**twelfth meeting of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap**

**Communique**

Joint Council members were welcomed on 5 July 2024 to Tarntanya on Kaurna Yerta (Country) in the 50th year of NAIDOC celebrations, by Kaurna and Narungga man Mr Jack Kanya Kudnuitya Buckskin. Joint Council paid respects to Kaurna elders, acknowledging their continuing custodianship of the land.

Joint Council welcomed the Productivity Commission’s first Three-Yearly Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Review). The findings and recommendations of the Review will inform the ongoing implementation of the National Agreement. Half way through the National Agreement key structures and processes have been established. But Joint Council agreed more needs to be done to deliver on the ground and in communities.

Joint Council agreed to the four key recommendations of the Review and to 15 of the 16 recommended actions. Joint Council agreed to do further work before deciding how to progress Action 2.2 on Indigenous Data, including establishing a data policy partnership to accelerate progress on data and report back to Joint Council.

Parties discussed the importance of transforming government agencies to deliver on the National Agreement including Governments’ commitment to establishing an independent mechanism for their jurisdictions. The Commonwealth Independent Mechanism will be established in partnership with the Peaks.

Governments have committed in principle to resource work under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. All parties remain fully committed to its implementation. Joint Council agreed to immediately prioritise funding for the Indigenous Led Review and Assembly, as required to improve delivery under the 2020 Agreement.

Joint Council discussed a new approach to develop an Inland Waters Target which stands to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ ownership and control of their waters.

Joint Council received important updates on the work of the Policy Partnerships for Early Childhood Care and Development, Justice and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages

Further information on Closing the Gap can be found here: [Home | Closing the Gap](https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/)

**Attendees – Coalition of Peaks representatives**

| **Name** | **Representing** | **Organisation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Ms Pat Turner AM | Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations | Joint Council Co-Chair; Lead Convenor, Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations |
| Mr John Leha | NSW | Co-Chair, New South Wales Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations |
| Mr Michael Graham | VIC | Co-Chair, Ngaweeyan Maar-oo |
| Ms Wynetta Dewis | QLD | Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service |
| Ms Vicki O’Donnell OAM | WA | Chair, Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia |
| Dr Scott Wilson | SA | Lead Convenor, South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network |
| Mr Graeme Gardner | TAS | Chairperson, Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre |
| Ms Paula McGrady | ACT | Deputy Chairperson, ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body |
| Dr John Paterson | NT | Lead Convenor, Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory |
| Ms Muriel Bamblett AO | Education and Families | Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency |
| Ms Donnella Mills | Health and Wellbeing | Chair, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation |
| Mr Jamie Lowe | Economic Development | Chief Executive Officer, National Native Title Council |
| Ms Karly Warner | Justice | Chair, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services |

**Attendees – Government Parties**

| **Name** | **Jurisdiction** | **Title** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hon Linda Burney MP | Commonwealth | Joint Council Co-Chair, Minister for Indigenous Australians |
| Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy | Commonwealth | Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians |
| Hon David Harris MP | NSW | Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty |
| Hon Natalie Hutchins MP | VIC | Minister for Treaty and First Peoples |
| Hon Leeanne Enoch MP | QLD | Minister for Treaty and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships |
| Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA | WA | Minister for Aboriginal Affairs |
| Hon Kyam Maher MLC | SA | Minister for Aboriginal Affairs |
| Hon Roger Jaensch MP | TAS | Minister for Aboriginal Affairs |
| Ms Rachel Stephen Smith MLA | ACT | Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs |
| Hon Chansey Paech MLA (virtual) | NT | Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty |

**Apologies**

| **Name** | **Representing** | **Organisation** |
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| Cr Linda Scott | Government Parties | Australian Local Government Association |

**Guests and Presenters**

| **Name** | **Representing** | **Organisation** |
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| Ms Sheryl Hedges (virtual) | Government Parties | Branch Head, First Nations Water, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water |
| Ms Catherine Liddle | Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership | Peaks Co-Chair, Chief Executive Officer, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care |
| Ms Kylie Crane (virtual) | Commonwealth Co-Chair, Deputy Secretary, Early Childhood and Youth, Department of Education |
| Ms Karly Warner | Justice Policy Partnership | Peaks Co-Chair, Chair, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services |
| Ms Tamsyn Harvey (virtual) | Commonwealth Co-Chair, Deputy Secretary, Justice and Communities, Attorney-General’s Department |
| Mr Beau Williams (virtual) | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy Partnership | Peaks Co-Chair, Chief Executive Officer, First Languages Australia |
| Dr Stephen Arnott (virtual) | Commonwealth Co-Chair, Deputy Secretary, Creative Economy and the Arts, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts |