Table A

Priority reform one: Formal partnerships and shared decision-making

The strong partnership elements at Clause 32 are:

* Element A: Partnerships are accountable and representative
* Element B: A formal agreement in place, that is signed by all
* Element C: Decision-making is shared between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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| **Action** | **Key achievements in 2024** |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) - Whole of Government |  |
| Establishment of  Closing the Gap  Partnership Forum  (Partnership  Forum) | * The Partnership Forum met three times in April, June, and September 2024. * In December 2023, the Partnership Forum committed to undertaking a policy deep dive at each 2024 meeting. The following deep dives were undertaken in 2024:   + April 2024: housing and homelessness – the (ongoing) development of a housing and homelessness target arose from this deep dive.   + June 2024: economic development.   + September 2024: education. |
| Place-based Partnerships | * The VACCA (the Partnership Forum's children and families sector representative) is leading a scoping exercise for Victoria’s Place-based Partnership and Community Data Project, in partnership with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo, local communities, key sector representatives and government. * Community consultations in Morwell were held over July and August 2024, bringing together local community members and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation representatives to explore priorities and aspirations for the future Place-Based Partnership and Community Data Project. * The Morwell Strategic Governance Group, chaired by VACCA and DPC, was established in July 2024 to provide oversight of the joint PBP/CDP scoping exercise. * VACCA has established local governance structures includes the Aboriginal Executive Leadership Group, Elders Council, Youth Committee and Working Group intended to provide a structured and inclusive mechanism for community input and decision-making. * VACCA held community consultations in Morwell throughout December 2024 that aimed to present back to the community what had been heard in previous consultations and ensure the project team had accurately captured the needs and expectations of the community. Feedback was gathered on the proposed service model and design of the youth hub. |
| Establishment of the First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria | * Statewide Treaty negotiations between the Victorian Government and the First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria commenced in November 2024. * Negotiations in January and February 2025 focused on how to close the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including a new independent accountability mechanism. States and territories have previously agreed to establishing an independent mechanism under the National Agreement to Close the Gap. |
| Establish joined-up approach to five policy areas: (Clause 38)  • Justice (JPP)  • Social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB PP)  • Housing (HPP)  • Early childhood care and development (ECCDPP)  • Aboriginal and Torres Strait  Islander languages (LPP) | * The Victorian Government has departmental representatives on the following policy partnerships:   + The JPP, which met four times in 2024. Most recently, the JPP has been building on the strong foundations set in its establishment phase and is now focusing on the implementation of its Strategic Framework, which was agreed-in-principle by Joint Council in June 2023.   + The ECCDPP, which met four times in 2024 and built on strong community feedback loops established by the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members and previous consultation with communities; collaborated with stakeholders, including Policy and Place-based Partnerships under the National Agreement and Safe and Supported; pursued dual processes of making recommendations to Joint Council; and progressed reform priorities via jurisdictional Closing the Gap architecture.   + The SEWB PP, which met twice in 2024 and is developing a Strategic Plan.   + The HPP, which met four times in 2024. The 2024 workplan has four focus areas: Sector Strengthening, Data, Capability building and working collectively.   + The LPP, which met four times in 2024 and has identified seven national priority areas to achieve Target 16 of the National Agreement. |
| Partnership with Victoria’s Implementation Partners to jointly develop Victoria’s Implementation Plan | * In partnership with Victoria’s Implementation Partner, Ngaweeyan Maar-oo, the Victorian Government held multiple phases of consultation across Victorian departments, the Aboriginal community-controlled sector and Aboriginal Governance Forums. Consultations focused on understanding issues within existing implementation efforts to close the gap and developing new priority actions that are strategic and future focused. Consultations continue throughout 2025 to further refine these priority actions in partnership with Victoria’s Implementation Partner, so that they reflect First Peoples’ priorities and strengthen closing the gap work in Victoria. * The Victorian Government is working in close collaboration with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo to deliver Victoria’s new Closing the Gap Implementation Plan (Implementation Plan). A shared decision-making approach has been embedded throughout the governance structure for the development of the Implementation Plan, where key decisions are made in partnership between Victorian Government departments and Victoria’s Implementation Partner members. |
| Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) |  |
| Participation and regular updates to Aboriginal Governance Forums and supporting opportunities to progress meaningful change through shared decision-making | * DTF continues to be an active member on the Treaty IDC, which was renamed the Treaty Executive Taskforce (TET) in 2024 and is represented by the Deputy Secretary of Economic Division. As part of the TET, DTF contributes to discussions and provides advice on treaty and truth processes, including treaty readiness activities and a whole of government approach to negotiations. * DTF regularly engages with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo through quarterly Partnership Forum (represented by the Secretary) meetings and directly to discuss opportunities to embed self-determination and actions towards Closing the Gap within DTF’s remit. * DTF continues to participate in the Implementation Action Group and the Implementation Working Group under the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (VAHHF) to collaborate with other government departments, Aboriginal housing lead agencies and the Koori Caucus to support the development of initiatives in line with the principles of self-determination. |
| Department of Education (DE) |  |
| Work in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) to implement and govern Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 (Marrung) | * In 2024, VAEAI continued to lead the Koorie Education Roundtables and support participation by the Koorie community and Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECG) in the Regional Partnership Forums. Feedback gathered through these mechanisms are reported back to the Marrung Central Governance Committee (CGC). * DE and VAEAI continued working closely as co-chairs of the Marrung CGC and through the Project Control Board to oversee and govern the implementation of *Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026*. * DE also continues to identify ways to deepen engagement with VAEAI, including regular fortnightly policy meetings to support forward planning, and collaborating on strategic pieces of work * The 2024–25 Victorian State Budget included $51 million over 4 years to improve education and wellbeing outcomes for Victoria's Koorie students, through strengthening self-determination and cultural safety in schools in line with the Reform Directions set out in the *Strengthening Self-Determination in Education Report*. |
| Active engagement with Aboriginal organisations in educational priorities | * Throughout 2024, DE actively participated in several shared Aboriginal decision-making bodies, including the Closing the Gap Partnership Forum, the National Closing the Gap Languages Policy Partnership, the Aboriginal Justice Forum, the Aboriginal Children’s Forum and the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum. |
| Development of Dhelk Wukang 2022-26, DE’s Aboriginal Inclusion Plan | * Throughout 2024, DE progressed the actions and initiatives set out its *Dhelk Wukang: Aboriginal Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026.* Of the 51 actions in the plan, 25 have been completed, and 21 are on track. * DE’s *Social Procurement Strategy 2024-26* was approved by the DE Secretary and published on its Corporate Procurement Portal. This is an evolution of the original strategy from 2019, and highlights the range of existing department plans and goals for social benefit that exist outside the procurement space, such as those embodied in Dhelk Wukang. * The Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) reported several initiatives underway to recognise Koorie peoples' involvement and inclusion in the design of new schools and early childhood infrastructure projects. VSBA has recently completed the Best Practice Guide on working with VAEAI and Koorie people on school building projects. |
