

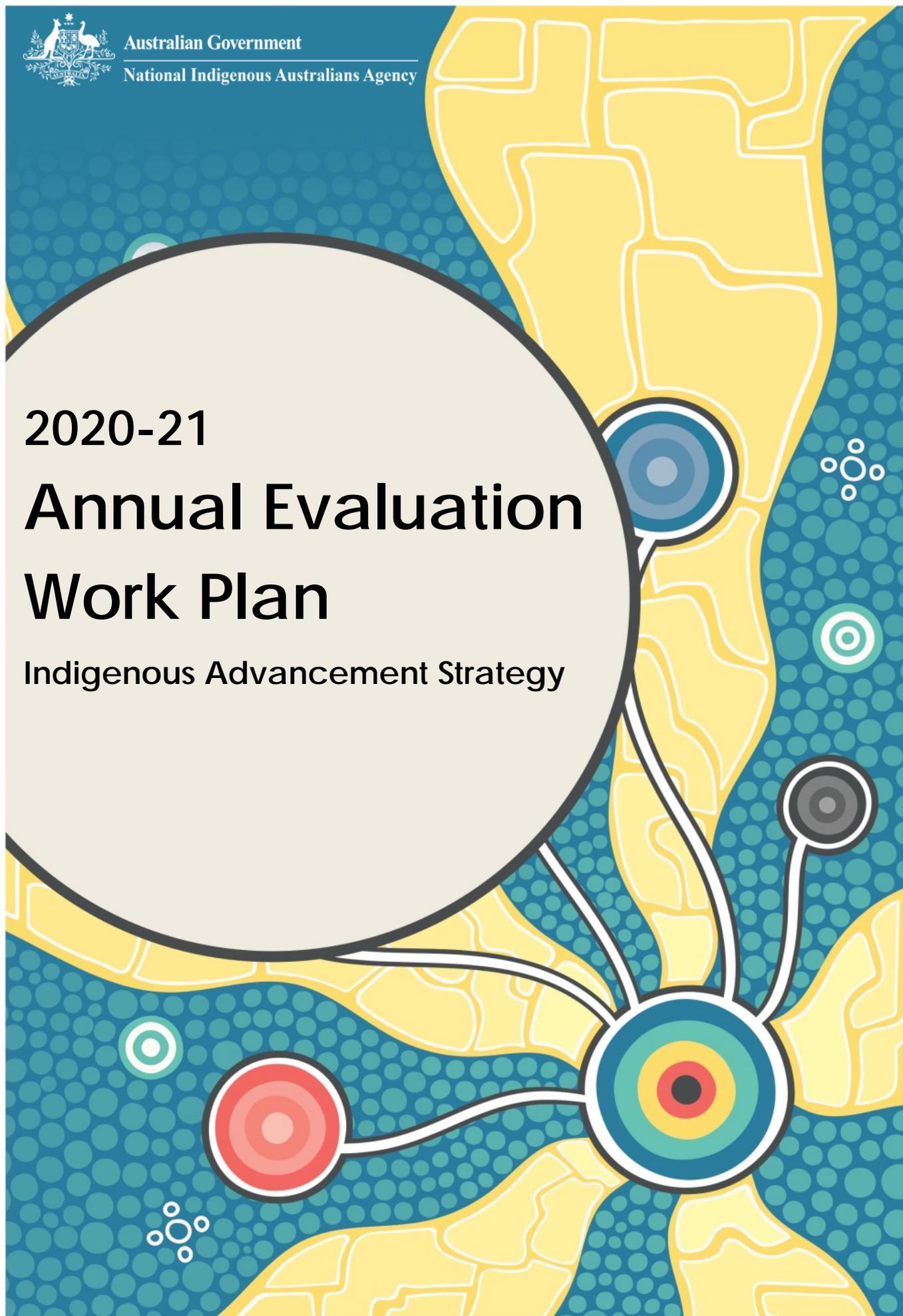


Australian Government  
National Indigenous Australians Agency

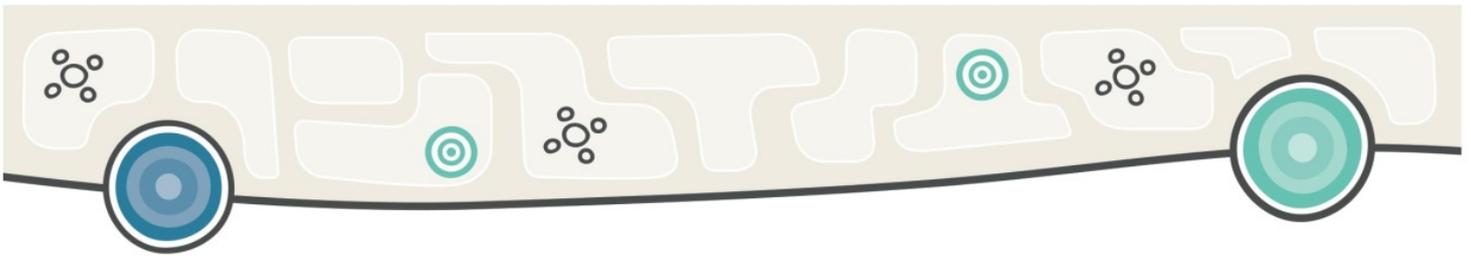
2020-21

# Annual Evaluation Work Plan

Indigenous Advancement Strategy







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## FOREWORD



I am pleased to present the 2020-21 Annual Evaluation Work Plan (the Work Plan), the fourth released under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) Evaluation Framework (the Framework).

The Framework was released in February 2018 to guide the evaluation of programs and activities conducted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, now the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). The Framework is intended to generate better evidence of whether, and how, activities funded under the IAS translate to improved outcomes for Indigenous Australians and ensure this evidence is used to inform policy and program decisions.

The release of the Work Plan supports the commitment to transparency made in the Framework. The Work Plan provides details on evaluation activities and enabling activities which are being conducted or planned to be conducted by the NIAA over the current financial year. The Work Plan also provides transparency around progress made since the previous financial year.

There are currently 24 evaluation activities underway in the Agency. Since the release of the 2019-20 Work Plan, 11 new evaluation activities have commenced, 14 evaluation activities have been completed, and the findings of two evaluations have been published on the NIAA website.

We are also working on a number of enabling activities. Since the 2019-20 Work Plan two new data improvement projects have commenced and one has been completed; and one new capability project has been completed and published on the NIAA website. In addition, two new research projects have commenced and been added to the Work Plan.

