

# Closing the Gap

## Appendix E: 2025

### Commonwealth Partnership Stocktake



Australian Government



CLOSING THE GAP

## Introduction

The annual Commonwealth Closing the Gap Partnership Stocktake (Partnership Stocktake) provides a point-in-time snapshot of how the Australian Government is working in formal partnerships and shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples under the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) (National Agreement) It supports transparency and continuous improvement, and helps track progress against Priority Reform One.

As set out in [Clause 37](#) of the National Agreement, the Partnership Stocktake reports on:

- the existing number of partnerships between Commonwealth entities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties
- partnerships that have been reviewed
- which strong partnership elements are met and unmet for each partnership
- what has been achieved through the partnerships.

The Partnership Stocktake is not an exhaustive list of all partnerships or partnership approaches.

## Our approach to the stocktake

In September 2025, Commonwealth entities were invited to submit partnership information for inclusion in the 2025 Partnership Stocktake. To be included, partnerships were required (at a minimum) to meet [Clause 32C\(i\)](#) of the National Agreement,

**“Decision-making is shared between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Shared decision-making is by consensus, where the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties hold as much weight as the governments.”**

Each partnership identified a lead Commonwealth entity and lead First Nations partner for the purposes of the stocktake. Unless otherwise indicated, lead parties (shown in bold throughout this report) collectively determined and endorsed their stocktake response, including self-assessment against the strong partnership elements set out in [Clauses 32 and 33](#) of the National Agreement.

## Partnership Stocktake

### Snapshot

- 52 partnerships were identified between the Commonwealth and First Nations partners, an increase from the 38 identified in 2024.
- 22 partnerships met all strong partnership elements under the National Agreement.<sup>1</sup> This is an increase from 8 in 2024, demonstrating stronger, more consistent shared decision-making.
- Partnerships were identified across 18 Commonwealth entities, with 6 entities participating in the Partnership Stocktake for the first time, highlighting growing engagement across government.

### Strengthening the stocktake

In 2025, the Commonwealth strengthened how shared decision-making is assessed through the Partnership Stocktake by:

- capturing examples of how shared decision-making operates in practice
- ensuring agreement between government and First Nations partners on how shared decision-making is applied in the partnership
- incorporating feedback from partnerships, to better reflect the variety of partnership models and shared decision-making approaches across national and place-based contexts.

### Summary of insights

Findings from the 2025 Partnership Stocktake show that:

- The Commonwealth is working in partnership with First Nations people across all 17 outcome areas of the National Agreement.
- Partnerships across the Commonwealth take different forms. Some partnerships are national policy focused, while others are place-based and tailored to specific local priorities. This flexibility allows partnerships to be designed and led in ways that best support First Nations communities and shared goals.<sup>2</sup>
- Partnerships are active and informing key Commonwealth focus areas including jobs and economic empowerment, food security, health and wellbeing and place-based approaches.
- Strengthening partnerships remains a priority across the Commonwealth.
- 88% of partnerships have a written agreement in place that is signed by both government and First Nations parties, reflecting a commitment to genuine, transparent and accountable partnerships.

<sup>1</sup> This includes where parties have agreed to mark a clause as 'N/A' if determined as not applicable to the partnership arrangement, in line with provisions under the National Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> References to 'policy', 'place-based' or 'other' functions are determined by each partnership and are not formal descriptors

**The partnerships that meet all National Agreement strong partnership elements (that have been determined applicable to the partnership) through this stocktake are:**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Collaboration
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy Partnership
- ACCHO-led Policy Analysis Partnership for culturally safe disability services
- Data Policy Partnership
- Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership
- First Nations Economic Partnership
- First Nations Health Governance Group
- First Nations Heritage Protection Partnership
- Partnership between the Department of Education and SNAICC – National Voice for our Children (SNAICC)
- Garma Institute – Partnership Commitment
- Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner Taskforce
- Gunga'yunga Djamarlkuliny Partnership Support Group
- Housing Policy Partnership
- Justice Policy Partnership
- Co-design Partnership regarding the Torres Strait Islanders Media Association (TSIMA) Collection Project
- Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Partnership Agreement on Remote Northern Territory Housing and Homelands
- Partnership regarding the NACCHO Cancer Program
- Partnership for the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Project and Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara
- Safe and Supported Partnership Agreement
- Shared Hearing Services Plans
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing Policy Partnership