| Consultation with the Koorie Education Workforce to develop the Aboriginal Employment Plan 2020-26 | * DE provided grant funding to VAEAI, as part of the Workforce Planning Support program, to provide advice to DE on supports for Koorie early childhood teachers and educators, such as enhancing attraction, recruitment and retention for Koorie staff, supports for Koorie early childhood teachers to move from provisional to full registration; and understanding cultural inclusion for Koorie staff in early childhood education settings. * DE’s *Aboriginal Employment Plan 2020 – 2026* contains over 50 actions. A review of the plan is currently underway. The review will also align the Aboriginal Employment Plan with *Dhelk Wukang*, whilst taking into consideration DE’s organisational structure, current funded initiatives and feedback from Koorie staff. * DE is also consulting with its Koorie Education Workforce (KEW) for feedback on revising the Aboriginal Employment Plan, to set out the priorities, actions and initiatives to attract and retain Koorie employees. * The 3rd annual Marrung Secretary’s Award was held in May 2024 to celebrate and acknowledge the contribution of DE staff to improve outcomes for Koorie learners. * DE commenced recruitment for 160 places as part of the Aspiring Koorie Teachers (AKT) Now initiative. This recruitment drive aims to attract and retain more Koorie people in the school workforce, providing employment, wrap around supports and paid placements for Koorie trainee education support and teaching staff. |
| Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) |  |
| DTP continues to codesign Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) Partnership Agreements with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Taungurung Land & Waters Aboriginal Council, and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation | * DTP entered into a partnership agreement with the Taungurung Land & Waters Aboriginal Council (TLaWC) in June 2024. * Key elements of the agreement include:   + Delivery of requirements under the Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement   + Identification of shared goals and aspirations   + Facilitating the Transport and Planning Portfolio’s support for initiatives that can enable revitalisation and celebration of Taungurung culture on its Country   + Identifying procurement opportunities for TLaWC-nominated suppliers, including development of a procurement strategy to engage TLaWC to undertake natural resource management. * To oversee implementation of the agreement, DTP and TLaWC have established an Engagement Team which met for the first time in October 2024 on Taungurung Country. * Initial preparations to commence partnership agreement discussions have begun with Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, with DTP providing funding in March 2024 to support its participation. * DTP has also extended invitations to additional Registered Aboriginal Parties to begin partnership agreement discussions, with a focus on Traditional Owner groups with Recognition and Settlement Agreements in place or under negotiation. This includes Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Barengi Gadjin Land Council. |
| Department of Health (DH) |  |
| Balit Durn Durn Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing | * The Balit Durn Durn Centre also finalised the co-design of a social and emotional wellbeing service model for Aboriginal children and families. The model – called the ‘Nest’– has been co-designed by the Balit Durn Durn Centre alongside an Expert Advisory Group, Aboriginal families, sector leaders, and workforce from both Aboriginal Community Controlled and mainstream organisations). The Nest model provides guidance to health services to support the development of consistent and high-quality culturally responsive models of care delivered to Aboriginal children and families requiring intensive social and emotional wellbeing supports. * The Balit Durn Durn Centre completed an Aboriginal-led co-design process for the development of a service and practice model to inform the establishment of two Aboriginal Healing Centres in Victoria. |
| Support VACCHO to deliver culturally appropriate preventive health initiatives aimed at reducing smoking, preventing diabetes, increasing healthy eating and active living, supporting improved maternal and child nutrition and health, supporting breastfeeding, and improved sexual and reproductive health, as well as reducing risk factors for cancer | * Development and implementation of VACCHO’s Aboriginal Cancer Journey Strategy 2023-2028, including funding support to VACCHO to lead the development of the Strategy and commencement of pilot initiatives, including a partnership with Echuca Regional Health (ERH) to pilot a new Aboriginal cancer journal. * The Department of Health has provided funding support for the Eastern Health and Monash Partners Comprehensive Cancer Consortium (MPCCC) to open a dedicated First Nations Cancer Clinic at Eastern Health’s Healesville Hospital. The program will deliver free, culturally safe oncology services to the region’s large Aboriginal population. * The Best Practice Aboriginal Forum on Reducing Tobacco and E-Cigarette Related Harms provides opportunities for ACCHOs and government funded organisations to report on their local initiatives, build capacity and share stories and progress in reducing smoking and vaping. The implementation of the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Program across Victorian Aboriginal communities is also underway. * All four ACCHOs under the Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group (LMARG) continue to be funded to deliver Working Together for Health, a place-based and community driven model focusing on reducing tobacco and e-cigarette related harms, increasing cancer screenings, immunisations and MBS715 health checks, improving mental health, healthy eating, and active living, and oral health promotion. * VACCHO developed, adapted and promoted key culturally safe cervical screening messages for Women’s Health Week 2024 via social media platforms. This campaign reached over 19,000 followers across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. * VACCHO promoted the alternative bowel cancer screening pathway to Victorian ACCOs, where bowel cancer screening demonstration kits were provided to Community members to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. * VACCHO facilitated yarns at local Men’s Sheds and other ACCO men’s to build relationships with local communities and raise awareness about bowel cancer screening and other men’s health issues such as prostate cancer. * The Department of Health commissioned a co-design process with Aboriginal families and sector representatives to improve inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness of screening approaches, including development of new perinatal mental health screening guidelines. * 20 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attended Diabetes Victoria’s mainstream *Life!* program for lifestyle modification information and support for the prevention of diabetes and cardiovascular disease. |
| Establish partnerships between Local Public Health Units (LPHUs) and Aboriginal community to support place-based responses to pandemic and infectious diseases and health promotion | * New LPHU engagement guidelines were developed by a working group with representatives from VACCHO, LPHUs, and the Department of Health. * Endorsed in November 2024, the ‘Guidelines for Engagement between Local Public Health Units (LPHUs) and the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Sector’ provide principles, key stakeholders and structures and recommended actions to build, maintain and monitor culturally safe and sustainable engagement for population health across Victoria. * Grants were provided to the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS) and Your Community Health for catchment planning priorities, including self-determined ACCO priorities. * Financial resources are delivered via a Memorandum of Understanding with local ACCOs to provide culturally appropriate guidance and advice to mainstream health services around the needs of local Aboriginal communities. * Agreements for strengthening Aboriginal engagement were signed by four ACCOs to support self-determined models of healthcare. * Two LPHUs employ an Aboriginal health lead or Koori Engagement Officer to support the development of relationships with ACCHOs or First Peoples communities. |
| Continued partnership with VACCHO on the Victorian Cancer Screening Framework Steering Committee and funded to lead cancer screening efforts for Aboriginal Victorians under the Victorian Cancer Screening Framework | * VACCHO and the Australian Centre for Prevention of Cervical Cancer (ACPCC) partnered to deliver a suite of culturally appropriate education, resources and supports to clinicians in ACCOs and other health services to help build a culturally safe cervical screening experience for Aboriginal clients. This includes the development a self-collection kit and a covering for clinician collected cervical screening tests. Across 2023-24, over 2,000 coverings and almost 3,000 self-collection kits were distributed to over 40 health services in Victoria. * VACCHO developed, adapted and promoted key culturally safe cervical screening messages for Women’s Health Week 2024 via social media platforms. This campaign reached over 19,000 followers across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. * VACCHO promoted the alternative bowel cancer screening pathway to Victorian ACCOs, where bowel cancer screening demonstration kits were provided to Community members to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. * VACCHO facilitated yarns at local Men’s Sheds and other ACCO men’s to build relationships with local communities and raise awareness about bowel cancer screening and other men’s health issues such as prostate cancer. * The Beautiful Shawl Project saw a notable increase in screens among Aboriginal clients with a 39.5 per cent increase on the previous 12-month period. Serviced through 22 ACCOs, 406 Aboriginal clients have had a breast screen across 2023-24. |