To support the development of the Work Plan, the Agency has undertaken a recent analysis of gaps in evaluation coverage across all funded programs and sub-programs. A tool has also been developed to determine which policies and programs should be prioritised for evaluation. To support consistent and transparent decisions, the tool assesses all evaluation proposals against the following criteria outlined in the IAS Evaluation Framework:

1. the significance of the program or activity to policy makers and Indigenous stakeholders;



2. the expected contribution of the evaluation to policy development, program implementation and/or stakeholder decisions; and
3. the risk of not evaluating, due to gaps in the evidence base or known or expected implementation issues.

The gaps analysis and prioritisation tool will help ensure future funding for evaluation is directed to significant and high risk programs and activities, and provides timely evidence to inform the policy and program feedback cycle.

On 3 June 2020, the Productivity Commission released its draft Indigenous Evaluation Strategy which provides a whole-of-government framework for Australian Government agencies to use when selecting, planning, conducting and using evaluations of policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The draft Strategy has many synergies with the IAS Evaluation Framework principles and values. It puts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at its centre, and recognises the need to draw on the perspectives, priorities and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in planning and undertaking evaluations. When the final Strategy is released, we will review the IAS Evaluation Framework to determine how it can be further refined to ensure consistency with the Strategy.

The 2020-21 Work Plan has been endorsed by the Indigenous Evaluation Committee and approved by the NIAA Executive Board.

