers to registration.
- Supporting ACCOs to seek and obtain community housing provider registration to open opportunities to access Housing Australia funding. Noongar Mia Mia was the first ACCHO achieving registration in May 2024.
- Under the Department of Communities' ACCO Strategy (2022-32), the ACCO Sector Building Grant Program concluded in June 2024 and provided more than \$550,000 to 11 ACCOs across the state to support the capacity of the ACCO sector in relation to the delivery of Aboriginal Representative Organisations (ARO) services.
- In line with the WA Police Force ACCO Strategy, during 2023-24, 51 percent (\$1.622 million) of the Police Community Services Funding was provided to 11 ACCOs to deliver 19 projects for Aboriginal people in Metropolitan and Regional Western Australia. The projects addressed youth engagement, improving community safety and prevention of family violence.
- In October 2023, the Department of Communities awarded Service Agreements to five ACCOs to provide services in Out of Home Care (OOHC) for the first time, joining Yorganop Association Incorporated, which has been providing culturally safe and responsive OOHC services for many years.

## Priority Reform 3 – Transforming Government Organisations

**Outcome:** Governments, their organisations and their institutions are accountable for Closing the Gap and are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund.

**Target:** Decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experiences of racism.

### Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Work in partnership with the Aboriginal Advisory Council WA to explore options for monitoring and reporting on WA Government's response to the 'transformation elements' under Priority Reform Three in the National Agreement	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Planning stage
Department of Treasury Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy - review of the State Budget process	Department of Treasury	Being delivered
Development of truth-telling, ceremony, and commemoration strategies to formally acknowledge and reconcile the Aboriginal prison history on Wadjemup	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	Being delivered
Development of the Aboriginal Cultural Centre	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Planning stage

## Key Updates

### Transformation elements of the National Agreement

Aboriginal advisory bodies working in partnership with government agencies bring together Aboriginal policy experts from specialised fields and provide informed advice on specific portfolios such as education, mental-health, and justice.

The WA Government established the Culture at the Heart Forum in partnership with the AACWA to bring together Aboriginal advisory bodies from across the State. The Forum is an opportunity for Aboriginal advisory bodies to work strategically to reshape and streamline how Government approaches partnerships and decision making.

A commitment of \$400,000 over four years was made in the 2024-25 State Budget to strengthen AACWA's strategic coordination and support the delivery of twice-annual Culture at the Heart forums. These activities will assist with further embedding the Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy, reshaping government services and systems to work with culture, and strengthening Government accountability.

### Department of Treasury's Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy

The Department of Treasury undertook an internal Aboriginal Cultural Capability Survey to explore cultural capability within the agency, which informs future capability building and development as part of Treasury's Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy implementation and its next Reconciliation Action Plan. At the 2024-25 Budget, the Department of Treasury provided consolidated advice to the Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) through the first Closing the Gap Treasury Minute, providing a comprehensive view of Budget Submissions seeking to address Closing the Gap.

### The Wadjemup Project

The WA Government commenced Stage Two of the Wadjemup Project to create outcomes for state-wide reconciliation. Aboriginal-led statewide consultation commenced in December 2023 to deliver strategies for truth-telling, ceremony, and commemoration to formally acknowledge the history and ongoing impacts of Aboriginal incarceration on Wadjemup. In



January 2024, the Minister for Tourism appointed the Wadjemup Whadjuk Cultural Authority, a community elected Aboriginal panel, as the Wadjemup Project Steering Group to lead the project through Stage Two. In May 2024, Aboriginal representatives from across Western Australia came together in Walyalup and Wadjemup to take part in Karla Wirrin Waarnk (Spiritual Conversations around the Fire).

## The Aboriginal Cultural Centre WA

In partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, the WA Government has commenced planning for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre to empower Aboriginal people to share their stories, history and culture. In December 2023, the WA Government approved the Business Case. The project definition planning is progressing, with key decisions regarding the Aboriginal Cultural Centre's form and function agreed by the Project Steering Committee, with representation from Government and Aboriginal community members.



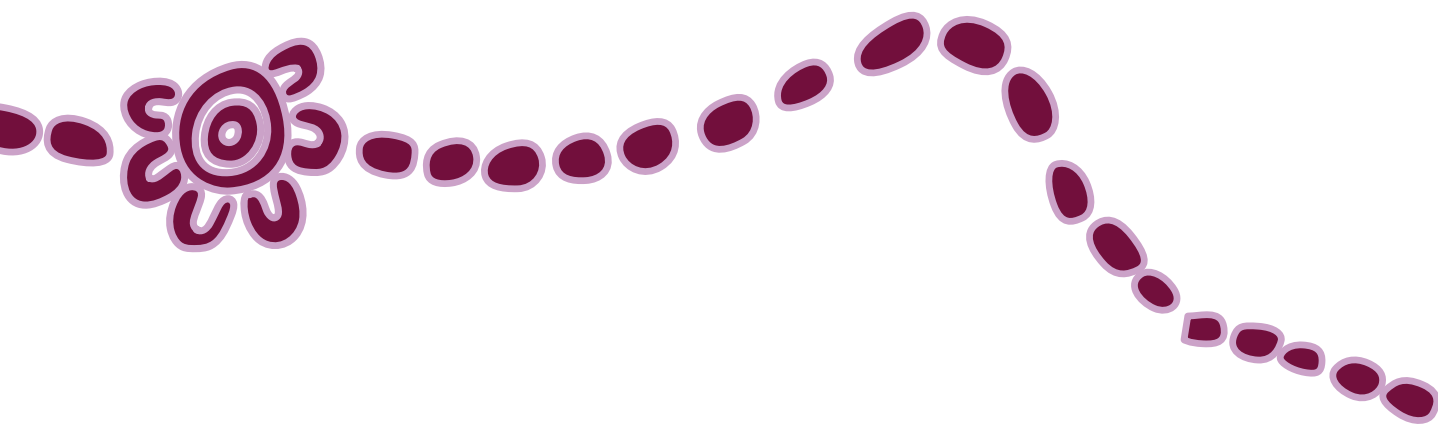
## Other highlights


### Embedding transformational elements in government agencies

The Department of Communities is launching its **Aboriginal Cultural Framework** (Framework) in late 2024, to operationalise how the Department of Communities will build, embed and maintain a culturally competent workforce and develop culturally capable systems, policies and practices that will ultimately enable better outcomes for Aboriginal people.

In 2023 and 2024, 38 principals participated in the **Department of Education's culturally responsive school leadership program**, a one-year program to develop the cultural responsiveness of principals. The program focuses on creating cultural and systems change in the Department of Education and aims to achieve two broad objectives: promoting reconciliation and strengthening Aboriginal student outcomes.

The **WA Aboriginal Health Executive Roundtable** held in August 2023 and attended by WA Health Executives, senior Aboriginal leaders from WA Health and leaders from the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services sector, provided an opportunity for health executives to listen, learn and identify how to collaboratively improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people. The Roundtable Recommendations Report includes seven high-impact actions endorsed for the WA Health System, centring on cultural governance, accountability strategies to monitor and respond to racism, culturally responsive workforce, strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Service sector, culturally safe models of care and preventing harms from racism in clinical settings.





## Priority Reform 4 – Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level

**Outcome:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to, and the capability to use, locally relevant data and information to set and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap, their priorities and drive their own development.

**Target:** Increase the number of regional data projects to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make decisions about Closing the Gap and their development.

### Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Progress the development of Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Legislation including a mechanism that supports Aboriginal data sovereignty and governance in WA	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Being delivered

### Key Updates

#### The Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Bill 2024

In May 2024 the WA Government introduced the Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing (PRIS) Bill 2024 into Parliament. In June 2024, the PRIS Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly and introduced into the Legislative Council. The PRIS Bill aims to protect the personal information of Western Australians and facilitate the responsible use and sharing of information to improve the delivery of government services. It provides important safeguards for sensitive Aboriginal family history information and sensitive Aboriginal traditional information.

The legislation would enable ACCOs to request access to government information and includes a mechanism that supports Aboriginal data governance in Western Australia by requiring that Aboriginal people and communities are involved or consulted when government information that primarily affects Aboriginal people is shared.

## Other highlights

### PeopleWA

In August 2023, the WA Government launched PeopleWA, a whole-of-government linked data asset that connects de-identified information about individual interactions with services across the WA public sector. PeopleWA connects over 75 million unique records of current and archival de-identified data about individual interactions with services across the Western Australian public sector.

PeopleWA empowers government, researchers, community services, and ACCOs to easily, responsibly, and safely access comprehensive datasets to inform evidence-based approaches. PeopleWA has been designed to support engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders and will be updated to align with the Aboriginal Data Governance approach outlined in the PRIS Bill. The Office of Digital Government is exploring opportunities to extend the use of PeopleWA to better support ACCOs, understand community level data and evaluate how it can be used to deliver on Priority Reform Four. Examples of this work include:

- Binarri-Binyja Yarrowoo (BBY) - BBY is supporting the selection of East Kimberley pilot projects for the Federal Government's Outcomes and Evidence Fund, focusing on socioeconomic targets 12 and 13. BBY has applied to access PeopleWA data to support the Outcomes and Evidence Fund project selection, definition, planning and identification of evaluation criteria. The successful implementation of pilot studies will reduce rates of out-of-home care and family violence against Aboriginal women and children.
- Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance (PAHA) - PAHA aims to improve health outcomes in the Pilbara region. PAHA's data project, 'Our Story, Our Way' focuses on creating an Aboriginal community-controlled data ecosystem. Through a partnership with the Office of Digital Government, PAHA has applied to access de-identified data from PeopleWA to develop a State of the Pilbara Report, initially targeting key indicators related to Closing the Gap. This pioneering collaboration serves as a valuable pilot for refining government processes in support of Priority Reform Four.

## WA Health Aboriginal Data Governance Policy

The Department of Health has developed an Aboriginal Data Governance Policy (the Policy) with the ACCO Sector. Importantly, the Policy addresses the requirements for Aboriginal people to have a greater say about Aboriginal data and how it is collected, stored, interpreted, and used. The Policy will also ensure that Aboriginal people have access to information held by the WA health system so that they can deliver better services to their people.

Once implemented, the Policy will support the realisation of Aboriginal Data Sovereignty for Aboriginal data held within the WA health system. More specifically, the Policy will ensure Aboriginal people control Aboriginal data so that it benefits WA Aboriginal communities. This is a critical first step in transforming the governance of Aboriginal data held within the WA health system.



## Section Two: Socio-economic Outcomes and Targets

This section reports on Western Australia's progress under each socioeconomic outcome area and related target, providing data on Western Australia's performance since the baseline year and progress on key actions to improve these outcomes.

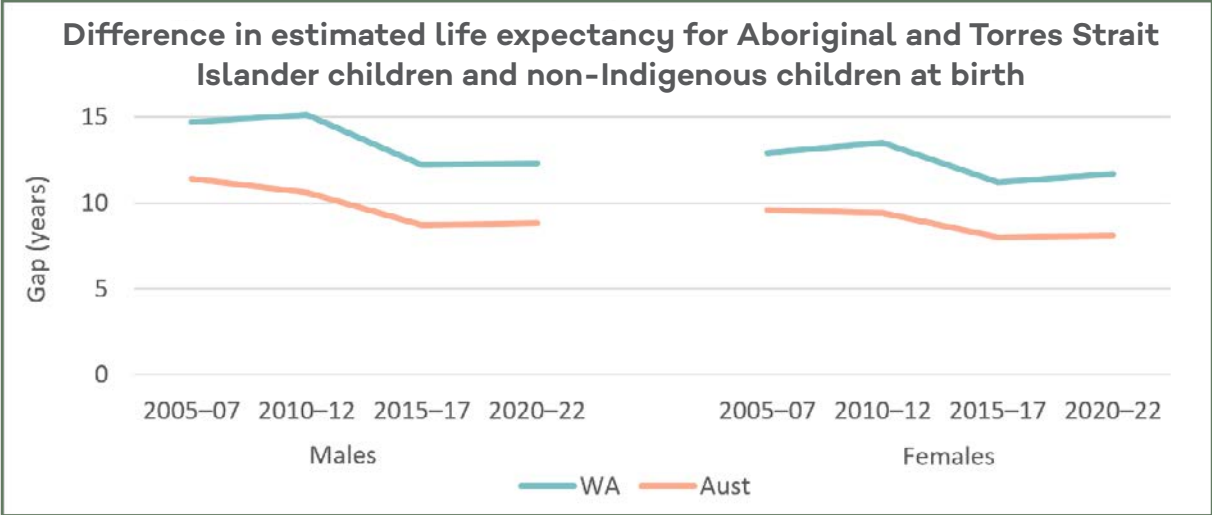
Since the 2023 Annual Report, the Productivity Commission has released a new year of target data for eight socioeconomic outcome areas:

<b>Outcome 1</b>	People enjoy long and healthy lives
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Children are born healthy and strong
<b>Outcome 3</b>	Children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years
<b>Outcome 10</b>	Adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system
<b>Outcome 11</b>	Young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system
<b>Outcome 12</b>	Children are not overrepresented in the child protection system
<b>Outcome 14</b>	People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing
<b>Outcome 15</b>	People maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters (Target 15A and 15B)



# Outcome 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives

**Target:** Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.



The gap in life expectancy has decreased in Western Australia but remains high. In 2020–22, the life expectancy of Aboriginal people in Western Australia was 68.9 years for males and 72.6 years for females. For non-Aboriginal males and females in Western Australia the life expectancy was 81.2 years and 84.3 years respectively.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
WA Aboriginal Health Partnership Forum	2023 - ongoing	Department of Health and Aboriginal Health Council of WA	Paused
Aboriginal Mental Health Workers	2023-2024	Mental Health Commission	Being delivered
Aboriginal Health Practitioners	2022 - ongoing	Department of Health	Being delivered
Transitional Care Program	2022-ongoing	Department of Health	Being delivered

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Health Navigator Pilot Program	2022-2024	Department of Health	Being delivered
Aboriginal Graduate Program	2024 - ongoing	Department of Health	Being delivered
WA Aboriginal Health Dashboard	2023 - ongoing	Department of Health	Planning stage
Cultural Determinants of Health Model	2025-2026	Department of Education	Planning stage

## Key Updates

Between July 2023 and July 2024, the Department of Health and Aged Care convened one **WA Aboriginal Health Partnership Forum** meeting. There has been focused effort on the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Collaboration, inviting membership from the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services sector this year; and commencing the development of a First Nations Schedule for the National Health Reform Agreement. The WA Government continued its partnership with the AHCWA including investment to support the Sustainable Health Review Program with approximately \$165,000 (including GST) in funding as part of the existing Service Agreement between the Department of Health and AHCWA.