| Partnerships between DH and VACCHO and other ACCOs | Holding three Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Forums:   * A two-day March Forum held in Bendigo focusing on the theme of sustainability. * A one-day June Forum held on Bunurong country for government and Koorie Caucus members to focus on 2024-25 budget outcomes and 2025-26 preparation. * A two-day September Forum held on Wathaurong country focusing on cultural safety. Both Minister Stitt and Minister Thomas attended for a portion of the 2-day event, which included discussions on sentinel events processes and the Action Plan.   The AHWP Action Plan working groups (Enabling Steps, Cultural Safety, Funding Reform, Infrastructure) reported completion of the following six actions:   * Implement regulatory reform of the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* to enable Aboriginal Health Practitioners to administer vaccines and for Department of Health to support training processes. * Create an Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Agreement between the Minister for Health, Aboriginal health services and mainstream health services. * Seek government endorsement of the Victorian Aboriginal Health, Medical and Wellbeing Research Accord ('the Accord') and develop a funding proposal for government consideration for the implementation of the Accord in FY23-24. * Develop a funding proposal for government consideration for sustainable implementation funding of the Victorian Aboriginal Health, Medical and Wellbeing Research Accord post FY23-24.   The following two actions were completed, noting the proposals did not attract investment through the State Budget:   * Develop a funding proposal for government consideration for the long-term maintenance of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Information System (Deadly Data) and support for ACCOs to participate in it. * Develop a funding proposal for government consideration for the introduction of a single and sovereign client management system for the ACCHO sector, including a staged operational transition plan which is responsive to the unique needs of the ACCO service model. |
| Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) | |
| Establishment of the State-wide Caring for Country Partnership Forum (SCfCPF) | * Two Forums were held during 2024, on Country and in person over 1.5 days. The first was co-chaired and hosted by Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation in June 2024, and the second was co-chaired by the three Gariwerd Traditional Owners – Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation – in November 2024. * During 2024, DEECA provided administrative support to the functioning and delivery of the Forums. The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations (FVTOC) has been onboarded as the new Traditional Owner Corporation Caucus (TOCC) Secretariat for 2024-25, providing both secretariat and policy functions to the TOCC. * Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corporation was invited to participate in and are now members of both the TOCC and SCfCPF following their appointment in August 2024 as Victoria’s 12th Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP). |
| Begin regular Regional Partnership Forums made up of senior Traditional Owner Corporation (TOC) staff and senior DEECA regional staff | * Regular Regional Caring for Country Partnership Forums or equivalent engagement meetings were held across 2024, as determined by Traditional Owners’ requirements and their availability. Engagement meetings included monthly partnership meetings, Traditional Owners on-Country Self-Determination committee meetings, monthly meetings with Department Liaison Officers, and regular meetings on projects aligned to specific Traditional Owner priorities. * While not all Traditional Owner groups wish to hold regional forums, DEECA actively engages directly on Country and through other portfolio or program specific governance arrangements to enable partnership building opportunities, monitored through the SCfCPF. |
| Continue to develop local Traditional Owner Self-Determination Plans with Traditional Owner groups and DEECA regions | * In early 2024 DEECA supported Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corporation with funding to develop their self-determination plan that outlines their aspirations for country. * Across 2024 DEECA continued to liaise with other interested TOCs to support their self-determined interests including the implementation of priorities in their Whole of Country Plans and other Traditional Owner led strategies. |
| Continue to implement improvements to DEECA systems and processes to enable Aboriginal self-determination | * In October 2024, the DEECA Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework (TOACEF) was refreshed and relaunched. The TOACEF ensures DEECA staff are aware of Traditional Owners’ rights and responsibilities, respect Traditional Owners as partners and rights holders, and understand our commitments and obligations for engagement. The Framework also sets out pest practice principles for engaging with the broader Aboriginal Community. * A framework has been developed to enable Traditional Owner participation in planned burning and fire suppression activities. It includes three levels of engagement, allowing Traditional Owner Corporations (TOCs) to participate based on their aspirations. * DEECA has developed and implemented an Access Deed to provide TOCs access to DEECA databases including Fire Management System (FMS), eMaps and FireWeb. This enables TOCs to nominate and plan their own cultural burns. * TOCs now have the ability to purchase fire related equipment and PPC/E through the Altona Logistic Centre. * DEECA and Country Fire Authority have agreed on a process that provides greater support for cultural burns across land managed by Forest Fire Management Victoria, as well as Country area of Victoria (all area outside the management of FFMVic, including private land, council managed land, roadside reserves, water authority managed land, etc.). * DEECA has continued to increase cultural burning opportunities from 15 burns in 2021-22 to 20 burns in 2022-23 and 29 burns in 2023-24. * The Critical Minerals Roadmap was released in December 2024, which includes a commitment to develop a Traditional Owner benefit sharing model (along with a separate model for communities). Initial funding was obtained for benefit sharing work as part of the Economic Growth Statement. |
| Strengthening Traditional Owner decision making in sustainable water management | * Implementation of Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap is progressing with almost all actions on track. Funding to continue implementation was announced by the Victorian Government in the 2024-25 Budget. Over the next four years, $7.72 million will support Traditional Owner involvement in pilot and research projects with a focus on activities designed to deliver short and medium term targeted outcomes. * New provisions in the Statement of Obligations have been drafted which will require formal partnerships between Traditional Owners and Water Corporations. These will be implemented in future years by Victorian water corporations. * The Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH), DEECA, Parks Victoria and CMAs have been working with Traditional Owners to support development of Traditional Owner-led Seasonal Watering Proposals for five trial sites. * DEECA partnered with Traditional Owners to develop and implement other key water policies which further Aboriginal self-determination. This included further work on the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy which is a key policy vehicle for the delivery of Water is Life outcomes. Additionally, work continued on the implementation of Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy, Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo (Yarra Strategic Plan), Waterways of the West Action Plan and the Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yalluk) Action Plan. * The Aboriginal Water Program is renewing four-year funding agreements directly with 17 Traditional Owner organisations to employ Aboriginal Water Officers and lead self-determined water projects. Four-year funding agreements are being offered to Traditional Owner organisations not previously funded by the program. * DEECA continues to support and facilitate the Aboriginal Water Officer Network (AWON) including quarterly meetings with the AWON on Country across Victoria. |
| Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) |  |
| Aboriginal Children’s Forum continues to bring together ACCOs, Community Service Organisations and Government | * All three ACFs of 2024 had dedicated sessions workshopping and providing feedback on the proposed new priorities and actions, focusing closely on aligning the new plan with the [*Yoorrook for Justice* report](https://yoorrookforjustice.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Yoorrook-for-justice-report.pdf), the [Closing the Gap Agreement report and key performance indicators](https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2025-02/NIAA%20CTG%20Combined%20Report.pdf) and the [Safe and Supported National Framework for protecting Australian children](https://www.dss.gov.au/system/files/resources/dess5016-national-framework-protecting-childrenaccessible.pdf). As a result, four priority areas were identified for the Strategic Action Plan:   + Equitable local access to Aboriginal models of prevention and early intervention services   + Self-determining and ACCO-led response to child safety   + Building knowledge and the evaluation of Aboriginal child and family ways   + Aboriginal decisions over investment in Aboriginal children and families * The ACF will continue to provide oversight of the agreement and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress against the priorities, but it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to coordinate work with other government departments and agencies to deliver outcomes. Action drivers identified within the Strategic Action Plan will provide quarterly reporting on milestones to the Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Executive Committee and ACF. |