Mr Blair Exell

Deputy Chief Executive Officer



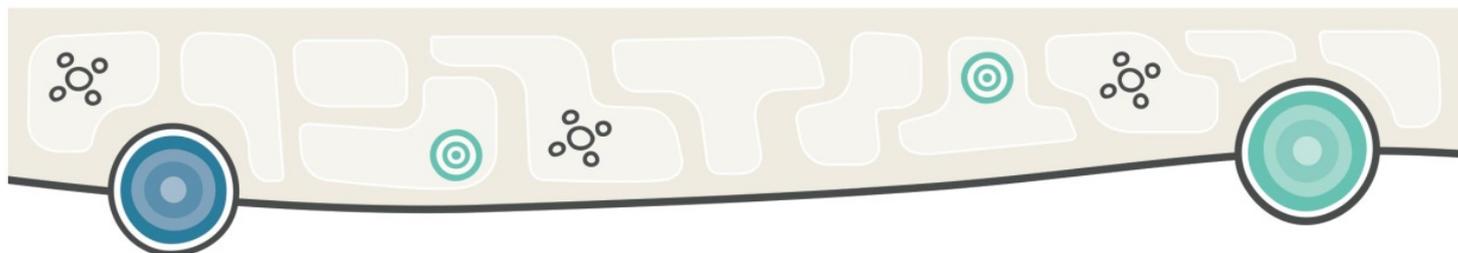
## Overview

The tables below list current and completed evaluation activities, by Program area, funded under Program 1.6 as at September 2020. Some are continuing activities, while others commenced following publication of the 2019-20 Annual Evaluation Work Plan on 1 October 2019 (marked 'New'). COVID 19 has delayed expected completion dates for some evaluations.

# PROGRAM 1.1 JOBS, LAND AND ECONOMY – EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

## Current evaluation activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<p><b>(NEW) Business Solutions Program (formerly Business Development and Assistance Program) - Indigenous Business Australia Evaluation</b></p> <p>This evaluation will assess the implementation, effectiveness and outcomes of the Business Solutions Program.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2021-22
<p><b>(NEW) Evaluation of Indigenous Employment Programs (IEPs) (this is a cross-cutting evaluation activity)</b></p> <p>This evaluation will examine three IEPs – the Employment Parity Initiative, the Vocational Training and Education Centres program, and Tailored Assistance Employment Grants. It will compare the design and implementation of each program, and identify critical elements that contribute to positive outcomes for Indigenous job seekers.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>(NEW) TAEG-School Based Traineeship (SBT)</b></p> <p>This evaluation will explore whether Government investment in SBTs is an effective mechanism for helping to transition school students to employment.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>(NEW) Time to Work Employment Service (TWES)</b></p> <p>This evaluation will examine the design and implementation of TWES, and compare outcomes from remote and non-remote prisons, to inform future program design and investment.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>Strengthening Organisational Governance Policy (this is a cross-cutting evaluation activity)</b></p> <p>The evaluation will examine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Strengthening Organisational Governance policy that requires all IAS funded grant recipients that receive a high value of funding to be incorporated under either the</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2020-21



Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 or the Corporations Act 2001.			
<b>Northern Australia White Paper: Land Tenure Reform Pilots</b> This evaluation will examine the implementation of the Land Tenure Reform Pilots measure. <sup>1</sup>	Evaluation	2018-19	2020-21
<b>Northern Australia White Paper: Prescribed Bodies Corporate Capacity Building</b> This is an evaluation of the PBC Capacity Building grants under the Northern Australia White Paper and will determine whether they have had the intended outcome of raising PBCs' organisational, governance and economic capacity.	Evaluation	2019-20	2021-22
<b>Northern Australia White Paper: Township Leasing and Land Administration</b> This evaluation will examine the implementation of the Township Leasing and Land Administration measure. <sup>2</sup>	Evaluation	2018-19	2020-21
<b>Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers<sup>3</sup></b> This review of Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers covers performance and relative efficiency	Review	2017-18	2020-21

## Evaluation activities completed since previous Work Plan

Description	Type	Status
<b>Indigenous Business Australia – Business Solutions Program<sup>4</sup></b> This evaluation strategy covered methods used to examine if the program is meeting its objectives.	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<b>Indigenous Rangers and Protected Areas</b> This evaluation strategy covered the development of a shared outcomes framework for the Indigenous Rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas programs, and be developed in collaboration with stakeholders.	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<b>Community Development Program (CDP)</b> This evaluation strategy identified methods for evaluating the effect of the CDP reforms in improving outcomes for participants and communities.	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<a href="#">Third Year Evaluation of the Indigenous Procurement Policy</a> The final report of the independent, third-year evaluation of the Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP), completed by Deloitte Consulting, confirmed the Indigenous Procurement Policy's success in increasing the rate of government purchasing from Indigenous businesses. The evaluation also identified opportunities to improve the policy and its implementation.	Evaluation	Published 3 Dec 2019

<sup>1</sup> Status has changed from review to evaluation.