The Mental Health Commission progressed activities aligned to the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce Strategic Framework 2020- 2025 which recognises the development of the Aboriginal workforce as a priority. Recruitment of **Aboriginal Mental Health Workers** into infant, child and adolescent mental health services remains a priority for the Child and Adolescent Health Service and WA Country Health Service, with ongoing recruitment underway.

The Department of Health has established the Collaboration to Grow the **Aboriginal Health Practitioners** Pipeline. The Collaboration includes representation from Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Registered Training Organisations (RTO) and acknowledges the need for coordinated, multi-sector planning and partnerships to enhance enrollments and completion of Aboriginal health qualifications across the RTO sector to meet workforce demands.

The **Transitional Care Program** (TCP) pilot has facilitated aged care accessibility for Aboriginal people, supporting Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to deliver aged care services beyond TCP. South West Aboriginal Medical Service and Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service have become Commonwealth approved aged care providers. South West Aboriginal Medical Service rolled out TCP services to the Peel region earlier this year and Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Corporation has begun delivering TCP along the southern coastal corridor (Fremantle to Golden Bay).

In 2023-24, the WA Government continued the implementation of the **Health Navigator Pilot Program** to coordinate the health needs of children entering out-of-home care. The Health Navigator Pilot Program is operating in one regional (South West) and one metropolitan (Mirrabooka) pilot site to help children in care navigate and access health and mental health services. In May 2024, the WA Government provided \$6.6 million to continue the pilot for an additional two years.

Implementation of the WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Policy has continued, which has supported key initiatives to grow the Aboriginal workforce across the health system. Key achievements include 36 Aboriginal cadets employed in 2024 under the Aboriginal Cadetship Program, the launch of the **Aboriginal Graduate Program** in 2024 with 6 Aboriginal graduates employed and a further 7 recruited for 2025 and the development of Aboriginal health leaders.

The Department of Health developed an internal **WA Aboriginal Health Dashboard** (the Dashboard) to provide enhanced and consolidated system-wide performance and progress monitoring of important Aboriginal health measures. The Dashboard currently includes over 80 measures aligned to the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030 Strategic Directions.

The Department of Education continues to offer training and professional learning for school psychologists to support the delivery of the **Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)** in schools and Child and Parent Centres, with a focus on culturally responsive program delivery.

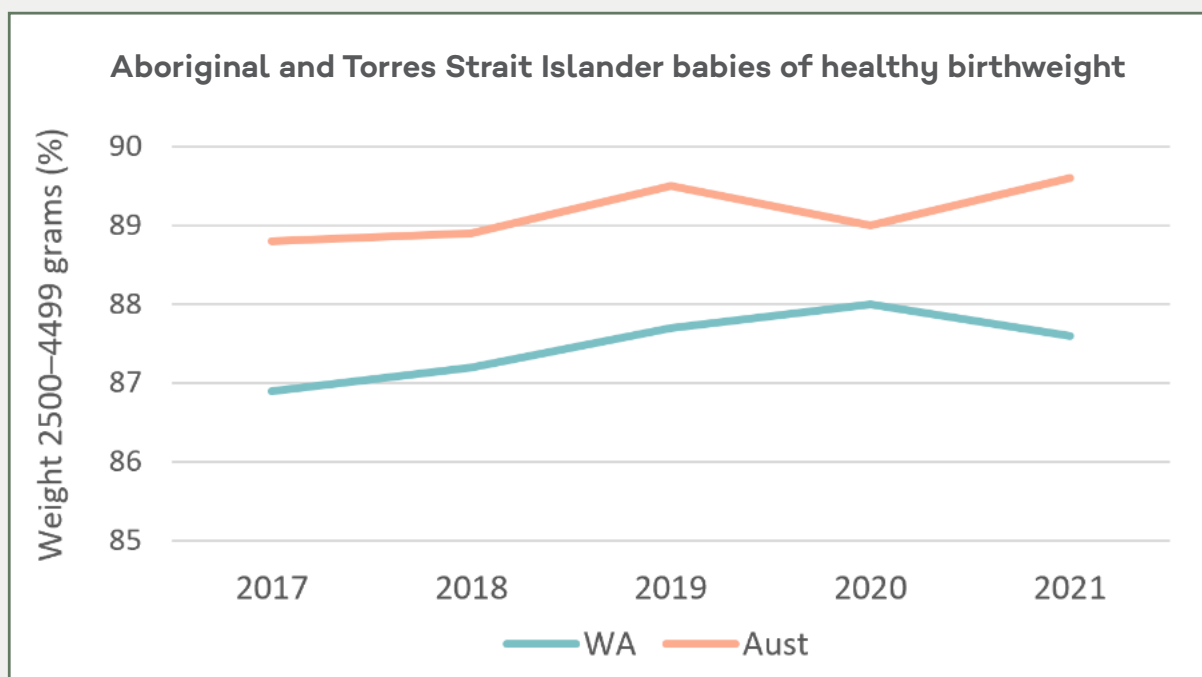
## Other highlights

The **WA Aboriginal Strategic Executive Collaboration** (WA Collaboration) is a key engagement forum for the broader Aboriginal health sector to provide information, evidence and advice to government, on strategies for improving Aboriginal health outcomes at a statewide level. The WA Collaboration was reconfigured in 2024 to support cultural governance for the WA health system and drive alignment of Closing the Gap initiatives. The Network is co-chaired by the Director General of Health and the Chairperson of the Aboriginal Health Council of WA.



## Outcome 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 percent.



There has been overall improvement in the proportion of Aboriginal babies with a healthy birthweight in WA (87.6 percent in 2021).

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Birthing On Country Project	Ongoing	Department of Health	Completed
Strong Links Program (Aboriginal Midwifery Group Practice)	Ongoing	North Metropolitan Health Service	Being delivered
Baby Coming You Ready eLearning review	2023-2024	Department of Health	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Birthing on Country Project** has been completed. The Centre for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Services Research at Edith Cowan University were contracted by the Department of Health to administer a survey to identify the maternity services and maternity workforce across WA that provide culturally safe care for Aboriginal women and families. A report has been completed with recommendations that will help to inform a systems approach, working towards addressing maternal and newborn health outcomes.

The WA Government is working to provide culturally secure antenatal services for all Aboriginal families. The **Strong Links Program and Aboriginal Health Liaison service** supported 595 unique patients. The team actively provided outreach support to Adolescent Clinics, the Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service (WANDAS) and WANDAS prison outreach. Of 174 Aboriginal mothers with Child Protection and Family Support involvement prior to attending WNHS to birth, 144 babies did not enter care (30 entered care). Social workers attended 201 pre-birth meetings to achieve positive outcomes.

In 2023–24, the North Metropolitan Health Service's Women and Newborn Health Service (WNHS) continued to deliver the **Strong Links Program and an Aboriginal Maternity Group Practice (AMGP)** for Aboriginal women across Western Australia. The AMGP supported 69 women, with 70 babies born. AMGP patients attended 10 antenatal appointments on average. 87 percent of AMGP babies were born at normal birth weight and 8.5 percent had low birth weights, compared to 66.2 percent (normal weight) and 27.7 percent (low weight) of non-AMGP Aboriginal babies.

The **Baby Coming You Ready (BCYR)** pilot concluded in 2023 demonstrating the success of the digital assessment, which replaces current screens and provides a trauma informed model of care. BCYR is currently being implemented as a standard process at Armadale and St John of God hospitals; Midwifery Group Practices in Northam, Merredin and Moora; and in the antenatal clinic at Narrogin Hospital. This includes the development of Memoranda of Understanding to ensure the Cultural Governance and Sovereignty of all deidentified data is safeguarded. The WA Government has awarded funding via the 2024 Innovation Challenge for My Baby, My Culture, My Journey in the Pilbara. This funding will embed BCYR throughout WA Country Health Service and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services in the Pilbara, and at King Edward Memorial Hospital.



## Other highlights

The **Moort Boodjari Mia program** provides a culturally safe specialised maternity healthcare and education program for Aboriginal women and families in Perth's eastern metropolitan region. Key achievements over the past year include:

- Increased early engagement and return visits among expectant mothers.
- Increase in gestation at birth and average birthweights.
- Enhanced accessibility to culturally safe maternity services.
- Continued commitment to holistic, culturally responsive care models.

In 2023 the **Aboriginal Health Council of WA consulted 15 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services** to identify services available for women and families, key gaps in service provision, and goals for improving child and maternal health from conception through to 2,000 days. A summary of findings and recommendations were prepared in a report and presented to Partnership Planning Group 1 - Long and Healthy Lives. A number of recommendations have been embedded into the workplan of the Partnership Planning Group.

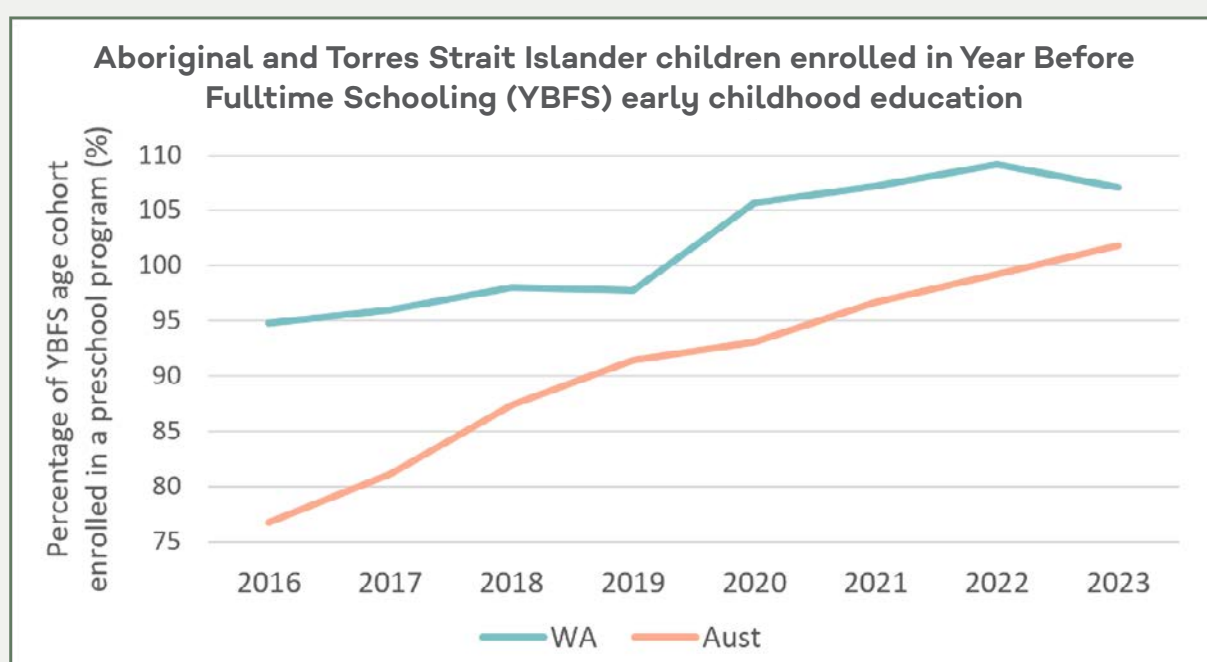
The Mental Health Commission's **Valuable Conversations for reducing the impact of alcohol use during childbearing years** training supports service providers across Western Australia to increase confidence in delivering Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) prevention.

At the completion of the Valuable Conversations training participants are equipped with the skills to be able to:

- Engage in valuable conversations with all clients about stopping or reducing alcohol use during pregnancy.
- Identify areas of their practice that require development for improved client engagement and outcomes.
- Plan for FASD prevention in the context of their work.
- Connect with professionals throughout their region and the state regarding FASD prevention.

## Outcome 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years

**Target:** By 2025, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in Year Before Fulltime Schooling early childhood education to 95 percent.



Enrolment of Western Australian Aboriginal children in the year before fulltime schooling has improved and been reported as more than 100 percent since 2020.

NB. The figure is greater than 100 percent because the numerator and denominator are from different sources.