| Transferring decision making to ACCOs for Aboriginal children and young people | * On 1 July 2024, the *Statement of Recognition Act 2023* (the Act) came into effect embedding the Victorian Government’s commitment to Aboriginal self-determination in the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA 2005). * The CYFA 2005 was amended to embed Aboriginal self-determination, introduce eleven binding principles for decision-making regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, legislate all five elements of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP) and enable the Community Protecting Boorais pilot through Section 18. * In 2024, departmental implementation of the Act focused on revising existing initiatives that support Aboriginal self-determination and the development of new policy and guidance tools. These resources ensure the principles are embedded in the design and delivery of child and family services for Aboriginal children and families. This includes incorporating the Act principles into the tools and guidance relating to the SAFER children framework. * Section 18 broadens the authorisations for Aboriginal agencies, allowing them to work with an Aboriginal child (and their non-Aboriginal sibling/s) without a Children’s Court protection order. Authorised Aboriginal agencies can now investigate reports made to child protection. Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care (ACAC) is the departmental program that operationalises this legislative provision. By placing the responsibility for the protection and care of Aboriginal children with Aboriginal agencies, Section 18 allows organisations to do things differently and make a difference in the lives of Aboriginal children and families. * The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care and Community Agency and Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative continue to lead the Community Protecting Boorais in 2024. Feedback from the project working group is that culturally attuned, strength based and relational approaches is resulting in better engagement and acceptance of support to address protecting concerns. |
| Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 2018-2028 Agreement | * The Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum met in April, September and December 2024. * The Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus Secretariat was established to support the coordination, preparation and active engagement of Koori Caucus to positively drive the aims and activities of the Dhelk Dja Agreement. In April 2024, an ACCO was appointed as the host organisation of the Secretariat for a two-year term. |
| Governance arrangements for Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort; Every Aboriginal Person has a Home. The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework guides implementation and supports delivery of the strategic directions. | * Joint representation at the Closing the Gap National Housing Policy Partnerships group, with Aboriginal Housing Victoria a Co-Chair and representing the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF). The group is tasked to lead the Closing the Gap housing reform agenda at a national level. * Homes Victoria participates across all levels of the *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort, Every Aboriginal Person Has a Home -* the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (*Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort)* governance mechanisms, together with AHHF members, including ACCOs and registered housing providers. *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort* embeds shared decision making and outcomes to ensure self-determination is at the forefront. * Aboriginal Housing Victoria is resourced to provide the secretariat functions for the AHHF and Implementation Working Group (IWG). * The recent establishment of the VAHHF Interdepartmental Committee will contribute the collective government agencies response to deliver the outcomes outlined in *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort* * The AHHF is the community engagement interface that supports *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort* implementation and other related Aboriginal housing and homelessness approaches. The AHHF meets quarterly across different regions and is currently investigating avenues to strengthen its regional presence. * Through the governance arrangements, 2024 has seen:   + Continuation of the commitment to sharing housing and homelessness data with all AHHF members.   + Delivery of the Big Housing Build, Regional Housing Fund and Social Housing Accelerator Program, 10 per cent of the total delivery for First Peoples social housing.   + An increase in funding to support the capacity building of the sectors.   + Delivery of the Aboriginal housing reform resourcing to pilot two new Aboriginal-specific homelessness entry points.   + Development of the yearly VAHHF IWG Workplan   + Development of a specific Aboriginal homelessness target. |
| The Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum | * At the ASGF held in November 2024, members agreed on key features of high-level solutions to challenges that both the Koorie Caucus members and the department felt were needed to embed self-determination, strengthen our partnership and increase oversight of progress against our shared commitments, including:   + Alignment of effort to Closing the Gap Socio-economic targets and measures and the four Priority Reform Areas under Closing the Gap   + Shared accountability   + Addressing the current limited departmental oversight   + Identifying dedicated resources for change * The ASGF committed to developing a ‘refreshed’ Korin Korin Balit-Djak (KKBD) Agreement, in alignment to the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, that centres priorities of community and directs overarching action for DFFH portfolios. * The ASGF also endorsed establishing Priority Reform working groups to advance reform and action aligned with the Closing the Gap Priority Reform areas.   + Each working group is chaired by an Aboriginal sector leader, with an executive sponsor appointed by the Secretary of the department and Aboriginal community representatives from across the department’s four Aboriginal Governance Forums.   + This Aboriginal leadership ensures that self-determination remains central to the reform work, while drawing on the necessary expertise from across the department. |
| Department of Justice and Community  Safety (DJCS) |  |
| Aboriginal Justice Agreement and associated governance structures | * Under the 25 year long Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA), the following partnership governance mechanisms function to monitor and implement key priorities, advise government, and provide a space for government to consult with community. * Established partnerships include:   + The Aboriginal Justice Forum (AJF)   + The Aboriginal Justice Caucus (AJC)   + Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees (RAJACs)   + Local Aboriginal Justice Action Committees (LAJACs)   + Collaborative Working Groups (CWGs) * The AJF, AJC, RAJACs, LAJACs and CWGs continued to meet regularly throughout 2024. * Supporting the AJC, DJCS continues to fund an independent secretariat to support the AJC, as well as full time Victorian Public Service Level 5 officers to support each of the nine RAJACs and their elected Aboriginal Chairpersons. * In 2024, three AJFs were held successfully in Eastern Metropolitan, Barwon South West and Gippsland regions with attached community forums that highlighted the justice concerns and needs of First Peoples in the region. * The final AJF of 2024 was the 69th forum, highlighting the longevity and strength of the AJA and AJF for Victorian Aboriginal Justice. |
| Closing the Gap Reference Group convened at Barwon | * Closing the Gap Reference Groups have been convened as self-determining bodies to provide guidance and ideas about how to improve the custodial experiences of Aboriginal men in custody and improve outcomes for Aboriginal people. * Closing the Gap Reference Groups were convened by Port Phillip Prison and continued at Barwon Prison Precinct. * The membership of both Reference Groups compromises senior leaders from the Aboriginal community (Aboriginal Justice Caucus and other relevant Aboriginal Organisations) and government. |
| Evaluation of Public Intoxication Reform | * A Monash University research team co-directed by Kyllie Cripps, a Palawa woman, continues to progress the independent evaluation into justice impacts of the public intoxication reform. * In April 2024, the Victorian Government supported and committed to action the Yoorrook Justice Commission’s recommendation that the evaluation be First Peoples led, cover at least the first 12 months and then three years of implementation, and publish its results. The evaluation is progressing in line with Yoorrook’s recommendation and DJCS is committed to the publication of the evaluation’s findings. * In 2024, Monash University commenced focus groups, interviews, and consultation with stakeholders, including Aboriginal community members. Ongoing research will continue these focus groups and yarning sessions, with a focus on local Aboriginal community members in locations across regional and metropolitan Victoria. * Monash continues to progress the evaluation in consultation with its Community, Legal and Advisory Services (CLAS) Committee, which includes representatives from the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, the Day family and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. |