<sup>2</sup> Status has changed from review to evaluation.

<sup>3</sup> In the 2019-20 Annual Evaluation Work Plan this was incorrectly reported as completed. The review consists of three tranches and two tranches have been completed.



<p><b>The Indigenous Cadetship Evaluation</b> This impact evaluation examined the effectiveness of the Indigenous Cadetship program in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to complete their degree and move to ongoing employment.</p>	Evaluation	Awaiting publication
<p><b>The Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBC) Training Program review</b> This review will inform whether to move to a second phase. It identifies opportunities to improve the design and delivery of the PBC training.</p>	Review	Awaiting publication

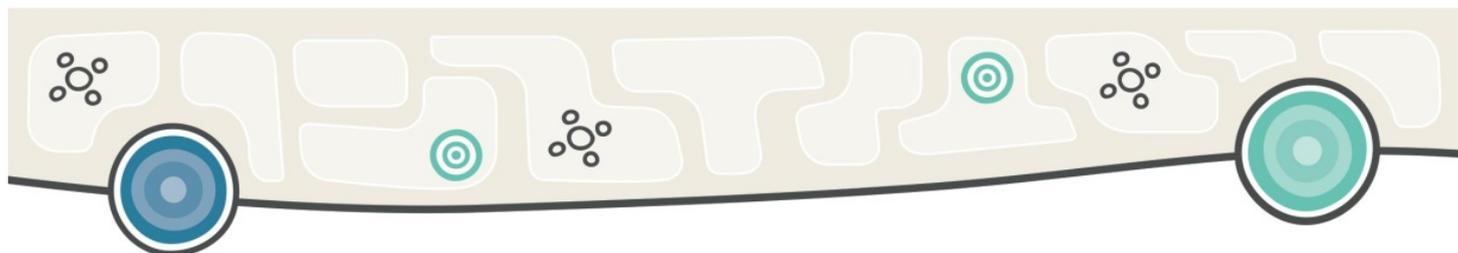
## Evaluation activities not carried over from previous Work Plan

Description	Reason
<p><b>The Indigenous Grants Policy</b> This evaluation strategy was to focus on the effectiveness of the Indigenous Grants Policy, including its impact on increasing funding to and service delivery by Indigenous organisations, and increasing Indigenous participation in the design and delivery of funded activities, and the impacts and benefits to Indigenous people of extending the application of the policy to other agencies' mainstream grant programs.</p>	The Indigenous Grants Policy evaluation strategy is no longer proceeding due to changed priorities.

# PROGRAM 1.2 CHILDREN AND SCHOOLING – EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

## Current evaluation activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<p><b>(NEW) Indigenous Girls STEM Academy</b> This evaluation will identify the Indigenous Girls STEM Academy's impact and inform how the Academy could be refined or adjusted. It is expected that the evaluation will be undertaken in three phases.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2023-24
<p><b>(NEW) IAS Secondary School Scholarships Evaluation</b> This evaluation will examine the effectiveness of the administration and delivery of IAS secondary school scholarships, and assess the impact of secondary school scholarships on student outcomes.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2022-23



<p><b>(NEW) Evaluation of Away from Base Activities</b></p> <p>This evaluation, about current Away from Base activities, will assess the need and impact of distance learning support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students, its administrative effectiveness and efficiency and will provide advice to government on implications for future AFB support.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>Girls Academies</b></p> <p>This impact evaluation of the Girls Academies will assess what is working, what is not, any unintended consequences, and what could be improved.</p>	Evaluation	2016-17	2020-21

