

## MEDIA RELEASE

3 December 2021



Coalition  
of Peaks

### PARTNERSHIP STATE OF PLAY — PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

The Joint Council on Closing the Gap met today for the seventh time under the historic Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap where governments are now working together with the Coalition of Peaks to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Progress was welcomed on several high priority actions to advance the four Priority Reforms and socio-economic targets in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Areas where the partnership needs strengthening were also acknowledged.

Under Priority Reform Two, the Joint Council agreed in principle two of the **Sector Strengthening Plans** covering the early childhood care and development sector and the health sector, establishing high level priorities and joint ways of building these key community-controlled sectors nationally.

“I’m pleased to see the first two sector strengthening plans laid out. These plans are an important tool for change and accountability, and the onus is now on every party to turn their commitments into practice. Our community-controlled sector is invaluable to our people: we see real change when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people deliver services to our communities.”  
said Patricia Turner AM, Lead Convener of the Coalition of Peaks.

Reporting and transparency are key features for successfully implementing the National Agreement. All governments will table their annual reports in their respective Parliaments from 2022, and the Joint Council will consider key implementation issues.

“The Coalition of Peaks are working with governments to ensure they transform how they do business and rise to the challenges set out in the National Agreement. Shared decision making, accountability and transparency are central concerns for us. We also value the independent review of progress to be conducted by the Productivity Commission because there will be things we are doing well, but also areas where we must do better. There will be lessons to learn on how we can work better into the future and invest in those actions which will close gaps faster,” Ms Turner said.

A **new target on Community Infrastructure** was recommended to First Ministers and the Coalition of Peaks for sign-off and inclusion in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. This target now includes measures that ensure essential services for remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will meet or exceed jurisdictional standards. This will not only help with housing standards but deliver significant health outcomes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Finally, the Joint Council was pleased to announce a new **Closing the Gap logo**, designed by Wiradjuri artist Lani Balzan. “The new logo is a great achievement. It will help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country, and the community more generally,

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can identify and better track the work and achievements of the National Agreement,” Ms Turner said.

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[Download !\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b\_img.jpg\) the seventh meeting of the Joint Council \*\*Communique\*\*.](#)

[Download !\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2\_img.jpg\) the Health and Early Childhood Care and Development \*\*Sector Strengthening Plans\*\*](#)

[Download !\[\]\(3211b5d1d968fc1665909b34f9f16010\_img.jpg\) the \*\*2021 Health Check Report\*\* and Joint Council’s response](#)

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### **About the Joint Council**

The Joint Council is made up of 12 representatives of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak organisations, elected by its members; a Minister chosen by each government, and a representative of the Australian Local Government Association nominated by its President. Its role is to support national leadership, coordination and cooperation on Closing the Gap and provide advice to First Ministers, the President of the Australian Local Government Association, and the Coalition of Peaks as signatories to the Partnership and National Agreements on Closing the Gap.

### **About the Coalition of Peaks**

The Coalition of Peaks is a representative body of over seventy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled peak members. The Coalition of Peaks came together on their own as an act of self-determination to be formal partners with Australian governments on Closing the Gap.

Members are either national, state or territory wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled peak bodies, including certain independent statutory authorities. Their governing boards are elected by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and / or organisations.

For more information on the Coalition of Peaks and to sign up for our mailing list, go to:

[www.coalitionofpeaks.org.au](http://www.coalitionofpeaks.org.au)