

Communique - Meeting No. 36/2025

24 and 25 June 2025

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No.36 on Tuesday 24 June and Wednesday 25 June 2025 at Dumas House.

Members in attendance were Rani Randall, Marty Sibosado, Anthony Hansen, Jenny Bedford, Maureen (MK) Kelly, Damien Parriman, and Gail Beck.

The meeting was led by Co-Chairs, Martin Sibosado and Rani Randall, and included engagements with Council of Aboriginal Services of WA (CASWA) and the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA), Department of Water and Environmental Regulations, Department of Finance, Department of Justice and the Department of Training and Workforce Development. The agenda involved a range of presentations and discussions which provided the Council with opportunities to offer advice and feedback to the government.

The key items discussed and considered by the Council included:

Internal Presentation

AACWA Strategic Plan - Engagement plan

Council received an update on the status of its Strategic Plan and the accompanying draft Engagement Plan. The Engagement Plan is designed to operationalise the Strategic Plan through targeted engagement with key stakeholders, using influence, advocacy, advice, and collaboration as core approaches. Council was given the opportunity to provide feedback ahead of its finalisation and submission for approval by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

AACWA Governance Program – Update

Council received an update on the comprehensive Governance Program of Work currently underway. The final *Charter of Governance* and *Code of Conduct* were presented for approval and formally endorsed, with two minor additions.

Council received an update on the professional development program currently being designed to support the ongoing growth and capability of Council members. Members also endorsed the Expression of Interest process for the appointment of new Council members. The Secretariat advised that it is collaborating with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Strategic Communications team to implement targeted advertising in regional Western Australia.

Closing the Gap Implementation Plan (CTGIP)

Council participated in two workshop sessions alongside representatives from AHCWA, CASWA and officers from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

The workshops aimed to foster a shared understanding among key stakeholders, align expectations, and support collaborative decision-making. Participants affirmed the importance of a strategic approach for the CTGIP 2026-2028.

Following the discussion, the consultant will provide recommendations to DPC in progressing the development of the CTGIP.

External Presentations

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) - Closing the Gap

DWER presented on key policy priorities, including water, Closing the Gap, partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and its Aboriginal governance. DWER outlined its Aboriginal governance structures and its focus on Priority Reform 3, which aims to transform government organisations and the integration of Aboriginal knowledge.

Council raised issues around regional engagement, water quality, and Aboriginal participation in environmental initiatives. DWER acknowledged challenges in regional engagement and reaffirmed its commitment to cultural safety, collaboration, and supporting Aboriginal organisations across the regions.

Department of Finance (DOF) – State Commissioning Strategy

DOF provided an overview of its strategic approach to the State Commissioning Strategy and the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy. Finance outlined its engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), sector strengthening initiatives and alignment with Closing the Gap priorities through Agency Commissioning Plans.

Council and DOF opportunities for place-based partnerships, service evaluation by Aboriginal organisations, and innovation through co-design.

Department of Justice (DOJ) and Council of Aboriginal Services of WA (CASWA) – Youth Justice – Cultural Safety and Security Framework

DOJ and CASWA presented on the Youth Justice and the Cultural Safety and Security Framework. The partnership between DOJ and CASWA, established to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in detention, has led to the development of the *Ngalang Bidee (Our Path)* Program, which promotes cultural healing, empowerment, and self-determination.

Council acknowledged the progress made and emphasised the need for a through-care model that supports young people across all stages of detention. Discussions also highlighted the importance of family connection, culturally safe care models, and storytelling as a tool for healing. DOJ noted ongoing efforts to improve remand processes and welcomed Council's input into broader system reform.

Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) – National Skills Agreement

DTWD provided an overview on the National Skills Agreement (NSA), the first intergovernmental agreement with dedicated funding to support Closing the Gap outcomes. DTWD outlined engagement opportunities with Aboriginal organisations, including CASWA and AHCWA, to strengthen Aboriginal participation in the VET sector.

Council raised key issues including regional access, foundational skills training, the need for culturally safe, place-based models and long-term sustainability for Aboriginal RTOs.



Ms Rani Randall
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA



Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA

* Confidential agenda items were not included in this Communique.