## Evaluation activities completed since previous Work Plan

Description	Type	Status
<p><b>Indigenous Girls STEM Academy</b></p> <p>This evaluation strategy covered the program's design and implementation.</p>	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<p><b>Indigenous Scholarships Evaluation Strategy</b></p> <p>This evaluation strategy focused on IAS secondary school scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It included the development of a monitoring strategy and early design thinking on how to conduct an impact evaluation of IAS secondary school scholarship activities.</p>	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<p><b>RSAS Evaluation Strategy</b></p> <p>The evaluation strategy covered the implementation, effectiveness and impact of the existing RSAS minor/medium reforms that have been implemented to the current 'franchise' model and the reforms to be implemented in 2019.</p>	Evaluation Strategy	Completed
<p><b>System Effectiveness</b></p> <p>This evaluation strategy focused on the system effectiveness of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 1 – strategic review of Children and Schooling, and Safety and Wellbeing Programs focused on identifying policy priorities and ensuring activities are evidence-based.</li> <li>• Part 2 – strategic review of whole IAS policy and investment framework, including a proof-of-concept monitoring and evaluation performance framework.</li> </ul>	Evaluation Strategy	Completed

## Evaluation activities not carried over from previous Work Plan

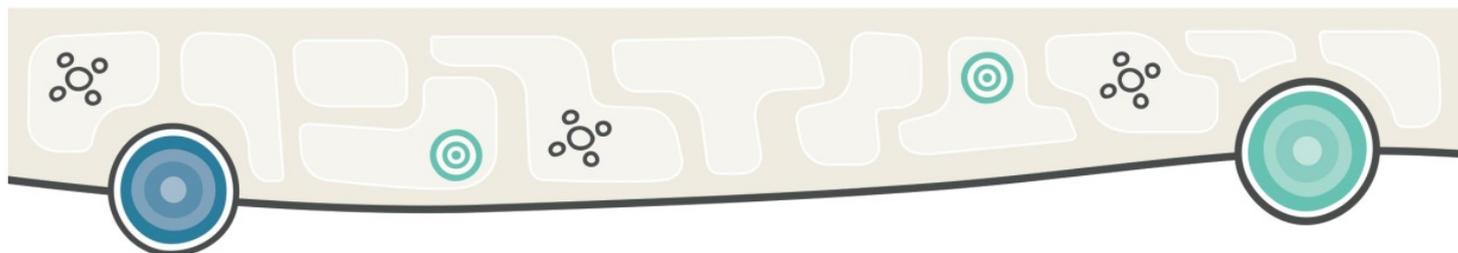
Description	Reason
<p><b>Strengthening the System Effectiveness of Early Childhood Investments (this was a cross-cutting evaluation activity)</b></p> <p>This impact evaluation was to use an evidence-informed analysis of early childhood evaluations to identify priorities, including examining significant impacts and cross-cutting, multi-sectoral elements to support systems' improvement.</p>	<p>Progress on this evaluation has been contingent on the policy context, which has shifted into implementing the National Agreement on Closing the Gap early childhood socio economic targets through co-design.</p>



## PROGRAM 1.3 SAFETY AND WELLBEING – EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

### Current evaluation activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<p><b>(NEW) The Dog Operations Unit</b> An evaluation of the design, implementation and early outcomes of Groote Eylandt Dog Operations Unit.</p>	Evaluation	2020-21	2021-22
<p><b>(NEW) The Impact of the Youth Prisoner Through-care Service Model for Improving Outcomes</b> This evaluation will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the co-designed youth prisoner through-care model.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2021-22
<p><b>(NEW) Allied Health in Remote Schools Project</b> This evaluation strategy is for a new pilot project that aims to identify and address childhood developmental delay and disabilities that may lead or have led to disengagement and poor learning outcomes.</p>	Evaluation Strategy	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>(NEW) The Impact of the Adult Prisoner Through-care Service Model for Improving Outcomes</b> This evaluation will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the co-designed adult prisoner through-care model.</p>	Evaluation	2019-20	2021-22
<p><b>Cultural Activities for Indigenous Youth</b> This monitoring and evaluation strategy will consider participants' experience in the co-design process, and invite participating communities to contribute through workshops to design the logic models and identify data collection requirements for monitoring and evaluation activities. Participants will be invited to reflect on the co-design process for developing the activities, and what went well and what could be improved.</p>	Evaluation Strategy	2019-20	2020-21



