



Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE

SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP

MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

MEMBER FOR HASLUCK

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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**SIGNIFICANT NEW FUNDING FOR THE JUSTICE SYSTEM TO
CLOSE THE GAP**

The Australian Government has released the Commonwealth's first Implementation Plan under the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap. It includes a commitment of more than \$1 billion to support Australian Government actions towards achieving the Priority Reforms and the 17 socio-economic outcomes.

Over \$25 million in targeted investments will be directed towards reducing the overrepresentation of adult and youth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system (Targets 10 and 11).

“The Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt, and I are committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to achieve long term, meaningful change” said the Attorney-General, Michaelia Cash.

The package includes funding for:

- \$9.3 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) for expensive and complex cases and to support criminal justice reform through coronial inquiries
- \$8.3 million in funding for culturally safe and appropriate family dispute resolution for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- \$7.6 million in funding to establish and support the Justice Policy Partnership between all Australian governments and Indigenous representatives
- Funding to provide support for jurisdictional implementation of the *Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*.

The Commonwealth's investment in the Justice Policy Partnership is a key first step in improving justice outcomes through a joined-up, Australia-wide approach, in line with the commitment under Priority Reform One of the National Agreement. This funding will

support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including those in regional and remote areas, where a large proportion of ATSILS work is already focused.

The Commonwealth's funding contribution includes support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and experts to participate in the Partnership, data and evidence gathering to inform the Partnership, and resources for secretariat and policy support functions across the National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Attorney-General's Department.

Minister Wyatt said the first Implementation Plan will set the foundation for the Commonwealth's efforts to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians across a broad range of outcomes.

“Providing an environment where families are healthy and safe will help children thrive, which is why we are placing an early focus on the justice targets and priority reforms under Closing the Gap.

“By working in true partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and bringing all levels of Government together with the Justice Policy Partnership, we are providing the support people need to reduce their contact with the justice system which will have long-term positive flow on effects for individuals, families and communities.”

Read the full Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan, including the Commonwealth's new justice investments, at www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/closing-gap.

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