## Key Updates

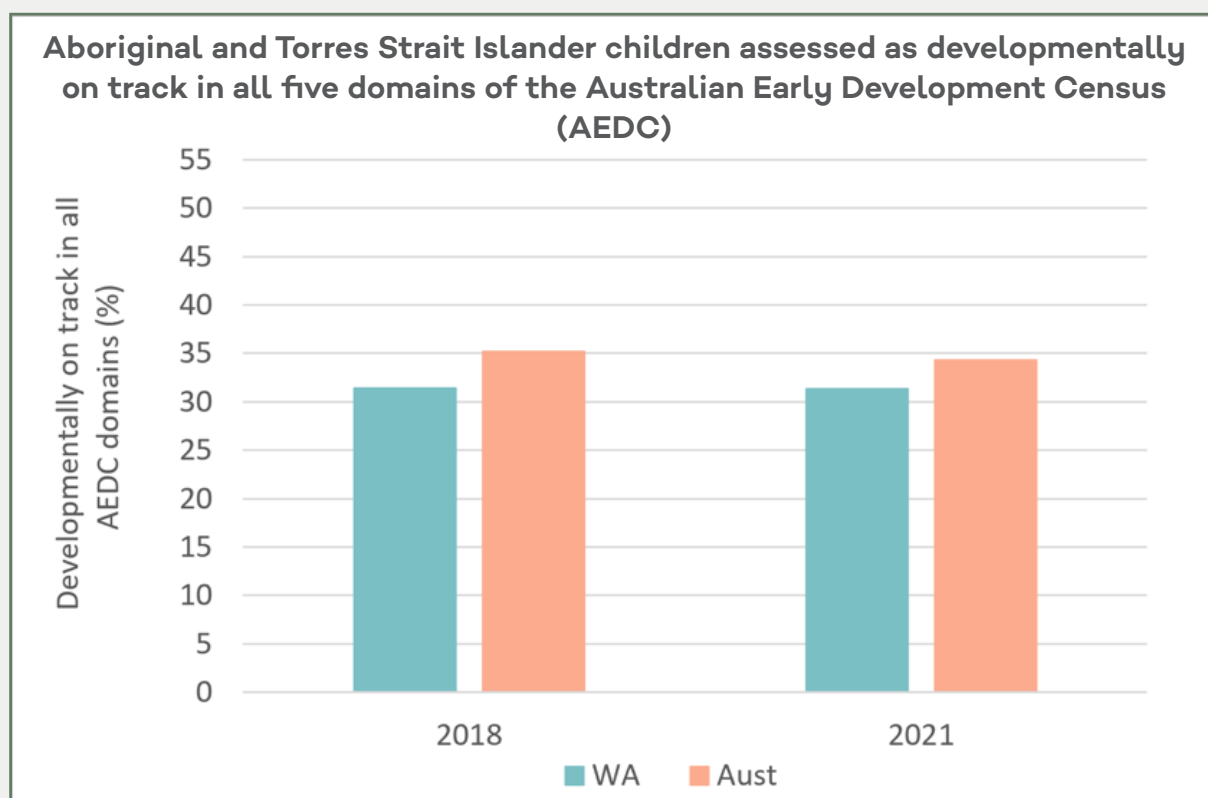
In 2023-24, the Department of Education, in partnership with the Departments of Health and Communities, has continued to oversee the **Child and Parent Centre (CPC) program** in Western Australia. Three CPCs located in the Kimberley are operated and led by local Aboriginal organisations: CPC Fitzroy Valley, operated by Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, and CPCs Halls Creek and Kununurra, both operated by the Wunan Foundation. These organisations work in partnership with the host and surrounding schools, local service providers and local Aboriginal Medical Services, to deliver a range of early learning, parenting support and health programs and services.

The Department of Education continues to work with schools hosting a **KindiLink program** to support parents and connect them with local community-based supports. In 2024, there are 54 KindiLink programs operating throughout Western Australia. In Semester 1, 2024, the total registrations for KindiLink were 1,773, which includes 324 registrations at Kimberley Schools Project KindiLink programs.



## Outcome 4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census to 55 percent.



Early childhood development appeared to worsen in Western Australia in the most recent reporting period. In 2021, 31.3 percent of Aboriginal children in Western Australia were assessed as developmentally on track in all five Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) domains.



# Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Early Years Partnership	Ongoing (2018-2028)	Department of Communities	Planning stage
Early Years Partnership Community Plans	2023	Department of Communities	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Early Years Partnership** (EYP) works closely with ACCOs that receive Connected Beginnings funding in each of the four Western Australia EYP communities (Derby, Bidyadanga, Central Great Southern and Armadale West). These ACCOs chair or co-chair local working groups to ensure strong community representation in the design and implementation of Early Years Community Plans.

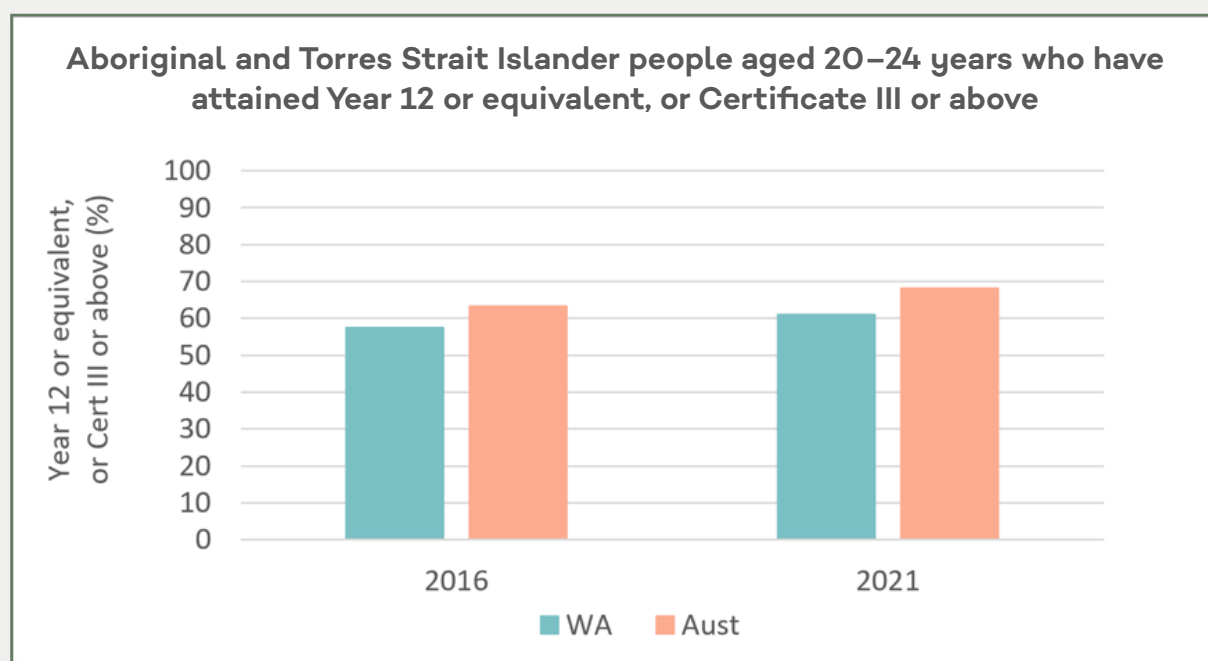
In August 2023, the final two EYP partner communities launched **Early Years Community Plans** which identify priority areas, with local and systems level actions that improve the wellbeing and school readiness of children aged 0-4 years. In May 2024, the WA Government and Minderoo Foundation committed an additional \$34.6 million in funding to deliver 24 projects in the four EYP communities from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028. Of these, eight projects (\$11.5 million) aim to improve universal and specialised community child health service provision, and one project aims to further promote early childhood dental health in Central Great Southern.

## Other highlights

To improve access to the **Australian Early Development Census** (AEDC), the Department of Education has worked closely with public, Independent and Catholic schools in 2023-24 to ensure all eligible schools in Western Australia participated in the sixth national data collection for the AEDC in 2024. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Consultants (for example, Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers) were available for consultation with the teacher during the preparation and completion of the AEDC for Aboriginal children. The Cultural Consultants assisted teachers to complete the Census from a cultural standpoint for Aboriginal children.

## Outcome 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (aged 20–24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 percent.



There have been improvements in Year 12 or equivalent attainment, or Certificate level III or above qualification, in Western Australia. In the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, 61.1 percent of Aboriginal people aged 20–24 in Western Australia were recorded as having this type of qualification.



## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Year 9 Career Taster Program	2022-25	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Being delivered
Senior secondary metrics	Fully implemented for the start of the 2025 school year	Department of Education	Being delivered
Balanginy Research Project	2023-24	Department of Education	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Year 9 Career Taster Program** supports Year 9 students to start their career exploration journey. In 2023, 1,068 Year 9 Aboriginal students participated in the Program, representing 7 percent of total participation. 65 percent of these students were based in regional and remote locations.

The Department of Education continued to lead work on development of **secondary metrics**, with schools engaged in familiarisation so that they are ready for implementation in 2025. The metrics will include disaggregation by gender and Aboriginality.

The **Balanginy Research Project** aims to investigate what success at school means for Aboriginal students and their parents engaged students. The project delivered on Phase 1 in July 2023, which involved gathering information through Yarning Circles. Phase 2 commenced in July 2023 and involved development and trialling of the Balanginy tool with students and parents from 15 primary and 6 secondary schools in the City of Swan.

The Department of Education provides professional learning, advice and guidance to support effective leadership and teaching, driven by the Department's **Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework**. In 2023, the Department of Education delivered 98 professional learning workshops to 4,700 principals, teachers, Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers, graduate school psychologists, and central and regional office staff to support the creation of culturally responsive schools.

## Other Highlights

The **Follow the Dream program**, delivered in partnership with the Polly Farmer Foundation provides tailored after school tuition and individualised mentoring support to Aboriginal secondary students to assist them to achieve positive academic outcomes. In 2023, the Program was delivered to 2,091 Aboriginal secondary students across 101 public schools throughout Western Australia. Western Australia Certificate of Education was achieved by 212 of the 289 Year 12 students in the program in 2023.

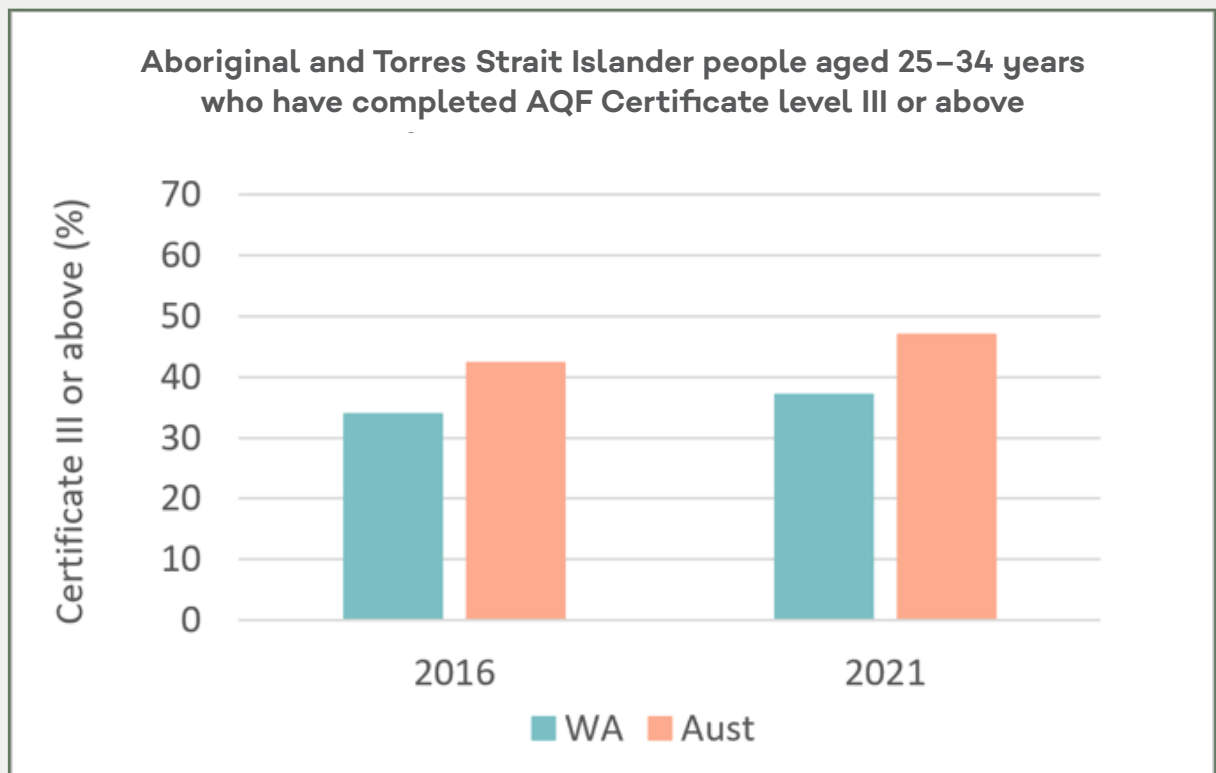
The **Clontarf Foundation's Academies** are designed to strengthen the educational and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal boys and young men and assist their transition through school and post-school destinations. In Term 1 2024, Clontarf Foundation Academies operated in 40 schools across Western Australia, supporting approximately 1,975 male Aboriginal secondary school students and 345 male Aboriginal primary school students, for a total of 2,320 Aboriginal male students.

The Department of Education continues to deliver **programs to enhance the engagement of female Aboriginal students** in public schools. In 2024, a total of 59 public secondary schools and 18 primary schools across Western Australia provide an engagement program for Aboriginal girls and young women through Australian Government and/or WA Government funding, supporting approximately 3,378 students.

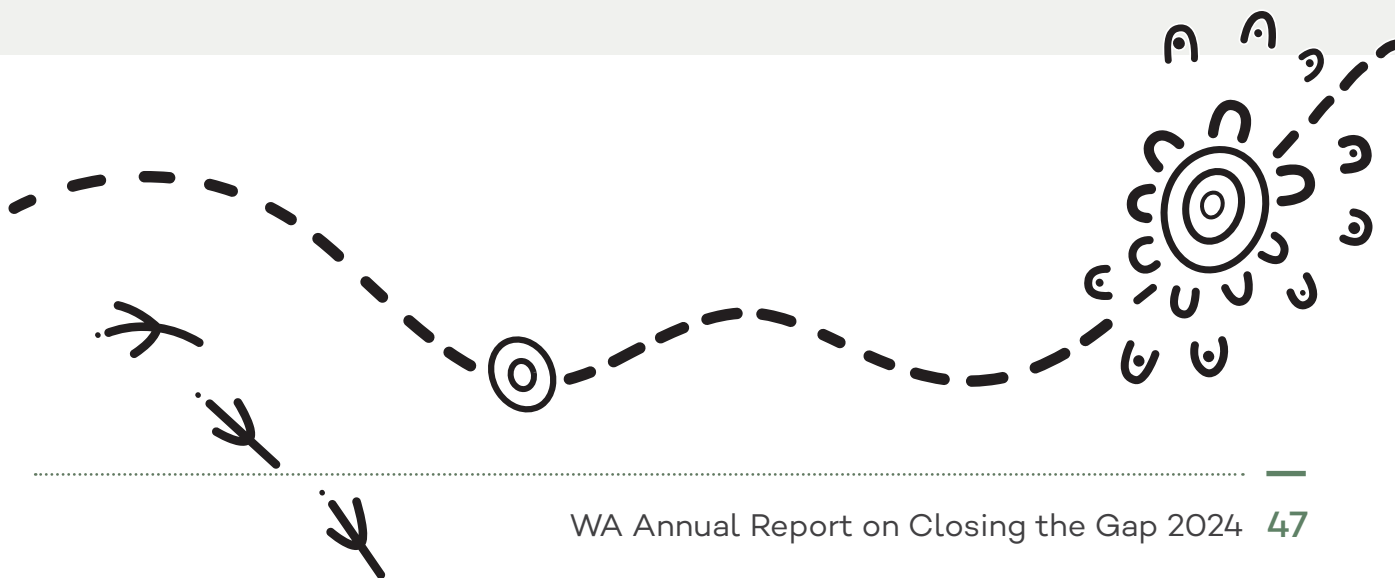
The **Ngaparrtji Ngaparrtji Two-way Science** (Two-way Science) program supports schools to build partnerships with local Aboriginal communities to develop integrated, culturally responsive learning programs that connect Aboriginal knowledge with the Western Australian Science Curriculum. Two-way Science features an action learning program for school staff, including workshops on Country developed through co-design with Aboriginal organisations. Students in Two-way Science schools are engaged in curriculum-linked programs featuring learning on Country delivered by local Aboriginal experts. Program participants report high levels of student engagement in science activities in the classroom that connect to the cultural learning goals of the community. The Two-way Science teaching and learning approach has also improved culturally responsive practice in other learning areas. 161 staff from 51 public schools across all education regions are participating in the program in 2024.

## Outcome 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential through further education pathways

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (aged 25–34) who have completed a tertiary qualification (Certificate III and above) to 70 percent.



There have been improvements in tertiary qualification attainment in Western Australia. In the 2021 Census, 37.1 percent of Aboriginal people aged 25–34 in Western Australia were recorded as having this type of qualification.



## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Aboriginal Career Promotion Programs (Djinda Ngardak)	Ongoing	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation	Completed
The “Collective Nations: Many Tracks” Aboriginal Education and Employment Strategy	2022-25	Department of Justice	Being delivered

## Key Updates

Tourism WA supported **Djinda Ngardak** to train Aboriginal students at a culinary camp focused on collaboration with chefs working with Australian native ingredients. The Djinda Ngardak program provided a series of culinary masterclasses that saw 118 Aboriginal students collaborate with Crown to deliver the World Indigenous Tourism Summit Gala dinner on 15 March 2023 for 600 guests.

The Department of Justice continued to undertake a number of key actions to implement the **Collective Nations: Many Tracks Education and Employment Strategy** including provision of educational resources, cultural awareness for Education, Employment and Transitional Services and development of a Remote Aboriginal Community Directory providing details of community-based services and organisations to help inform service delivery including education and employment support to prisoners from regions: Shire of Broome, Shire of Halls Creek, and Shire of Wyndham.

## Other Highlights

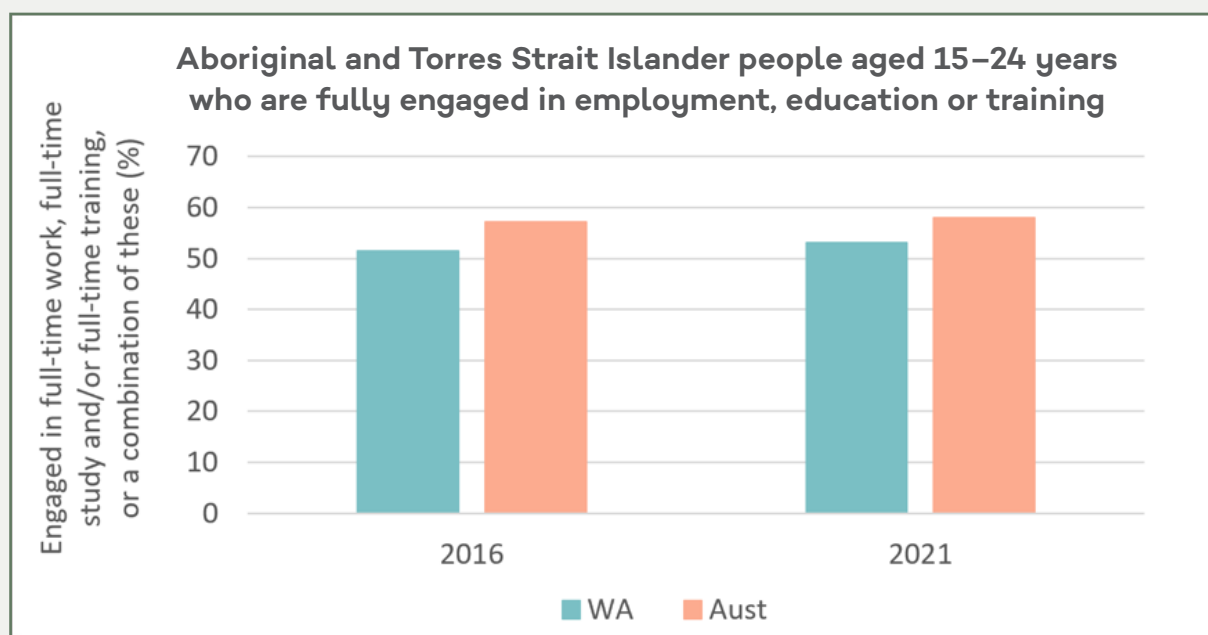
The WA Government is progressing a number of initiatives to increase the training and employment of Aboriginal people. For example, the **Aboriginal Employment Enabling Program** (AEEP) supports Aboriginal people to gain employment and/or access training opportunities; employers to improve their cultural competency and to grow the number of Aboriginal employees in their workforce; and organisations, including ACCOs, to build their capacity to support Aboriginal people accessing employment and/or training, and employers recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees. In 2023-24, three Aboriginal organisations were funded to deliver services under AEEP in the Goldfields-Esperance and Kimberley regions, commencing from 1 July 2024.

The **Regional Vocational Education and Training Advisory Group** (RVAG), comprising schools, TAFE, School of Isolated and Distance Education Registered Training Organisation (SIDE RTO) and Industry, has begun planning for improved Vocational Education and Training (VET) delivery and participation in the Kimberley. In 2023, SIDE RTO enrolled 30 Aboriginal students into Certificate I and II qualifications. In 2024, 39 Aboriginal students were enrolled with SIDE RTO into qualifications ranging from Certificate I, II and III.



## Outcome 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are engaged in employment or education

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (aged 15–24) who are in employment, education or training to 67 percent.



There have been improvements in youth engagement in employment, education or training in Western Australia. The 2021 Census recorded 53.1 percent of Aboriginal people aged 15–24 in Western Australia as being in full-time work, full-time study and/or full-time training, or a combination of these.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Aboriginal Employment Enabling Program**	2024-2025	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Being delivered
Enhanced Aboriginal services at Jobs and Skills Centres	2023 - ongoing	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Being delivered
Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer Career Pathways Review	2023-24	Department of Education	Being delivered

\*\* Please note: The program name was previously Aboriginal Jobseeker Support Program

## Key Updates

The Department of Training and Workforce Development continues to support meaningful and sustainable training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people. In 2023-24, three Aboriginal organisations were funded to deliver services under the **Aboriginal Employment Enabling Program** (AEEP) program in the Goldfields-Esperance and Kimberley regions, commencing from 1 July 2024. The AEEP supports:

- Aboriginal people to gain employment and/or access training opportunities;
- employers to improve their cultural competency and to grow the number of Aboriginal employees in their workforce; and
- organisations, including ACCOs, to build their capacity to support Aboriginal people accessing employment and/or training, and employers recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees.



Aboriginal Services are provided at a network of 19 **Jobs and Skills Centres** across Western Australia to enhance opportunities for Aboriginal people to engage in sustainable employment and help meet Western Australia's skills shortages and growing workforce demand. From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, across all Jobs and Skills Centres:

- 4,086 Aboriginal clients accessed services.
- 19,561 services were delivered to Aboriginal clients.
- 1,101 organisations received Aboriginal employment advice and/or information.

A working group including representatives from the Department of Education, United Workers Union and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs) formed was formed in June 2021, with a focus on reviewing and amending the current AIEO Job Description Form and the development of a career structure, skills and competency framework. In 2023, statewide consultation with AIEOs was undertaken to develop a proposed career structure which expands the **career pathway for AIEOs**.

## Other Highlights

The **Aboriginal School Based Training Program** is a Vocational Education and Training program designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal students. The program supports Aboriginal secondary students in Years 10, 11 and 12 to commence training that leads to post school opportunities, including employment or further education pathways. In 2023, 206 students across 24 schools participated in the program.

In 2023-24, the Waalitj Foundation was awarded a further two-year contract to continue the provision of wraparound **employment enabling support services** to December 2025. The target cohort comprises Aboriginal people, including young people who have exited the justice system aged from 15-30 years who are considered 'job ready'. The supports are available to young people in the Perth, Peel, Goldfields/Esperance, South West and Great Southern regions. Services are provided to reduce or remove barriers for these youth to access employment and training. From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, 76 Aboriginal youth received funded support to transition into employment or training leading to employment.



## Outcome 8: Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

**Target:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (aged 25–64) who are employed to 62 percent.



There have been improvements in employment in Western Australia. The 2021 Census recorded 49.8 percent of Aboriginal people aged 25–64 in Western Australia as employed.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Aboriginal Business Round of the Local Capability Fund	Ongoing	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation	Being delivered
Aboriginal Capability Pavilion at AOG Energy 2024	2024	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation	Completed
WA Aboriginal Ranger Program	Ongoing	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attraction	Being delivered
Aboriginal Pastoral Program	Ongoing	Department for Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered
Aboriginal Governance and Leadership Development Program	Ongoing	Department for Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered
Round 6 of the Regional Economic Development Grants	2023-2024	Regional Development Commissions	Completed
Transport Portfolio Meet the Buyer and Supplier Forum 2023	2023-2024	Main Roads WA	Completed



## Key Updates

The **Local Capability Fund** (LCF) continues to build capability, capacity and improve the competitiveness of Aboriginal businesses competing for government and private sector contracts. In 2023–24, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation awarded grant funding of \$552,381 to 13 Aboriginal businesses through the Aboriginal Business Round of the LCF.

As part of WA Government's commitment to facilitate WA Aboriginal business participation, wider promotion of the **Aboriginal Capability Pavilion** (now Aboriginal Business Pavilion) resulted in up to 12 Aboriginal businesses exhibiting at the AOG Energy 2024.

**Aboriginal Ranger Program** (ARP) continues to create jobs, training and community development opportunities for Aboriginal people on a range of land tenures in regional and remote communities across Western Australia. In the 2023–24 reporting period, almost 165 full time equivalent (FTE) were funded in Rounds 6, 7 and 8 through an allocation of \$40.3 million. The percentage of Aboriginal people that will be funded for employment via this funding allocation will equate to approximately 95 percent.

In Phase 1 the ARP funded 855 rangers to undertake formal training and has funded the employment of 1254 Aboriginal people. In addition, joint management arrangements cover approximately a quarter of Western Australia's conservation reserve system, providing training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through direct and indirect employment options in regional areas.

In 2023–24, the **Aboriginal Pastoral Academy** has expanded into the East Kimberley and is helping support careers for Aboriginal people in the pastoral industry, working across three levels: preparing new entrants for the pastoral industry, programs to support career progression, and leadership development. The first East Kimberley pre-employment program has been delivered at Mistake Creek station, with graduates being ready for employment on Kimberley properties in the 2025 pastoral season.