<b>Link Up Services Program</b> This monitoring and evaluation strategy will be designed to support an impact evaluation of the Link-Up Services Program.	Evaluation Strategy <sup>5</sup>	2018-19	2020-21
<b>Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training<sup>6</sup></b> This review will assess the delivery of MHFA training to frontline workers and high risk communities.	Review	2018-19	2021-22
<b>Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services</b> This impact evaluation is working with treatment services in NSW to embed evaluation capacity into services, quantify the impact of a model of follow-up care on the health and social outcomes of clients, and quantify the costs and benefits of services.	Evaluation	2017-18	2020-21
<b>Testing Community Safety and Justice Outcomes using Randomised Controlled Trials<sup>7</sup></b> <b>(this is a cross-cutting evaluation activity)</b> This impact evaluation utilising five randomised control trials will test the impact of activities on reducing offending, violence and improving community safety outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Evaluation	2017-18	2020-21

## Evaluation activities completed since previous Work Plan

Description	Type	Status
<b>Third Action Plan to Reduce Family Violence – Indigenous Specific Measures</b> This evaluation includes a program review and assessment using in-depth interviews and existing service provider data.	Evaluation	Awaiting publication
<b>National Indigenous Critical Response Service</b> This evaluation assesses the effectiveness of the National Indigenous Critical Response Service in providing culturally appropriate support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples affected by suicide-related or other trauma.	Evaluation	Awaiting publication
<a href="#">Family Violence Prevention Legal Services National Evaluation Report</a> This evaluation examines the impact of the Family Violence Prevention Legal Service program, including whether program objectives and outcomes are being achieved and providers are meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence and sexual assault.	Evaluation	Published Nov 2019
<b>Testing the Impact of the Prisoner Through-care Service Model for Improving Community Safety and Justice Outcomes</b>	Evaluation Strategy	Completed

<sup>5</sup> The status of this evaluation has changed to 'evaluation strategy'.

<sup>6</sup> This was listed as a cross-cutting evaluation activity on the previous work plan.

<sup>7</sup> This evaluation was listed as completed in 2019-20 but not all elements of the trials had been completed – a further report from the provider is expected in 2020-21.



This evaluation strategy covered the impact of a program model to enhance existing prisoner through-care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.		
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## Evaluation activities not carried over from previous Work Plan

Description	Reason
<p><b>The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Investment evaluation</b> This impact evaluation of four SEWB projects was to examine their contribution to social and economic prosperity outcomes, and the impact and efficacy of SEWB investment more broadly.</p>	The SEWB Investment evaluation is not proceeding at this time due to shifting priorities linked to the current environment.

## PROGRAM 1.4 CULTURE AND CAPABILITY – EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

### Current evaluation activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<p><b>Empowered Communities (EC)<sup>8</sup></b> This evaluation covers the EC initiative following the first four years of implementation.</p>	Evaluation	2020-21	2021-22

### Evaluation activities completed since previous Work Plan

There have been no Program 1.4 evaluation activities completed since release of the previous Work Plan.

<sup>8</sup> This was listed as a cross-cutting evaluation activity on the previous work plan, at the strategy stage. Approval was recently obtained to progress to evaluation, with the strategy to be finalised collaboratively as part of the evaluation.



## PROGRAM 1.5 REMOTE AUSTRALIA – EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

### Current evaluation activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<b>National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing<sup>9</sup></b> This evaluation Strategy will develop an approach to examining the design, implementation, effectiveness, and short and long term impacts of housing investment through the national partnership.	Evaluation Strategy	2018-19	2020-21

### Evaluation activities completed since previous Work Plan

There have been no Program 1.5 evaluation activities completed since release of the previous Work Plan.

## ENABLING ACTIVITIES

Enabling activities are activities that support future evaluations and/or policy development and include capability development projects; data improvement projects and research.