| Development of dedicated Aboriginal Victims of Crime Strategy | * Development of the Aboriginal Victims of Crime Strategy (the Strategy) continues to progress. The Strategy is being developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Community to identify how the victim support system can better respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Aboriginal Justice Caucus (AJC) endorsed the establishment of a dedicated Project Control Group (PCG) for the Strategy. The PCG includes members of AJC and ACCOs, and met regularly in 2024 to ensure the Aboriginal Community leads the Strategy’s development. PCG and AJC endorsement is required before the Strategy is considered by Government. This comprehensive consultation also ensures that the voices of Aboriginal people are being heard and shape the Strategy. * To inform development of the Strategy in 2024, DJCS engaged closely with the Aboriginal Community and sector, including with RAJACs (September to November 2024), AJC (October 2024), Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (late 2024), and First Peoples Assembly (December 2024). DJCS also engaged mainstream service providers (late 2024), and collaborative working groups (June and December 2024). * On 12 December 2024, the research report ‘*Ensuring that Aboriginal perspectives inform responses to Aboriginal victims of crime’,* commissioned by DJCS and produced by the Centre for Innovative Justice, in partnership with Djirra, Elizabeth Morgan House and Dardi Munwurro, was publicly launched and will inform the Strategy’s development. |
| Continued Aboriginal leadership in the implementation and delivery of the Stolen Generations Reparations Package, led by the Stolen Generations Advisory Committee, and Stolen Generations Reparations Independent Assessment Panel | * The Stolen Generations Reparations Advisory Committee has nine members who are all Stolen Generations members or their descendants. The Advisory Committee provides continued Aboriginal leadership in the design and delivery of the Package, ensuring it remains culturally appropriate and aligns with community expectations. * As one example of its impact, members of the Advisory Committee made a major contribution to the design and delivery of the Victoria Police apology to the Stolen Generations on 24 May 2024. * As another example, the Department of Justice and Community Safety designed and implemented a collective in-person apology model in accordance with recommendations of the Stolen Generations Reparations Steering Committee final report. The Advisory Committee played a critical role, alongside selected ACCOs, in the design of the collective apology to ensure it met the needs of the Stolen Generations members and supported their healing. * The Premier delivered the first in-person apology to eligible applicants to the Stolen Generations Reparations Package on 10 October 2024. Feedback received from partners and some applicants indicated that the event was successful in supporting the healing journey of eligible applicants and strengthening connection.  The Advisory Committee will continue to support delivery of future in-person apologies. * The Stolen Generations Reparations Independent Assessment Panel has 10 members. The Stolen Generations Reparations Independent Assessment Panel has 10 members. The Panel is chaired by a Stolen Generations Person with Deputy Chairs being Stolen Generations and/or Aboriginal People. The Independent Assessment Panel model gives effect to the Bringing Them Home Report which recommended that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are involved in decisions about reparations. * To the end of 2024, this Panel has carefully considered 695 applications to the Package, of which 623 have been found eligible. |
| Creation of a new Youth Justice Act | * The Aboriginal Justice Caucus has worked closely with the Victorian Government on development of new *Youth Justice Act* 2024 (YJ Act) and have been instrumental in shaping key aspects designed to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people * The new YJ Act introduces specific guiding principles for Aboriginal children and young people, which enshrine respect for their human and cultural rights and self-determination. It has a dedicated focus on supporting Aboriginal self‐determination and reducing Aboriginal over‐representation in youth justice. * The YJ Act also includes other specific measures for Aboriginal young people, such as sentencing principles and custodial principles, and a Statement of Recognition that recognises, respects, and supports the distinct cultural rights of Aboriginal people and their right to self-determination. * Alongside the creation of the new YJ Act, government made further reforms to bail laws, applicable to both adults and children, targeted at serious alleged offending on bail. The majority of these reforms commenced by 2 December 2024. Provisions enabling a 2-year trial of electronic monitoring of children on bail in certain circumstances (along with enhanced bail supports), commenced on 22 April 2025. |
| Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) |  |
| Recruitment principles in small business portfolio, such as the Small Business Ministerial Council | * In 2024, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) commenced an open recruitment process for one chair and 8-10 members of the Small Business Ministerial Council (SBMC). The SBMC terms of reference formally include the requirement for at least one Aboriginal business representative. This reflects DJSIR’s commitment to embedding Aboriginal voices in economic advisory structures. |
| Koorie Skills Working Group | * In 2024, stewardship of the Koorie Skills Working Group formally transferred from the Department of Education to DJSIR, following machinery of government changes. Through ongoing collaboration with VAEAI and the First Peoples community, the Working Group continued to provide strategic advice to improve outcomes for Aboriginal learners in vocational and further education. These insights have shaped DJSIR’s post-secondary education agenda and contributed to the alignment of Skills First reforms with self-determination principle. * In late 2024, members of the Victorian First Nations VET Alliance were invited to join the KSWG. The Alliance is made up of three Aboriginal RTOs in Victoria: (VACCHO, VACSAL and Bubup Wilam). |
| Department of Government Services (DGS) |  |
| Women Leading Locally Program | * The program provided participants with resources and skills to campaign in the 2024 local government elections. The program is now complete with participants graduating in August 2024. |

Table B

Priority Reform Two – Building the community-controlled sector

National Agreement Clauses 118 and 119:

1. There is sustained capacity building and investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, which deliver certain services and address issues through a set of clearly defined standards or requirements, such as an agreed model of care
2. There is a dedicated and identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce (that complements a range of other professions and expertise) and where people working in community-controlled sectors have wage parity based on workforce modelling commensurate with need
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations which deliver common services are supported by a Peak Body, governed by a majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board, which has strong governance and policy development and influencing capacity
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations which deliver common services have a dedicated, reliable and consistent funding model designed to suit the types of services required by communities, responsive to the needs of those receiving the services, and is developed in consultation with the relevant Peak body

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| **Action** | **Key achievements in 2024** |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet – Whole of Government |  |
| Sector Strengthening funding under the National Agreement | * In 2024, the Partnership Forum endorsed the allocation of approximately $2.2 million from Victoria’s $3.3 million sector strengthening funding commitment to the delivery of seven ACCO-led projects. * These projects were developed by Ngaweeyan Maar-oo to support ACCOs to build their capacity and capability to provide high quality services for First Peoples in Victoria. * The projects are being led by ACCOs with relevant service delivery experience and community links, across the priority sectors of health, housing, disability, children and families, and languages and culture. |
| Sector Strengthening Projects | * The first sector strengthening project was delivered in the priority sector of Early Years. The Early Years Summit was held from 12 – 13 June 2024 and was co-led by Bubup Wilam and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages. * The Early Years Summit brought together First Peoples professionals in the early years sector to share cultural wisdom and develop priorities and strategies to support the health, wellbeing, and cultural strength of First Peoples children. * In May 2024, the Partnership Forum provided out-of-session endorsement for five sector strengthening project proposals, in the priority sectors of health, disability, and housing. * In September 2024, the Partnership Forum subsequently endorsed another two project proposals in the Languages and Culture sector. * All seven projects in each of these areas are currently underway and expected to be delivered between 2025 and 2026. |
| ACCO funding – Community Capability | * In 2024, DPC administered a range of grant programs providing funding to ACCOs for operations and program delivery:   + Koorie Youth Council 2021-25: supporting operations including staffing and administration, program delivery and delivery of the annual Koorie Youth Summit.   + Koorie Heritage Trust 2022-25: supporting operations and the delivery of the Koorie Family History Service and the Koorie Oral History Program.   + Connecting Home 2020-24: supporting operations and case management services for members of the Stolen Generations and their families. * Victorian NAIDOC events 2024: supporting delivery of Victorian NAIDOC week events in 2024. |