As part of the **Aboriginal Governance and leadership Program**, Morrgul Pty Ltd continues to deliver the Aboriginal Procurement Advisory Service program state-wide. In Year 2 of program delivery (August 2023 to August 2024), Morrgul supported 93 Aboriginal businesses and tracked \$37.43 million in

estimated value of contracts awarded to Aboriginal businesses, creating an estimated 170 jobs and reaching a return on investment of \$180.85 for every dollar invested.

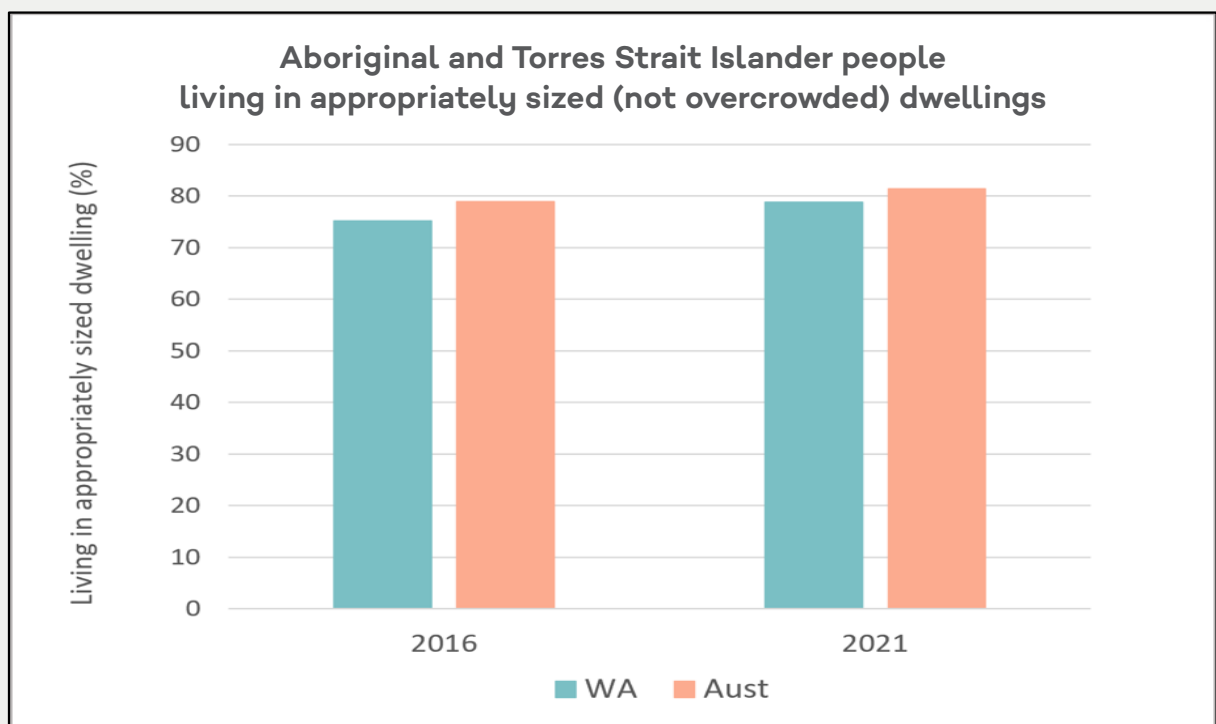
Through the **Regional Economic Development Grants Round 6**, in 2023-24, five grants were awarded to Aboriginal businesses totaling \$662,405, one in the Goldfields-Esperance region, two in the Kimberley and two in the Pilbara.

The WA Government is committed to supporting Aboriginal businesses in the tendering process. The **Meet the Buyer and Supplier Forum** was held in November 2023 with 500 participants, created to connect Aboriginal businesses with the Transport Portfolio and industry. An Aboriginal Business Webinar was held in May 2024 with 80 participants, designed to introduce Aboriginal businesses to the Transport sector, and outline how/where to register for work.



## Outcome 9: Aboriginal people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need

- **Target 9A:** By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88 percent.
- **Target 9B:** By 2031, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households:
  - within discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities receive essential services that meet or exceed the relevant jurisdictional standard
  - in or near to a town receive essential services that meet or exceed the same standard as applies generally within the town (including if the household might be classified for other purposes as a part of a discrete settlement such as a “town camp” or “town-based reserve”).



There have been improvements in housing overcrowding in Western Australia. The 2021 Census recorded that 78.8 percent of Aboriginal people in Western Australia lived in appropriately sized dwellings. NB. There is no data available for Target 9B.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Investing in remote Aboriginal housing	Commenced 2022	Department of Communities	Being delivered
Aboriginal Community-Controlled Housing Organisation (ACCHO) Strategy	Ongoing	Department of Communities	Paused
ACCHO Sector Strengthening Project – Development of Aboriginal housing peak body	Commenced 2022	Department of Communities	Being delivered
Boorloo Bidee Mia – Transitional Crisis Accommodation for Rough Sleepers	Commenced 2021	Department of Communities	Completed
Co-designing the Aboriginal Environmental Health Program	Commenced 2023	Department of Health	Planning stage
Review of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030 to identify opportunities for delivering better waste outcomes in regional and remote communities, including Aboriginal communities	Commenced. Due to be delivered in 2025	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	Being delivered



## Key Updates

Of the WA Government's \$350 million **Remote Communities Fund**, \$140 million is driving progress against Target 9A through a program of housing construction and refurbishment in remote and town-based Aboriginal communities across WA. A Remote Housing Review and Guide developed in 2023-24 is informing the investment, ensuring that housing is culturally appropriate and designed for local climates and environmental conditions. As part of the Kimberley Flood Recovery there are 156 residential dwellings in scope for the Department of Communities to repair or rebuild. Of these, 98 are complete with the remaining underway or soon to commence.

In 2023, the Department of Communities committed to engaging with the Aboriginal community-controlled sector to develop a **10-year strategy** to inform WA Government's implementation of the Housing Sector Strengthening Plan. Following consultations with ACCOs, the Department of Communities is redirecting efforts to building the capability of the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Housing Organisation (ACCHO) sector.

In 2023-24, Department of Communities commissioned and worked collaboratively with Shelter WA, WA's peak housing body, to deliver the **ACCHO Sector Strengthening project**. The project has been instrumental in identifying the organisations that make up the Aboriginal community housing sector; developing organisational policy and procedure templates that will assist ACCHOs in meeting the requirements of the Community Housing Registrar; and supporting Noongar Mia Mia in working with Shelter WA and the Community Housing Registration Office to become WA's first registered Aboriginal community housing provider.

**Boorloo Bidee Mia** is the first low barrier homelessness service in WA, offering culturally supportive medium-term accommodation for people with complex needs. In January 2024, \$47.6 million in new funding was announced for the continuation of 15 critical accommodation and homelessness services across Western Australia.

Through a collaborative co-design process, the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Sector and the Department of Health are developing a contemporary **model of care for Aboriginal Environmental Health**. The contemporary model of care aims to achieve better Aboriginal community health outcomes from improved environmental health conditions, management

and activities. The Aboriginal Health Council WA and the Department of Health are finalising the draft Model of Care for final endorsement by the Aboriginal Environmental Health Model of Care Committee.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has released a draft **Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030** which recognises that waste management is an essential determinant of the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and their Country. The draft strategy includes a new priority to ensure adequate and appropriate waste infrastructure and services to meet the needs of remote Aboriginal communities.

## Other Highlights

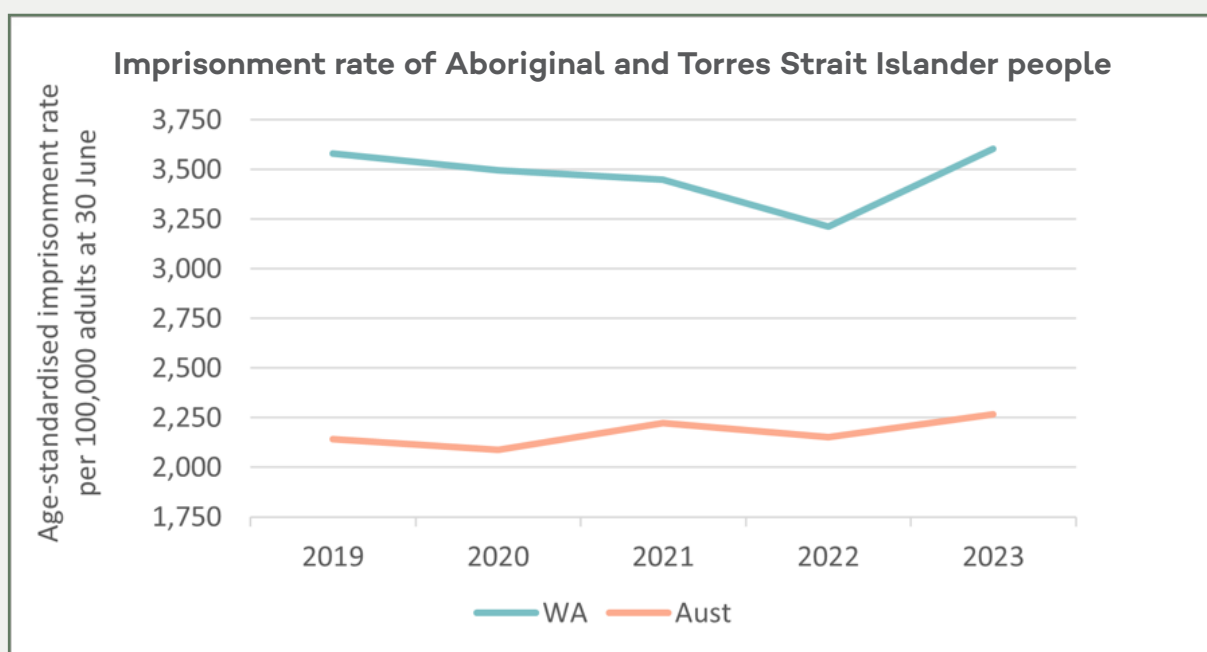
Through the **Northwest Aboriginal Housing Fund**, as at June 2024 \$160.2 million has been approved to deliver eight investments, with at least \$104.8 million of approved investment and/or spend directed to Aboriginal organisations. This has enabled support to be provided to: 234 families, including eight who have achieved home ownership; 523 Aboriginal people to maintain or improve their employment; and 74 Aboriginal people to make progress towards achieving an apprenticeship. Over 300 homes are expected to be made available for affordable rental or home ownership through full investment of the fund.

On 1 July 2023, Horizon Power assumed responsibility from the Department of Communities for the **delivery of power to 117 remote Aboriginal communities**. In total, Horizon Power is now responsible for servicing 170 remote communities. Over 2023-24, Horizon Power has built strong community connections, developed strategic partnerships with Regional Service Providers, and prioritised safety inspections and asset remediation work. Horizon Power's on the ground engagement with community members has provided insights into immediate asset priorities to ensure safe and reliable provision of power, as well as the opportunity to explore opportunities for community participation in the clean energy transition.



## Outcome 10: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

**Target:** By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 percent.



Overall, there has been no change in the imprisonment rate of Aboriginal people in Western Australia since the 2019 baseline year. The 2023 rate was 3605.1 per 100,000 adults.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
The Carey Bindjareb Project	Ongoing	Department of Justice	Being delivered
Legal Assistance Action Plan 2022-2025	2022-2025	Department of Justice	Being delivered
Bail Support Service and Prison In-Reach Legal Services	2023-2025	Department of Justice	Being delivered
Custody Notification Service	Ongoing	Department of Justice	Being delivered
Aboriginal Mediation Service	Ongoing	Department of Justice	Being delivered
The Yiwarra Kuju - Western Desert Justice Program	2021-2024	Department of Justice	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Carey Bindjareb Project** is a joint venture between the Department of Justice and Carey Training Pty Ltd providing a comprehensive educational and mentoring program for Aboriginal men currently engaged in the criminal justice system. This program has been conducted at Karnet Prison Farm and Roebourne Regional Prison. The 14 week, intensive program has been developed using a through care model to support participants to attain industry skills, life skills and the confidence and resilience needed to fulfil and sustain employment.

The Department of Justice continued to implement the **Legal Assistance Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2025**. A key action under the Legal Assistance Action Plan is to work towards self-determination and the provision of culturally safe services for Aboriginal people.

The Department of Justice continues to provide funding to Aboriginal Legal Service of WA for their **Bail Support Service/Prison In-Reach Legal Service** (BSS/PIR) from July 2023 to June 2025. The BSS/PIR aims to reduce avoidable

remand by providing earlier access to bail and support for adult accused persons to comply with bail. A formal evaluation of the Project is currently being undertaken which will inform future funding beyond 30 June 2025.

Throughout 2023-24, the **Aboriginal Mediation Service** (AMS) has continued to support Aboriginal people navigating conflict, with the goal of reducing overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the justice system. The AMS case load has increased by 135 percent from the 2022-23 financial year due to increased stakeholder engagement throughout Western Australia. In June 2024 a referral pathway with the Children's Court of Western Australia was established to facilitate AMS delivery, in order to reduce the over representation of Aboriginal people (particularly children) in the justice system and produce positive outcomes for families and the community. Currently 27 open cases are being managed, and AMS has experienced a 75 percent increase in family case referrals compared to the previous financial year.