### Current enabling activities

Description	Type	Year Approved to include in Work Plan	Expected Completion
<b>(NEW) Indigenous Justice Clearinghouse</b> This project provides funding to the Indigenous Justice Clearinghouse (managed by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice) to continue and extend the production and dissemination of research and policy papers on critical Indigenous justice issues.	Research	2020-21	2020-23

<sup>9</sup> This was listed as a cross-cutting evaluation activity on the previous work plan.



<p><b>(NEW) Indigenous Suicide and Data Mapping Project</b>          This project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- map Indigenous suicide prevalence</li> <li>- examine the contribution of risk and protective factors to suicidal behaviours</li> <li>- examine the relationship between service provision and Indigenous suicide</li> <li>- Investigate the availability and quality of Indigenous status information.</li> </ul>	Research	2020-21	2021-22
<p><b>(NEW) Indigenous Business Research Project – ‘Making Indigenous Friendly Businesses’</b>          This three-year research project seeks to understand what drives Indigenous business, and factors that support sustainable businesses with Indigenous-friendly workplace environments.</p>	Research	2019-20	2022-23
<p><b>(NEW) Long-term outcomes for Indigenous employment program participants</b>          This project will examine integrated administrative data to better understand long-term employment outcomes for Indigenous job seekers.</p>	Data improvement	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>Australian Bureau of Statistics’ National Health Survey</b>          Broad consultation with Indigenous Australians around co-design of the Indigenous component of the future National Health Survey.</p>	Data Improvement	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>Support for Emerging Indigenous Australian Evaluators to Attend Australian Evaluation Society Conferences in 2019 and 2021</b>          This capability development project will strengthen the evaluation capabilities of emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evaluators, and support increased capacity in culturally safe evaluation practice and use.</p>	Capability Development	2019-20	2020-21
<p><b>IAS Evaluation Guidance Materials</b>          This capability development project will focus on developing guidance material for evaluators to ensure evaluation activities are undertaken in alignment with the IAS Evaluation Framework.</p>	Capability Development	2018-19	2020-21
<p><b>AIATSIS Ethics Project</b>          This capability development project will embed AIATSIS ethics clearance processes in IAS evaluation activities.</p>	Capability Development	2017-18	2020-21



## Enabling activities completed since previous Work Plan

Description	Type	Status
<p><b>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Regional Profiles</b></p> <p>This data improvement project involved analysis of data used to produce statistics describing geographic variation in the health and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the regional level.</p>	Data improvement	Completed
<p><b>Murdi Paaki Lessons Learned</b></p> <p>This explored lessons learnt in the Murdi Paaki region over a long history of regional governance.</p>	Capability Development	Published January 2020



## GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
<b>Capability development</b>	A project that encompasses one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourages the development of understanding and capability in evaluation skills,</li> <li>• fosters a culture of evidence based thinking that supports the integration of evidence into better policy and program design, and</li> <li>• strengthens continuous learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-cutting evaluations</b>	Evaluations that examine the interconnections within and across activities and programs. These are critical considerations for successful outcomes under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.
<b>Data improvement</b>	Data improvement projects that aim to build the availability of data that can inform evaluations and research.
<b>Enabling Activity</b>	Enabling activities are activities that can support future evaluations and policy development and include data improvement activities, capability improvement activities and research.
<b>Evaluation strategy</b>	An evaluation strategy sets out the proposed details and approach to an evaluation - what will be evaluated, how and when. An evaluation strategy informs future evaluation projects as well as monitoring and data collection activities.
<b>Impact evaluation</b>	An evaluation that assesses if an intervention makes a difference, or its impact. The key feature of this type of evaluation is that it identifies the unique effects (intended or unintended) that can be attributed to the intervention.  See <a href="#">BetterEvaluation</a> for examples of impact evaluation methodologies.
<b>Indigenous Advancement Strategy Evaluation Framework</b>	The guide for the evaluation of programs and activities under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, delivered by the National Indigenous Australians Agency.  See <a href="#">Indigenous Advancement Strategy Evaluation Framework</a>
<b>Review</b>	These projects provide descriptive accounts of performance, emphasising operations and outputs.

