

ACT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AGREEMENT 2019-2028

What we heard report



RENEWING THE AGREEMENT

Conversations were held with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the renewal of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement (Agreement).

The ACT Government in partnership with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body had conversations with the community to help shape the next Agreement.

The next Agreement will build on the original commitment to delivering equitable outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT. The next Agreement will include self-determination as the underlying principle reminding us that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have distinct cultural rights embedded in legislation and that the ACT will support the exercising of those rights.



THE CONVERSATION

There were two specific engagement objectives:

- (1) to have a conversation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in the ACT about working towards equitable outcomes; and
- (2) to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are supported to live the lives they choose and reach their full potential.

Conversations were held online, in open forums and directly with stakeholders from **13 March 2018 to 14 August 2018**.

WHO ENGAGED

Conversations with community have been extensive and far reaching including:

- Face to face conversations with more than 60 individuals including Traditional Custodians, community members, community organisations, and detainees in the Alexander Maconochie Centre;
- An online survey through community networks with a combined reach in-excess of 1,000 individuals; and
- An online survey through the “YourSay” and “Strong Families” websites resulting in 70 completed surveys.

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Key insights from the community

Key areas the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community have been telling us to focus on are:

- Children and young people;
- Community leadership;
- Cultural identity;
- Inclusive community;
- Connecting the community;
- Economic participation;
- Life long learning;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Housing; and
- Justice.

Feedback from the conversations

Of the 10 focus areas, the community highlighted children and young people, housing, and justice as the top priorities for them and their families.

Feedback from the community about where they would like to see change includes:

Children and Young People

More support for families to stay together, and to have early access to support, and culturally appropriate support.

Housing

The community saw the need for ACT Government to have a clearly defined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ACT Housing Policy and an official Aboriginal Liaison Officer to be engaged at Housing ACT.

Justice

There was a strong call to increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff throughout the entire Justice/Youth Justice system.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The ACT Government in partnership with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body will be checking in with the community on what we've heard and whether we have got it right for the next Agreement.

We will check-in through a number of ways, including participation at a community event, emails to the community and stakeholders, and a short video.

More information on the current Agreement can be found at [Agreement 2015-18](#) or by contacting the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs at oatsia@act.gov.au.

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Key Timings

Step 1 – March – August 2018

Community conversation on the renewal of the Agreement

Step 2 – December 2018

Report on feedback from community conversations released

Step 3 – December 2018

Checking in with community and stakeholders on what we've heard

Step 4 – First quarter of 2019

Agreement endorsement and launch

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

330

unique pageviews on
YourSay

70

responses
to the **online survey**

15

presentations
delivered to
community members

75

people participated in
community forums

1,000

people reached
through various **online**
mediums

400

information packs
handed out at
community events