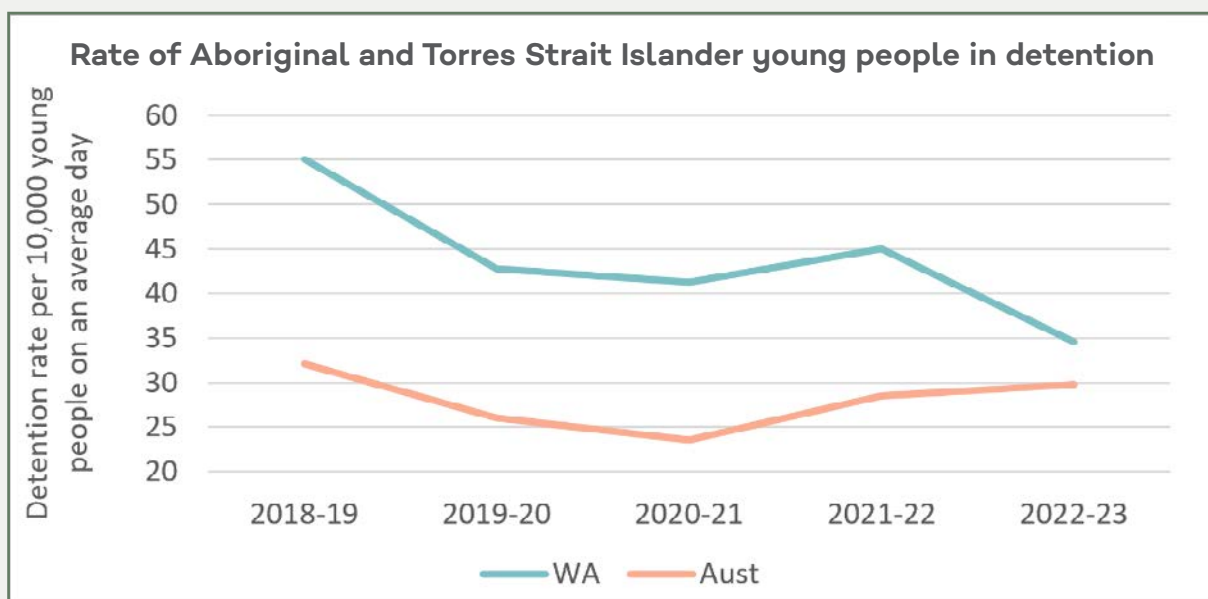
Through the **Yiwarra Kuju-Western Desert Justice Program**, the Department of Justice has partnered with Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa to improve criminal justice system outcomes for the Martu people of the Western Desert community through the provision of on-country mentoring, drug and alcohol services, and therapeutic diversionary programs. During 2023-24 there were:

- 28 full days of workshop delivery at Roebourne Regional Prison, which resulted in the facilitation of 83 cultural sessions and 1,102 recorded participations by Martu men and women.
- 37 Wangka Mingyirpa - Martu Cultural Advisory Panel proceedings facilitated, with 306 separate hearings for 166 separate Martu individuals.
- 47 Martu bail applications and non-custodial sentence outcomes; of these, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa provided 22 support letters via the Wangka Mingyirpa Cultural Advisory Panel, with 16 successful in being granted bail (a 72 percent success rate).
- 36 Martu participants of the Program offered post-release employment through Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa's Ranger program.

Through the 2024-25 Budget, the WA Government approved a 12-month extension of the Program, with funding granted to facilitate a full evaluation (commenced in June 2024).

# Outcome 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

**Target:** By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (aged 10-17) in detention by at least 30 percent.



The rate of detention of Aboriginal young people aged 10-17 in Western Australia has improved. The 2022-23 rate was 34.6 per 10,000 young people.



## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress Status
Therapeutic Court Pilot for Protection and Care Matters, Children's Court WA	2020-24	Department of Justice	Being delivered
KJJS Collaborative Design Project	2020-25	Department of Justice	Being delivered
WA Police Force ACCO Strategy 2022-2032	2022-23	WA Police	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Dandjoo Bidi-Ak Therapeutic Court** (Dandjoo) aims to provide a culturally safe and respectful environment to empower and support Aboriginal families who are in care and protection matters in the Perth Children's Court. Dandjoo now operates three days per week and funding has been provided through to 30 June 2025. In addition, the Department of Justice's Legal Assistance Branch continues to provide funding to legal assistance service providers, including Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, from 2022-23 to 2025-26 to assist families to engage with the Therapeutic Court Pilot.

In 2023-24, the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy (KJJS) continued to provide funding through a series of grant agreements to ACCOs and other service providers to deliver culturally appropriate services to young people. These include structured activities outside of school hours, community night patrols, cultural camps, a youth engagement program, and a tailored TAFE program. The **KJJS Collaborative Design Project** received funding in the 2023-24 WA Budget to further co-design and implement an immediate response night space pilot in Broome. A co-design committee was established as part of Phase 2 of this project to refine the immediate response night space concept and support implementation of a pilot. The co-design committee developed an operational model and Kullarri Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation was engaged as the service delivery partner for the project.



The Broome night space, now known as Ngurra Buru in traditional Yawuru language, commenced operations in May 2024.

Under the **WA Police Force ACCO Strategy**, successful youth engagement pilot projects have been transitioned to longer term projects. 41 percent of the Police Community Services Fund (PCSF) was expended on youth engagement programs. Youth engagement programs specifically for Aboriginal children and young people include:

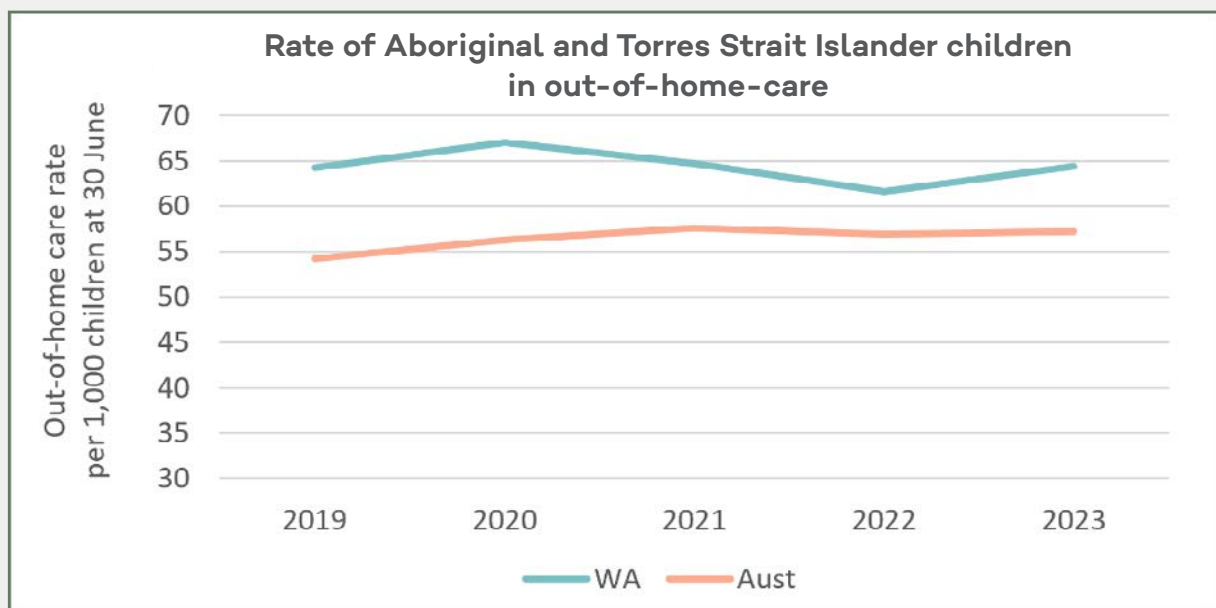
- Antisocial behaviour patrols, de-escalation, referral to support services and transportation to home or safe space (Cannington).
- Empowerment and responsible decision-making education (Goldfields-Esperance, Kimberley, Wheatbelt).
- Place-based solutions for Aboriginal young people unable to go home at night due to safety or lack of supervision (Kimberley).
- Identification through community consultation of suitable positive Aboriginal youth engagement opportunities (Goldfields-Esperance).
- Individual case management, including facilitating relationship development and trust between Aboriginal children and young people, local Police and schools (Mandurah, Midland and Wheatbelt).

74 percent of PCSF expenditure on youth engagement programs was provided to local ACCOs, and funding across youth engagement programs totaled \$1.054 million in the 2023-24 financial year.



## Outcome 12: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system

**Target 12:** By 2031, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 percent.



Overall, there has been little change in the rate of Aboriginal children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care in WA since the 2019 baseline year. The 2023 rate was 64.4 per 1,000 children.



## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Building Safe and Strong Families: Earlier Intervention and Family Support Strategy	Ongoing	Department of Communities	Being delivered
10 Year Roadmap to Reduce the Number of Aboriginal Children in Care - Implementation of actions under Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-31 (Safe and Supported)	TBD	Department of Communities	Planning

## Key Updates

To support families, the following **Earlier Intervention and Family Support Services** (EIFS) are being commissioned, with all new service contracts set to commence by mid-2025:

- Family Support Networks;
- Intensive Family Support Service in metropolitan and regional locations; and
- Regional Family Support Hub (formerly Regional Service Model) in the South West.

The procurement process was developed to best support ACCOs to tender for EIFS services, particularly in regional areas.

To ensure continuity of service for families, and to support the planning and implementation of the commissioning process, the Department of Communities extended all existing contracts for EIFS services.

These extensions are aligned to the commencement of new service contracts. In alignment with the ACCO Strategy and the National Agreement's partnership elements, it is now mandatory for all new EIFS service contracts to be led by an ACCO or delivered in partnership with an ACCO. Partnership Plans are required for non-ACCO lead service providers and ACCO partners.

In 2023, the Department of Communities committed to developing a **10 Year Roadmap** to Reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care to drive progress against Target 12 and respond to actions and deliverables under Safe and Supported 2021-31. The Department of Communities is now progressing implementation of Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-31.

## Other Highlights

The **Regional Service Model** (RSM) was implemented in the South West, Pilbara, and East Kimberley in mid-2023, as part of Department of Communities' commitment to expanding and increasing diversionary and intensive support for families in regional areas. The RSM in the South West (now known as the Regional Family Support Hub) is being procured as part of the current EIFS commissioning, with ongoing funding secured to support families living throughout the South West.





# Outcome 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe

**Target:** A significant and sustained reduction in violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children towards zero.

In the 2018-19 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, 9 percent of Aboriginal women aged 15 years or over in Western Australia experienced domestic physical harm or face-to-face threatened physical harm in the last 12 months. The Australian figure was 8.4 percent. There is no new data since the 2018-19 baseline year.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Implementation of the Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy	2022-2032	Department of Communities	Being delivered
Development of the Justice Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy	Ongoing	Department of Justice	Being delivered
Rapid Rehousing	Time limited	Department of Communities	Being delivered
Family and Domestic Violence Hubs	Time limited	Department of Communities	Being delivered



## Key Updates

During 2023–24, key achievements under WA's **Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy 2022–2032** include the Department of Communities partnering with Tjallara Consulting to develop an Aboriginal Healing Framework to provide clear and practical guidance for how healing work can be supported and operationalised as part of Western Australia's response to family violence. The framework is being developed over 2024 and will be informed by relevant evidence, community engagement and consultations. The Department of Communities also offered one-off grant funding through the Aboriginal Family Safety Grants Program 2024 for eligible ACCOs and/or not-for-profit registered Aboriginal businesses to develop Aboriginal and community-led family safety activities in their region, over a period of two years. The grant program supports activities that are designed to prevent or respond to family violence and that are aligned to the Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy 2022–2032. The grant program will allocate \$5.75 million to successful projects and will also include the procurement of an independent Aboriginal evaluator to work in partnership with the grant recipients to undertake culturally secure evaluation of the program.

The Department of Justice is finalising development of the **Justice Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy**. To inform the development of the Strategy, in 2023–24, additional consultations were held with male and female prisoners in selected prison estates, as well as with detainees and former prisoners. These consultations were Aboriginal-led and conducted in partnership with recognised authorities. The approach was through yarning circles and graphic visual recording, as an evidence-informed Aboriginal research method, aimed to provide deep insights into the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced violence and those who have used violence.

The **Rapid Rehousing** for Aboriginal women (Moorditj Bidi – Strong Path) was awarded to Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and commenced on 1 July 2023. Moorditj Bidi provides eligible Aboriginal women, with or without children, to successfully transition from crisis accommodation to secure tenancies in the private rental market. The program aligns to the Noongar Housing First Principles which were developed to help housing and support service providers to create culturally safe environments, housing and support services for Noongar people experiencing homelessness, their families, and communities.