| Coordination of Victoria’s Expenditure Review under the National Agreement | * After Victoria’s Closing the Gap Expenditure Review was completed in November 2023, DPC established a working group in partnership with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo and commenced planning for Victoria’s second Expenditure Review. * In September 2024, the Partnership Forum agreed to pause work on Victoria’s second Expenditure Review and instead consider options to progress that work as part of the development of Victoria’s next Closing the Gap Implementation Plan. |
| Department of Treasury and Finance |  |
| DTF supports and engages with community housing organisations as part of the Victorian Government’s key housing initiatives. | * DTF jointly delivers the Social Housing Growth Fund with Homes Victoria which includes the Homes for Aboriginal Victorians Round (HfAVR). HfAVR provides grant funding to ACCOs to deliver social housing dwellings for Aboriginal Victorians. * The Housing Registrar is working with ACCOs to facilitate more ACCOs to become registered housing providers. This approach has increased ACCO housing registration and will allow them to leverage opportunities from Victoria’s existing and future housing investments. * Affordable Housing Investment Partnerships (AHIP) makes up to $2.1 billion in low interest loans and government guarantees available to Community Housing Agencies, not for profit organisations and ACCOs to support the development of social and affordable housing. The Victorian Homebuyer Fund (VHF) partnered with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to support First Nations homeownership by offering lower deposit requirements and higher contributions for First Peoples. The VHF will close on 30 June 2025. Victorians will be able to access the national Help to Buy scheme once it’s established. |
| Department of Education |  |
| Promoting and funding Aboriginal organisations | * In 2024, DE signed a 2-year common funding agreement (to replace the previous 1-year agreement) with VAEAI, to support its ongoing activities to support improved outcomes for Koorie learners. * $51 million was announced as part of the 2024-25 Victorian State Budget to improve education and wellbeing outcomes for Victoria's Koorie students. This included $31 million over 4 years to resource Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Registered Aboriginal Parties to support improved education outcomes for Koorie students. * As part of annual reporting, DE has confirmed that 30 verified Victorian Koorie businesses were engaged to provide goods and services (including construction) in 2023–24, with total expenditure of $15.6 million. This is an increase of $4.2 million from the previous financial year in 2022–23. The total figure is driven by engagements on the department’s major program of construction projects. * The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) worked closely with cultural knowledge story author Dr Sue Atkinson (Yorta Yorta), ochre artist Annette Sax (Taungurung), and Aboriginal graphic designer Rob Barnett to review the new Victorian Early Years Development Framework (VEYLDF) to reimagine the models within the framework through a Koorie lens. This included reimagining the planning cycle, the ecological model and the teaching and learning approaches graphics using flora and fauna from Victoria that have specific significance to Koorie culture. |
| Department of Transport and Planning |  |
| Prioritising Social Procurement for First Peoples Businesses | * In November 2022, DTP entered a 12-month Pilot Partnership with Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce (Pilot). * The Pilot was a key factor in driving the increase in expenditure from First Peoples’ businesses in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years:   + 2021-2022 = $2,897,530   + 2022-2023 = $7,877,089   + 2023-2024 = $16,355,191. * Following its completion in November 2023, DTP undertook an evaluation of the Pilot which identified several opportunities for further action including increasing the number of First Peoples businesses that are prequalified to tender for certain works or registered on State Purchase Contracts, as well as ongoing analysis of upcoming opportunities to engage First Peoples businesses. * As an outcome of the Pilot, in June 2024 DTP appointed a two-year fixed term First Peoples Business Engagement Coordinator to improve procurement reporting and outcomes. |
| Creating transport infrastructure to provide greater access to services for First Peoples | * DTP’s Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program (FLTSP) funded a series of localised First Peoples community initiatives in 2024:   + A partnership with VAEAI to encourage participation at Koorie pathway events by supporting safe transport options. These pathway events are aimed at inspiring First Peoples students to dream big and achieve their aspirations.   + A partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited to provide safe transport options, equitable access and encourage participation for First Peoples in a calendar of sporting programs.   + A partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (in collaboration with DJANDAK) to undertake a 10-month project to integrate Indigenous art and culture into bus stop designs across Bendigo. The project aims to transform bus shelters into cultural landmarks that preserve and celebrate Indigenous heritage, support cultural tourism and make public transportation more inviting and inclusive. * A partnership with Cooinda Aboriginal Corporation to provide a 12-month pilot project to improve access to a Cultural Centre, with culturally safe and welcoming spaces and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the western suburbs. The centre offers services including cultural studies and art classes, homework classes for the youth, and job-ready services such as assistance with resumes and job applications. |
| Department of Health |  |
| Development and piloting of outcomes-based funding model with peak body for Aboriginal community controlled health sector | * The rollout plan and communications for Funding Reform was temporarily paused, as agreed with VACCHO * The department is now working with VACCHO to establish a post-reset environment for Funding Reform * VACCHO has submitted an annual impact statement for the 2023-24 Financial Year |
| Continue to improve access to specialist appointments and medical care for Aboriginal people in rural and regional areas in collaboration with the Aboriginal community controlled health sector | * Under the Victorian Autism Plan, funding of $0.520 million was allocated to Wathaurong Aboriginal Health Service and VAHS to deliver autism assessments for Aboriginal children in their local areas. This funding supports the accessible delivery of services in community for children with lower complexity autism needs. |
| Increase cancer screening expertise at VACCHO and strengthen data systems to improve cancer screening reporting | * Funding support to VACCHO to lead Framework Respect, a culturally responsive and safe framework to boost participation in cancer clinical trials. In partnership with local ACCOs, the framework will form part of the Cancer Clinical Trials Program 2024-2028. This will sit alongside a new culturally safe lung cancer screening pilot to be developed in partnership with the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre Alliance |
| Continuation of funded activity by VACCHO to co-ordinate culturally safe strategies to reduce smoking prevalence amongst Aboriginal people and support ACCHOs across Victoria to become smoke free. | * Quit Victoria launched a new Aboriginal Quitline website (www.aql.org.au) by mob, for mob in 2024 that includes information on the harms of smoking and vaping and tips for quitting. The website development involved working alongside Aboriginal art creative consultancy, Aboriginal health workers, Tacking Indigenous Smoking workers, Elders and community members. |
| Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) project at VAHS funded by Community Based Health Services is building the capability of ACCOs to fully utilise Medicare Benefits Schedule funding in the delivery of services and to support greater incentives for increased use of Aboriginal Health Assessments in the community. | * The 2023-24 budget provided $1 million annually to Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS) to deliver specialist clinics that include paediatricians and allied health. This builds on work VAHS had done to develop strong clinical capability and engagement with the community to deliver services that support an average of three hundred children and families each year. |
| Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action |  |
| Increase the number of projects and initiatives where Aboriginal people are accessing water for economic development and other self-determined purposes | * As at December 2024, the total volume of water entitlements held by known Traditional Owner and Aboriginal organisations in Victoria is 9,228 megalitres (ML). This includes 6,610 ML returned by government projects. * During 2025, there are a number of water returns to Traditional Owners that will progress through existing commitments including:   + the return of 1.36 gigalitres (GL) in Northern Victoria through the Goulburn Murray Water Connections Project.   + Water to be returned from the Moorabool system to the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.   + The ‘Latrobe 3-4 Bench’ water entitlement which includes a commitment to reallocate 16 GL of this entitlement. This will be shared with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation to support cultural values and self-determination; the environment for priority environmental flows, and irrigators for agriculture. * The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation is leading a project trialling water delivery in the Moorabool Yaluk (Moorabool River) (see case study on page 183 of the report). |