## Partnerships and Outcome Focus Areas

Partnership	Health and Wellbeing Outcomes 1, 2 & 14	Education and Early Years Development Outcomes 3, 4, 5 & 6	Employment and Economic Development Outcomes 7 & 8	Housing and Infrastructure Outcomes 9 & 17	Access to Justice Outcomes 10 & 11	Families and Kin Outcomes 12 & 13	Connection to Country, Culture and Languages Outcomes 15 & 16
Justice Policy Partnership					<b>Area of Focus</b>		
NAJP Closing the Gap Engagement Forum					<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Area of Focus</b>	
Partnership between the ABC and First Languages Australia				<b>Area of Focus</b>			<b>Area of Focus</b>
Partnership between the ABC and First Nations Media Australia				<b>Area of Focus</b>			<b>Area of Focus</b>
Mud Crabs - On Country Seafood and CSIRO			<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
Monitoring Sea Country Indigenous Protected Area				<b>Area of Focus</b>			<b>Area of Focus</b>
Partnership for integrating halophytes with low-input prawn farming			<b>Area of Focus</b>				
First Nations leadership in environmental watering on Djandak			<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
Environmental water delivery on Yorta Yorta Country			<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
First Nations Heritage Protection Partnership			<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owner Taskforce			<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
Inland Waters Target 15c Working Group							<b>Area of Focus</b>
Connected Beginnings Advisory Group	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Area of Focus</b>					
Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>	
Partnership between the Department of Education and NATSIEC	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Area of Focus</b>				<b>Area of Focus</b>
Partnership between the Department of Education and SNAICC		<b>Area of Focus</b>					

## Partnerships and Outcome Focus Areas continued

Partnership	Health and Wellbeing Outcomes 1, 2 & 14	Education and Early Years Development Outcomes 3, 4, 5 & 6	Employment and Economic Development Outcomes 7 & 8	Housing and Infrastructure Outcomes 9 & 17	Access to Justice Outcomes 10 & 11	Families and Kin Outcomes 12 & 13	Connection to Country, Culture and Languages Outcomes 15 & 16
First Nations VET Interim Partnership Committee		Area of Focus	Area of Focus				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Collaboration	Area of Focus				Area of Focus	Area of Focus	
First Nations Health Governance Group	Area of Focus						
Delivering activities under the Rheumatic Fever Strategy	Area of Focus			Area of Focus			
Partnership regarding the NACCHO Cancer Program	Area of Focus						
Social and Emotional Wellbeing Policy Partnership	Area of Focus						
Partnership for the SKA Project and Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara			Area of Focus	Area of Focus			
Gadhungal Marring and Bundanon partnership	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus				Area of Focus
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy Partnership							Area of Focus
Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices Steering Committee						Area of Focus	
Safe and Supported Partnership Agreement						Area of Focus	
Shared Hearing Services Plans		Area of Focus					
Partnership to elevate First Nations Male Voices	Area of Focus		Area of Focus				
Co-design Partnership regarding the TSIMA Collection Project				Area of Focus			Area of Focus
Commonwealth Implementation Joint Working Group	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Garma Institute – Partnership Commitment		Area of Focus	Area of Focus				Area of Focus
Gunja'yunga Djamarrikuliny Partnership Support Group	Area of Focus		Area of Focus	Area of Focus			Area of Focus

## Partnerships and Outcome Focus Areas continued

Partnership	Health and Wellbeing Outcomes 1, 2 & 14	Education and Early Years Development Outcomes 3, 4, 5 & 6	Employment and Economic Development Outcomes 7 & 8	Housing and Infrastructure Outcomes 9 & 17	Access to Justice Outcomes 10 & 11	Families and Kin Outcomes 12 & 13	Connection to Country, Culture and Languages Outcomes 15 & 16
Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Remote NT Housing and Homelands partnership				Area of Focus			
Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Port Augusta Partnership	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Remote First Nations Food Security Strategy Project Reference Group	Area of Focus	Area of Focus		Area of Focus			Area of Focus
Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council Housing Project	Area of Focus		Area of Focus	Area of Focus		Area of Focus	
First Nations Economic Partnership			Area of Focus				Area of Focus
Housing Policy Partnership				Area of Focus			
Empowered Communities – Cape York	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – Central Coast	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – East Kimberley	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – Far West Community Partnerships	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – Inner Sydney	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – Ngarrindjeri Ruwe	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – Tristate	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus
Empowered Communities – West Kimberley	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus	Area of Focus

*Note: This table does not include all partnerships captured through the 2025 Partnership Stocktake.*