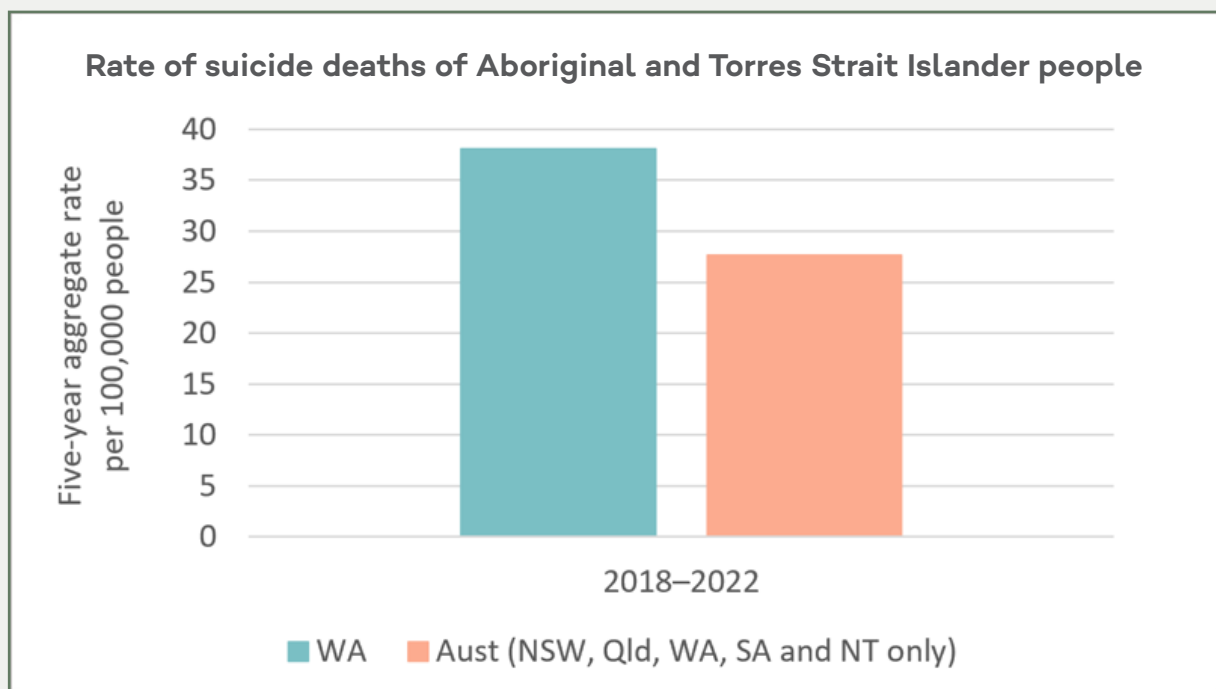
Throughout 2023-24, the WA Government has supported the establishment of family and domestic violence hubs. The Armadale **family and domestic violence hub** commenced service delivery in September 2023 as an interim service, being delivered by Hope Community Services in partnership with Yorgum Healing Services. It offers a range of holistic support services including group and one-to-one counselling, legal information sessions and men's outreach services. Alliance partners to the Armadale Hub include Aboriginal Legal Service and Marmun Mia-mia Aboriginal Corporation. In June 2024, Family Outreach Service Broome, operating as part of Men's Outreach Service Aboriginal Corporation (MOSAC), was awarded a contract to lead the delivery of a new One Stop Hub for family and domestic violence services in Broome. Family Outreach Service Broome partnered with Anglicare WA and an alliance of specialist services that includes Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation, Jalygurr Guwan Aboriginal Corporation, Broome CIRCLE and Legal Aid WA. An interim service is expected to commence late 2024. The place-based adaptation of the One Stop Hub model will ensure MOSAC implements an integrated service delivery from a 'whole of family' approach, with cultural and On-Country work to support healing.





## Outcome 14: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

**Target:** Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero.



The WA rate of suicide deaths of Aboriginal people was 38.1 per 100,000 people in the 5-year period 2018–2022. There are no assessments of jurisdictional progress for this target, as the required data is not available. The WA 2018–2022 rate is similar to 2016–2020 and is the highest of the five jurisdictions with available data.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Western Australian Suicide Prevention Framework 2021 – 2025 (Aboriginal people stream)	2021-2025	Mental Health Commission	Being delivered
Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing	Ongoing	Mental Health Commission	Being delivered
Regional Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plans - Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Program	2021-2024	Mental Health Commission	Being delivered
Social and Emotional Wellbeing Model of Service Pilot program	2022-2024	Mental Health Commission	Being delivered
Kimberley AOD Youth Service	To be established	Mental Health Commission	Planning
Active Recovery Team	2023-2024	WA Country Health Service	Being delivered
Response to Suicide and Self Harm in Schools Program	2023-2024	Department of Education	Planning
Whole School Approaches to Student Wellbeing and Care	2023-2024	Department of Education	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The Mental Health Commission continued to empower and strengthen the Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal people through community-led programs such as Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa's Martu Healing and Support Program which is funded under the **Western Australian Suicide Prevention Framework 2021-2025**. This program - Wama Wangka ("Talking about alcohol") is developed and run by Martu People for Martu People. Wama Wangka involves taking Martu people onto country to talk about alcohol, addressing issues

such as suicide, depression, non-suicidal self-injury, family conflict and family and domestic violence to build personal and community resilience through the development of cultural knowledge and identity.

The **Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Program** continued to operate across Western Australia throughout 2023-24, with CLOs located at ACCOs within each of WA's 10 health regions. This Program enables a culturally secure approach to suicide prevention and supports ACCOs' engagement and delivery of Regional Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plans. This Program was extended to June 2026, and consultation and engagement were undertaken in all regions to inform a revised Regional Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plan.

In the 2024-25 Budget, the WA Government committed \$12.6 million to support an additional 18-month delivery of the **Social and Emotional Wellbeing Model Programs** across Western Australia. This includes:

- The Social and Emotional Wellbeing Model of Service Pilot Program (the SEWB Pilot Program) coordinated and led by Aboriginal Health Council WA (AHCWA), delivered in five locations: Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields, Midwest, and South West. An interim evaluation report for the SEWB Pilot was published in 2023, with a final report expected in 2025.
- The Bigiswun Youth SEWB Proof of Concept (the Bigiswun Youth SEWB) is a community-led social and emotional wellbeing service for Aboriginal young people in the Fitzroy Valley. The Mental Health Commission has funded the Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre to deliver Bigiswun Youth SEWB.

The Mental Health Commission continue to work with the Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Governance Group on an informed and co-designed **Kimberley Youth Alcohol and Other Drugs Service**. Continued engagement with community and organisations will support appropriate delivery of the [Kimberley Youth alcohol and other drugs Service – Service Model](#).

To improve access to crisis intervention in regional and remote and rural areas, WA Country Health Service (WACHS) continued to provide services through the:

- Brief Crisis Intervention service (BCI): WACHS BCI service has received funding of \$4.7million to continue to provide a Telehealth service supporting children and adolescents to transition out of emergency departments until 2025-26.

- **Active Recovery Team (ART):** WACHS ART service has received funding of over \$1.9million to continue to provide recovery planning, and crisis response, for individuals with complex needs recovering from an acute or crisis episode to minimise future presentations to emergency departments and prolonged inpatient stays across the Wheatbelt and Midwest regions, in partnership with non-government organisations.
- **Mental Health Emergency Telehealth Service (MH ETS):** WACHS MH ETS receives recurrent funding to provide telehealth services that support WA country doctors and nurses by providing 24/7 access to specialist emergency clinicians by videoconference to hospitals and nursing posts around the state.

As part of the **Response to Suicide and Self Harm in Schools Program**, Telethon Kids Institute has been engaged to review and contemporise the school response and planning guidelines for students with suicidal behaviour and non-suicidal self-injury. This is scheduled to be completed, and approved Guidelines and support materials disseminated, by 30 June 2025.

Committed to whole-school approaches to student wellbeing and care, on 6 June 2024, the Department of Education released **Student Wellbeing and Care: Future Directions**. The paper sets out the Department of Education's position on how public schools can best contribute to the mental health and wellbeing of students.

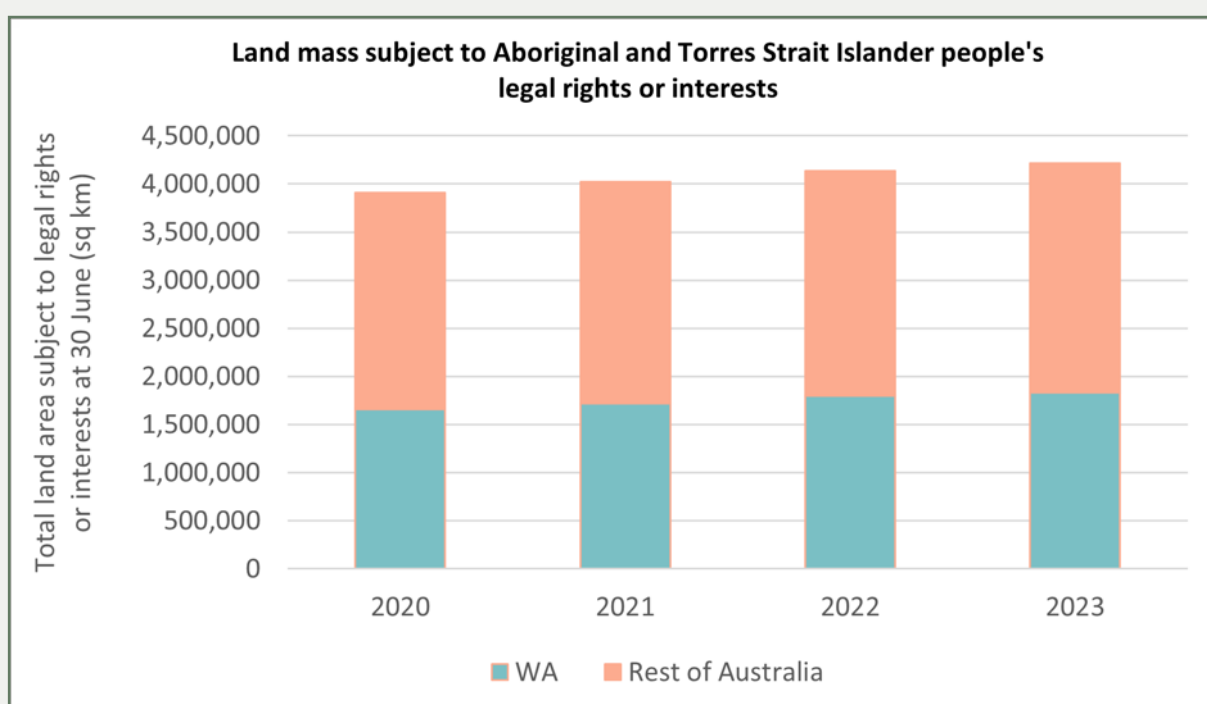
## Other Highlights

The Joint Implementation Plan, provided under the **WA Bilateral Schedule on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**, was formally endorsed on 8 February 2024 and outlines an intent to continue to work closely with the National Indigenous Australians Agency, AHCWA and Aboriginal service providers, to ensure programs are best placed to deliver optimal outcomes and to ensure that services are complementary and not duplicative.

The Mental Health Commission continued to work in partnership with the Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Governance Group and other WA Government Agencies through the **Kimberley Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Steering Committee**. This includes working towards formalising a Partnership Agreement between the Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Governance Group and WA Government Agencies, and the endorsement of an associated Implementation Plan to guide the prioritisation of initiatives for collaborative and coordinated delivery in the Kimberley region.

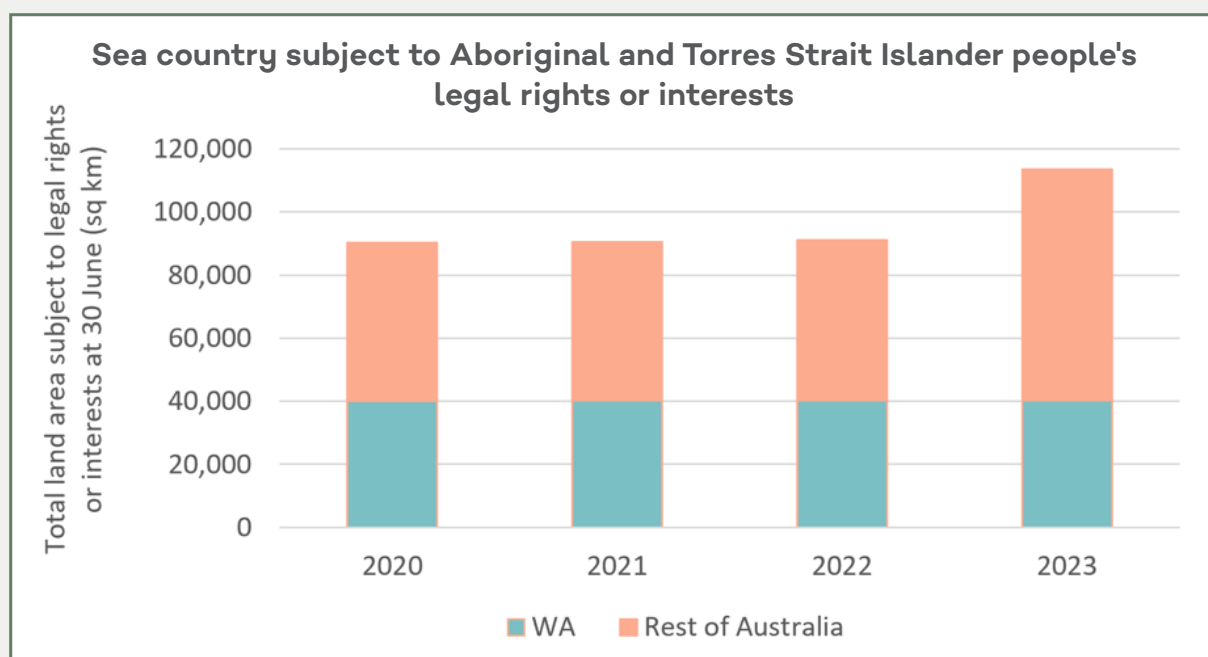
## Outcome 15: Aboriginal people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters

- **Target 15a:** By 2030, a 15 percent increase in Australia's landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights or interests.
- **Target 15b:** By 2030, a 15 percent increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in the sea.