| Strengthen Traditional Owner decision making in biodiversity | Ongoing work to strengthen Traditional Owner decision-making in biodiversity planning and management:   * Funding from the Victorian Government is supporting Traditional Owners to deliver outcomes for Country is continuing with groups to undertake revegetation (through BushBank), read and heal Country through cultural and conventional practice, restore Spirit on Country, develop economic opportunities (such as plant nurseries, undertake land management of conservation areas and building capacity and partnerships (through the Melbourne Strategic Assessment)) and increase their capacity to participate in biodiversity including through co-investment processes and leading the delivery of on-ground biodiversity actions. * Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) and DEECA signed the Yananyin Gadhaba (we walk together) partnership agreement. The agreement enables the two partners to deliver better outcomes for biodiversity by strengthening biocultural led approaches for healing, governing and caring for Country. In 2023-24 the partners co-developed a set of actions that will be delivered over the coming years. The actions include finding alignment and driving change to support a two-worlds policy approach, identifying pathways for investment in biocultural management, and investigating instruments for management within cultural landscapes. * Traditional Owner groups are partnering with DEECA on:   + establishing principles and strategies to guide transformation of biodiversity management and investment to support healing Country including exploring planning and management for culturally significant species and mechanisms for cross tenure management of cultural landscapes;   + a wide range of research projects, including restoring platypus habitat, translocating crayfish, restocking wetlands with native fish, and designing and implementing monitoring programs for forests, turtles, frogs and freshwater fish, including eels. Some projects are well established, while others are in formative, early stages;   + Victoria's preparedness (incl. surveillance) and response for wildlife emergencies including H5N1 Avian Influenza a highly infectious disease that can cause severe illness and death in native birds and some mammals; and   + exploring planning and management for culturally significant species. |
| Develop a sustainable funding model for Traditional Owner groups that elevates self- determination and the ability to submit to budget bids | * In September 2024, DEECA refreshed and enhanced the advice provided to budget bid authors to support the preparation of submissions for the 2025-26 budget process. This included standard guidance for all DEECA on Country bids to consider impacts and opportunities for Traditional Owners. The 2025-26 budget is expected to be tabled by the Treasurer on 20 May 2025. * DEECA has piloted a streamlined funding initiative between its Regions, Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group and Gunaikurnai Land & Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC). A combined schedule of grants and letter of variation between GLaWAC and RECAFP has been drafted and is in final stages of approval. A workshop will be held with the 12 TOCs to discuss expansion of the pilot and other streamlined funding reform options in the first half of 2025. * DEECA has upgraded GEMS & Grants Online to include greater reporting and self-management portal capability for Traditional Owner Corporations (TOCs). In 2025, the 12 formally recognised TOCs will be invited to identify authorised users to access the Grants Online Portal functions and associated training and supports. |
| Develop a DEECA Learning and Development package with Traditional Owners to be utilised by TOCs | * To support the rollout of a new Learning Management System, DEECA in partnership with the Traditional Owner Corporation Caucus (TOCC) has undertaken a needs analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to:   + understand the TOCs’ unique learning and development needs   + discuss existing, perceived, and future barriers to learning and development opportunities   + understand what already exists and works well for TOCs in relation to learning and development. * Consultation on learning and development needs took place in 2024 with three TOCs, and DEECA has developed a report based on the results of the consultation and the needs analysis to identify possible focus areas for training. |
| Working with Aboriginal suppliers to identify how DEECA’s project and procurement processes incorporate cultural responsibilities and knowledge | * To support Aboriginal Owned Businesses (AOB), DEECA has membership with Social Traders and Kinaway Chamber of Commerce, and in 2024 conducted regular meetings with Kinaway to discuss procurement opportunities for AOBs. * DEECA also directly engaged 39 unique Aboriginal Owned Businesses through procurement processes in 2024. * Communications continued to raise awareness of the departmental social procurement strategy as well as the procurement process supporting purchases from AOBs. * DEECA is updating departmental policies and procedures to incorporate guidance on the first right of refusal process for Traditional Owners Corporations with Natural Resource Agreement (NRA). * DEECA has implemented geo-tracking functionality in its finance system to allow for better monitoring of the 10% procurement target for Traditional Owner Corporations with NRAs. |
| Prioritising Aboriginal suppliers when procuring goods and services: through the development of a DEECA Aboriginal Procurement Report | * Geographic tagging of procurement has been enabled in DEECA’s purchasing system (Oracle) that allows Natural Resource Management (NRM) spend to be captured for those Traditional Owner Corporations with a Natural Resource Agreement (NRA). * Progress towards the 10% Natural Resource Agreement procurement target for TOCs is now being monitored annually with the next update due in July 2025. In July 2024, the estimated procurement spends were: DJARRA 16%, Taungurung 5%, and Wotjobaluk 2.5%. DEECA is improving internal systems to facilitate more efficient and accurate reporting as well as ensuring continued focus on increasing investment. |
| Department of Families, Fairness and Housing |  |
| Transformation of the Children and Families service system | * Reporting on proportional funding in children and families service delivery in ACCOs is reported through the Aboriginal Children’s Forum (ACF). As of March 2025, Funding to ACCOs as a proportion of total funding has increased from 11% in 2016-17 to 17% in 2024-25 * VACYPA (Alliance) are currently working with Members and their teams to update the rights and aspirations report based on contemporary priorities. VACCA is in the process of reviewing the rights and aspirations to ensure it aligns with VACCAs current reform priorities. |
| Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 2018-2028 Agreement | * The 2023-24 State Budget committed $31 million to maintain Aboriginal-led family and sexual violence service delivery. * A component of this budget outcome included $6.1 million in ongoing funding to Aboriginal frontline family violence services, a proportion of which was provided as service development funding to be used flexibly depending on the needs of the ACCO to meet local workforce and capacity building needs. * Two Aboriginal Access Points have been in operation for more than 12 months in the Bayside Peninsula and Barwon areas. Aboriginal Access Points are a complementary service model to The Orange Door, providing an ACCO-led, culturally safe referral pathway for Aboriginal people impacted by family violence. |
| Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort – Aboriginal housing sector strengthening and capacity building | * In 2023-24, Homes Victoria has continued to support Aboriginal Housing Victoria through the Community Housing Sector Development Fund in progressing the Local Government Partnerships Project. The Supporting Aboriginal Registration and the Breaking Down Barriers to the Big Housing Build Grant Programs were progressed and these grants were released to the sector in early 2025. * An online, accessible version of The Aboriginal Housing Registration Guide has been developed and is now available on the Homes Victoria website. |
| The Big Housing Build Social Housing Growth Fund has a delivery target of 820 net new social housing dwellings for Aboriginal Victorians. | * The Supporting Aboriginal Registration project allocated $850,000 (excl. GST) to Aboriginal Housing Victoria for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. This initiative focuses supporting and guiding ACCOs and Traditional Owner groups through the housing registration process. * The Breaking down Barriers to the BHB project allocated $850,617 to Aboriginal Housing Victoria for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. This initiative provides funding to assist Registered Aboriginal Housing Organisations in their bids for BHB funding. * As at March 2025, 389 homes have been contracted as part of the 420 BHB Social Housing Growth Fund Aboriginal homes target. * As at March 2025, 218 homes have been placed with Aboriginal Housing Agencies as part of the 400 BHB social homes delivery target. |
| Department of Justice and Community Safety |  |
