



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the  
Finance and Public Administration Reference Committee report:  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience of law enforcement  
and justice services

APRIL 2026

## OVERVIEW

On 4 March 2015, the Senate referred the following matter to the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee for inquiry and report: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience of law enforcement and justice services, with particular reference to:

- a) the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have access to legal assistance services;
- b) the adequacy of resources provided to Aboriginal legal assistance services by state, territory and Commonwealth governments;
- c) the benefits provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by Family Violence Prevention Legal Services;
- d) the consequences of mandatory sentencing regimes on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incarceration rates;
- e) the reasons for the high incarceration rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and juveniles;
- f) the adequacy of statistical and other information currently collected and made available by state, territory and Commonwealth governments regarding issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice;
- g) the cost, availability and effectiveness of alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, including prevention, early intervention, diversionary and rehabilitation measures;
- h) the benefits of, and challenges to, implementing a system of 'justice targets';
- i) and any other relevant matters.

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Government notes the recommendations. Given the passage of time since this report was tabled, the Government provides the following update:

The Government is delivering First Nations-led justice reinvestment initiatives nationally and establishing an independent national Justice Reinvestment Unit to support up to 30 community-led justice reinvestment initiatives. The Government also supports the Justice Policy Partnership, which brings together First Nations' peak bodies and experts and Commonwealth and state and territory Governments.

Through the National Access to Justice Partnership, the largest investment in legal assistance in over 20 years, the Government is improving access to justice for people experiencing vulnerability and financial disadvantage.