The proportion of land in Western Australia subject to Aboriginal people's legal rights or interests increased from 65.7 percent in 2020 to 72.5 percent in 2023. In 2023 this was a total land area of 1,831,091 square kilometres.





The proportion of sea country in Western Australia subject to Aboriginal people's legal rights or interests increased from 34.3 percent in 2020 to 34.4 percent in 2023. In 2023 this was a sea area of 40,148 square kilometres.

## Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Plan for Our Parks	February 2024	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	Being delivered
WA Aboriginal Ranger Program	Ongoing	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	Being delivered
Legislative Amendment to the <i>Land Administration Act 1997</i>	2023	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	Completed
Legislative Amendment to the <i>Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972</i>	Proposed introduction to Parliament in 2023 or 2024	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	Being delivered

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Aboriginal Fishing Representation	Ongoing	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered
Customary Fishing Regulation	2024	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered

## Key Updates

As of June 2024, 14 Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) were finalised and registered through **Plan for Our Parks** (PfOP), including since July 2023. This totals 3.4 million hectares to be managed with Traditional Owner partners in joint or cooperative management. A further nine ILUAs or Joint Management Arrangements have been executed and are awaiting registration or are being negotiated under this initiative.

Through Phase 2 of the **Aboriginal Ranger Program** (ARP), the WA Government committed \$74.3 million to support 77 Aboriginal ranger projects, across 55 Aboriginal organisations to conduct land and sea management programs on Country. Rounds 6, 7 and 8 of the ARP were funded in 2023–24, consisting of 45 new projects including 23 new partners. Of these 45 projects, 12 commenced via Round 6, from 1 January 2024 and the remaining 33 commenced after July 2024.

The *Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Act 2023* was proclaimed on 10 August 2023. The proclamation of the Act made a number of amendments to the **Public Works Act 1902** and the **Land Administration Act 1997**, including the introduction of the diversification lease. The Department of Planning, Land and Heritage has released public facing policy and guidance documents to assist proponents, including native title parties, in understanding what a diversification lease can be utilised for and preparing an application.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is responsible for delivering the divestment of the **Aboriginal Lands Trust estate** and is actively working with Aboriginal stakeholders across Western Australia to negotiate positive divestment outcomes. Four properties have been divested since July 2023 and substantial progress made towards the divestment of 51 more properties approved by the Aboriginal Lands Trust and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



for divestment. In July 2024 the WA Government approved \$10.3 million in funding from 2024-25 to 2027-28 for the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage to undertake the next tranche of divestment activities under its Aboriginal Lands Trust divestment program. In July 2024 the WA Government approved \$10.3 million in funding from 2024-25 to 2027-28 for the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage to undertake the next tranche of divestment activities under its Aboriginal Lands Trust divestment program. To remove legislative barriers to divestment, the WA Government is continuing to progress targeted amendments to the **Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972**.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development received funding through the 2024-25 State Budget for:

- the establishment of an **Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Committee** under section 42 of the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994* to advise the Minister for Fisheries. Draft terms of reference for the committee and an expression of interest process for membership is in development.
- the development and implementation of **customary fishing arrangements**. New pilot customary fishing arrangements (Accords) have been developed and will inform future regulation (or other subsidiary legislation) regarding customary fishing.

## Other Highlights

There have been six determinations of Native Title in Western Australia, with a total land mass determined being approximately 78,075.119 square kilometres. In October 2023, the WA Government endorsed the **WA Native Title Compensation Policy Framework**, outlining the processes and approach to resolving the WA Government's native title compensation liability.

In 2023, the **Abandoned Mines Program** commenced a program of earthworks to remediate the Ellendale mine site on Bunuba Country in the West Kimberley, which was abandoned in 2015. The contract was awarded through an open tender process to Aboriginal business Buru Rehab. Despite the delays caused by flooding throughout the Fitzroy River catchment, the 2023 dry season works program under the Buru Rehab Ellendale contract has recorded 50 percent Aboriginal participation, with three Bunuba trainees in progress towards being certified competent on a range of equipment and tasks under the contract.

## Case Study: New Midwest joint management partnerships with Nanda and Wajarri Yamaji


In 2023-24, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions entered into new joint management arrangements with Nanda and Wajarri peoples – embedding place based and shared decision-making into the management of new and existing parks and reserves that will conserve and protect Country, and the special cultural values within them. As well as having a formal role in decision-making over these parks and reserves, the agreements provide for direct employment outcomes, support to build the capacity of Nanda and Wajarri ACCOs, and for the Nanda and Wajarri communities to access Country to visit and maintain their places of cultural significance.

The arrangements with Wajarri Yamaji provide for the creation and protection of 816,000 hectares (about four times the size of the Australian Capital Territory) to be added to Western Australia's conservation estate and jointly vested and managed with Wajarri Yamaji, providing over 16 jobs for the local community. These agreements will enhance the protection of Burringurrah (Mount Augustus) a site of immense cultural significance, as well as providing for the employment opportunities and career pathways for the remote Burringurrah Community, which is about 500 kilometres from the nearest regional town. The joint management framework was co-designed to reflect Wajarri cultural governance with the Burringurrah and Minangu land groups responsible for decision-making in their respective areas.

The new agreement with Nanda involves the creation an additional 325,000 hectares of new jointly managed conservation areas as well as the joint management and vesting of the existing Zuytdorp Nature Reserve and world renowned Kalbarri National Park. In addition to providing for the employment of five Nanda rangers, new and exciting cultural tourism and commercial opportunities are being created.



**Above photo caption:** Wajarri Yamaji Aboriginal Corporation, Burringurrah, Minangu representatives with Minister for Environment and DBCA Director General and staff at Burringurrah.



## Outcome 16: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and languages are strong, supported and flourishing

**Target:** By 2031, there is a sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.

In the 2018-19 National Languages Survey there were 31 Aboriginal languages being spoken in Western Australia, including 2 considered strong. There were 123 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages spoken in Australia overall, with 14 considered strong.

### Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Julurru Junba Project	Completion 2023	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Being delivered
Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course (Accreditation)	Ongoing	Department of Education	Being delivered
Yikan Noongar digital language resource	Ongoing	Department of Education	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries has provided \$500,000 to the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre for the '**Julurru Junba' Project**, to document a song and dance cycle which connected language groups in the Kimberley, Pilbara and the Northern Territory. This Project has had delays due to the 2023 Kimberley floods and COVID-19 travel limitations and is scheduled for completion in 2024.

Through the **Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course**, 32 trainees completed first- and second-year units during 2024, and another 25 trainees commenced their training in September 2024. There are 9 units in both Certificates III and IV in Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, with all content for the Certificate III learner books completed. Delivery of the Certificate III course is anticipated to commence in 2025.

The Department of Education's **Yikan Noongar Language Program** provides positive support for students to engage in learning Noongar language and culture. The project is Noongar-led and captures Noongar ways of being and doing, in collaboration with Education Services Australia. With 90 percent of public schools located on Noongar country, there is a high demand for Noongar language to be taught in schools. Yikan Noongar Year 3 resources have been available since 2023, with development of Year 4 program resources underway.

## Other Highlights

The **Kimberley Language Resource Centre** received \$200,000 to conduct a research and planning project to support the State of Language Continuation in the Kimberley Report. This project will scope the health of the Aboriginal languages spoken in the Kimberley, uncover best practice in language revitalisation activities and identify priorities for strategic investment in the region. The report is expected to be completed in early 2025.

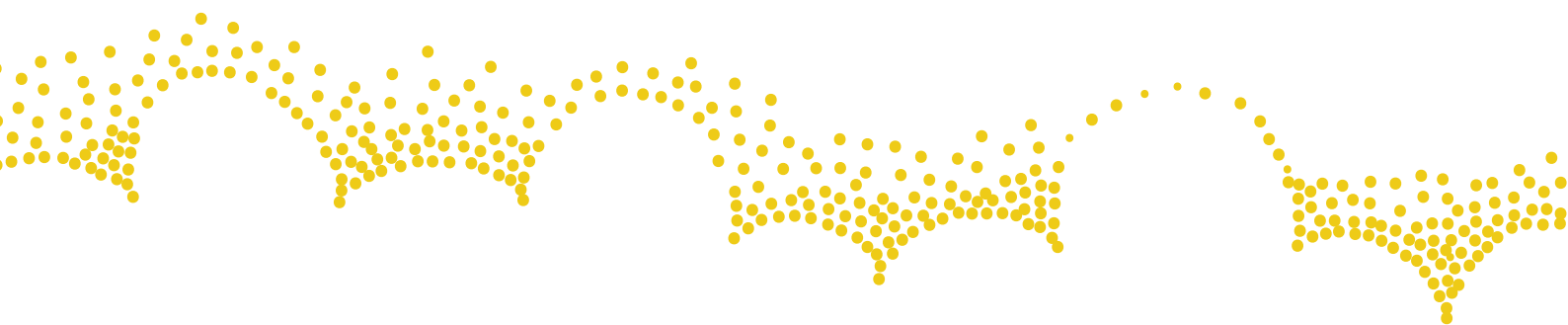
The number of students learning an Aboriginal language in public schools continues to increase. The **Aboriginal Languages in Public Schools** course is one of a kind in Australia, using a traineeship model that gives Aboriginal people an opportunity to pass on their knowledge, a place where true on-Country learning exists, for the language teachers as well as for their students. The model has been recognised in Western Australia, nationally and internationally as best practice in teaching traditional languages in

schools. At Semester 2, 2023, there were 97 public schools teaching one of 24 Aboriginal languages to 14,857 Kindergarten to Year 12 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The **Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies Course** was available as a General or ATAR course in 2024 and an Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies Curriculum Advisory Committee was formed. As at 30 June 2024, 6 students were enrolled in the Year 11 ATAR Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies course, 294 students were enrolled in the Year 11 General Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies course and 181 students were enrolled in the Year 12 General Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies course.

In December 2023, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs announced the opening of a **Cultural Hub** for Aboriginal people seeking personal and family history materials held by the State Library of WA and Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries through the State Records Office and Aboriginal History Western Australia unit. The Cultural Hub provides a dedicated facility at the State Library of WA for Aboriginal people who want to learn more about their family history through ancestry information and research services.

In February 2024 the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries provided a \$173,000 grant to support an initial six months of secretariat functions for the **WA Network of Aboriginal Language Centres** and the development of a strategy for operations of the Network to enable better engagement with the WA Government.





## Outcome 17: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision making regarding their own lives

**Target:** By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion.

In the 2014-15 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 66 percent of Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over in Western Australia had accessed the internet at home in the last 12 months. The Australian figure was 73.5 percent. There is no new data since the 2014-15 baseline year.

### Progress against key actions in the Implementation Plan

Key Action	Timeframes	Agency Responsible	Progress status
Implementation of the Digital Inclusion in WA Blueprint	2022-ongoing	Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of Digital Government	Being delivered
Tailored digital connectivity solutions	2022-2024	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	Being delivered

## Key Updates

The **Digital Inclusion in WA Blueprint** is delivered through a whole of government Blueprint Implementation Program. Key achievements over the past 12 months include:

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development continued to improve access to fixed and mobile broadband in regional and remote locations across Western Australia. A further \$29.8 million has been committed for 27 mobile and community-scale projects across the Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields-Esperance regions over the period 2024 to 2026. This includes an innovative pilot to provide free community Wi-Fi in five remote Aboriginal communities utilising Low Earth Orbit Satellite technologies.
- WA Country Health Service continued to work to improve access to virtual healthcare through engagement with Aboriginal Engagement Officers. A community based Digital Access Priority Initiative is improving equity of access for vulnerable remote Aboriginal patients, partnering with Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Aboriginal Health Workers testing telehealth options into community. The current focus is on Kimberley Aged Care remote outreach patients and West Pilbara community patients receiving virtual outpatient services.
- The Department of Training and Workforce Development now offers the free AE820 Digital Literacy Skill Set course across regional and metropolitan TAFE colleges.
- The State Library of Western Australia hosts the Storylines digital platform that provides learning and access to heritage collections including photographs, oral histories, video recording and genealogical information to Aboriginal people.

The WA Government continues to partner with Aboriginal Corporations to **tailor digital connectivity** solutions. Key achievements over the past year include:

- Four community-scale Wi-Fi networks were upgraded in Tjuntjuntjara (August 2023), Jigalong and Mowanjum (October 2023) and Kalumburu (November 2023). These networks now provide free, unlimited data 24/7 to all residents and visitors. Each solution incorporates a rooftop-mounted Wi-Fi mesh and wireless access points and VoIP phones inside every premise to deliver seamless indoor or outdoor connectivity across the entire built area and surrounds.



- WA Government funding of \$6.39 million was awarded under the Regional Connectivity Program (RCP) Round 3 to expand the free community-wide Wi-Fi solution to Bidyadanga, and ten outstations, Burringurrah and Guda Guda. Bidyadanga and two outstations were completed in April 2023 and Burringurrah in August 2024. Guda Guda is scheduled for completion in October 2024 and the remaining eight outstations around Bidyadanga in February 2025. The combined population of these seven communities and outstations accounts for 11.3 percent of the total Aboriginal population living in remote communities in Western Australia. Consultation has commenced with another seven communities in the Fitzroy Valley and Dampier Peninsula in preparation for RCP Round 4, with these communities accounting for another 10.7 percent of Aboriginal people living in remote areas.
- State funding of \$1.76 million has also been awarded for 14 Telstra 4G small cells in Aboriginal communities under the RCP Round 3 and Mobile Black Spot Program Round 7 for completion in 2027.