| Aboriginal Justice Agreement Community Grants Program | * Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA) Community Grants Programs administers funding of approximately $40 million per annum, with over 98 per cent of this funding going to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to enable delivery of Aboriginal-led solutions to address ongoing disadvantage. * In 2024 the AJA Community Grants Program enabled Aboriginal Community Organisations to deliver over 100 grant initiatives – which included a diverse range of self-determined programs that promote healing, cultural identity and create positive pathways that divert Aboriginal people from the justice system. * The AJA Community Grants Program recognises that Victorian Aboriginal communities are best placed to design and deliver initiatives that effectively engage Aboriginal people and achieve positive and sustainable outcomes. |
| Continued support for Tarwirri Indigenous Lawyers Association | * DJCS has committed to a further four-year funding agreement from 2023-24 to 2026-27 with Tarwirri to continue to support Aboriginal legal professionals, law graduates, and law students. * The funding supports the organisation’s service delivery, operational and program costs and enables Tarwirri to   + co-ordinate seasonal placements and cadetships for law students   + establish mentoring opportunities   + increase participation and employment of Indigenous lawyers in their profession   + increase awareness of employment opportunities for Indigenous job seekers   + provide holistic support to Indigenous law students   + deliver cultural awareness information to the wider legal profession   + participate in wider Indigenous legal and social justice matters   + employ an Executive Officer to assist with the day-to-day operations of the organisation * Additionally, in 2024 DJCS provided funding for Tarwirri to host the National Indigenous Legal Conference (NILC) in Melbourne. * Hosting the NILC was a major achievement for Tarwirri. * The NILC a three-day conference with 400 attendees, and a gala and awards ceremony night. * The NILC included keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions by Indigenous lawyers, Judges, Commissioners, and community members from across the country. |
| Aboriginal Youth Justice continued support for Aboriginal Organisations | * Youth Justice funds 14 Aboriginal organisations across Victoria to deliver key programs and services which aim to divert Aboriginal children and young people away from Youth Justice. * Youth Justice continues to work with the Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector by providing brokage funding, workforce, and capability uplift. |
| Aboriginal Healing Unit at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre | * The Aboriginal Healing Unit, opened in September 2023. focuses on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal women and supporting reintegration in a respectful, therapeutic way. Mentoring from Elders and Respected Persons help support the women building essential life skills in a safe space, for both those in remand and sentenced custody. Corrections and Justice Services (CJS) fund the ACCO Elizabeth Morgan House (an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation) to deliver the therapeutic services for Aboriginal women residing there, and more broadly for Aboriginal women at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. |
| Community grant funding from Corrections and Justice Services | * Corrections Victoria provided funding to Dardi Munwurro to deliver Men’s Healing and Behaviour Change Programs and the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency to deliver Beyond Survival Men’s -Healing Programs. * Corrections Victoria also provided funding for the Statewide Indigenous Arts in Prison and Community Program delivered by The Torch, the Wadamba Prison to Work Program delivered by Wanyaari. and the Baggarrook Aboriginal Women’s Transitional Housing Program delivered in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and Aboriginal Housing Victoria. |
| Crime Prevention Initiatives | * DJCS has supported Aboriginal-led crime prevention initiatives through the Crime Prevention Innovation Fund and Youth Engagement Grants. * In 2024, three Aboriginal-led projects funded under Round 2 of the Crime Prevention Innovation Fund reached completion. These projects included:   + Dardi Munwurro – Dardi Youth Foundations project, which provided creative and vocational pathways for disengaged Aboriginal youth in Melbourne’s north metropolitan region.   + Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative – Gulgurn Manja Gariwerd Academy Program, offered culturally informed early intervention supports in the Wimmera South West region.   + Aldara Yenara Australia Aboriginal Corporation – Bigauga Imilang Barparrik (Yesterday Today Tomorrow), delivered cultural camps and group activities for Aboriginal young people in Campaspe and Moira. |
| Emergency Recovery Victoria’s Aboriginal Community Recovery grant funding | * Emergency Management recovery coordination practices have dedicated governance arrangements to account for the specific relief and recovery needs of Aboriginal Victorians and Traditional Owners. |
| Aboriginal-Led Model of Health Care in Victorian Prisons | * The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and Justice Health have partnered to design an Aboriginal-led model of health care and develop measures to support the capacity building of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) to deliver in-reach prison health services. * Expanding the health services of ACCHOs into correctional settings will enable Aboriginal people in custody to access culturally appropriate primary health care with a focus on providing social and emotional wellbeing support that strengthens the continuity of health care as Aboriginal people transition into the community. * The development of the model is governed by a Co-Sponsor Executive Group and Service Design Group, both consisting of members from VACCHO, the ACCHO sector, Aboriginal Justice Caucus and DJCS. These groups are working together to ensure that service design, resources and capability building strategies are guided by Aboriginal decision-making, leadership, and strategic direction. * Aboriginal people in prison were also consulted throughout 2024 and will continue to inform the model in 2025. Work is underway to identify Aboriginal people in community with lived experience to inform service design on a regular basis. Implementation of this model is dependent on additional funding. |
| Delivery of the Victims Legal Service | * The Victims Legal Service (VLS), delivered in partnership through Aboriginal legal service providers (Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and Djirra), Victoria Legal Aid, and community legal centres continues to provide victim-centric, trauma informed and culturally safe legal support. * Through funding from the Australian Government a pilot expanding the VLS was launched in March 2024. The pilot provides legal advice to sexual violence victim-survivors seeking to protect their confidential communications and health information during court proceedings. As one of the pilot partners, Djirra provides direct support to women who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander seeking to report sexual violence to police and secondary consultations to other VLS pilot providers in confidential communications applications made in relation to women who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. |
| Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions |  |
| Funding for ACCOs | * In 2024, DJSIR invested $1.28 million in Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation to establish a Community Revitalisation site in East Gippsland. DJSIR also funded Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place to deliver culturally safe pre-employment programs, student mentoring, and coaching initiatives to support Aboriginal community members entering or re-engaging with the workforce. |
| Funding for the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI) | * In 2024, DJSIR provided $1.743m in funding to VAEAI to implement the Wurreker Strategy via the Wurreker Brokers program. * As part of this program VAEAI employs brokers across Victoria to facilitate collaborative relationships with First Nations communities, education and training providers and employers.   + Through this investment, VAEAI also hosts the annual Wurreker Awards. An event that celebrates First Nations success and showcases excellence. |
| Engagement with Aboriginal Chambers of Commerce (Small Business Victoria) | * In 2024, DJSIR’s Small Business Victoria (SBV) and Aboriginal Economic Development unit maintained monthly engagement sessions with Kinaway Chamber of Commerce and Ngarrimili. These engagements provided critical insights that shaped the co-design and delivery of business support programs, improving uptake and cultural safety for First Nations businesses. This partnership model strengthened the relevance and accessibility of DJSIR's programs across the state. |
| Aboriginal Business Survey | * In 2024, insights from the Aboriginal Business Survey continued to inform program and platform design at SBV, including improvements to the Business Victoria Aboriginal business page. The survey results, which engaged 83 First Nations businesses and held direct discussions with 54, were shared across DJSIR teams to inform culturally responsive outreach, grant design and communications. |
| Mental Wellbeing of Business Community Grants Program | * In 2024, DJSIR finalised delivery and acquittal of two $100,000 Mental Wellbeing of Business Communities grants to Kinaway and Ngarrimili. These First Nations-led programs supported cultural immersion activities, digital wellbeing resources, and co-designed wellbeing packs tailored to First Peoples business owners and creatives. The grants were fully delivered by October 2023, with outcomes informing future wellbeing support models for the sector |
| Sector strengthening plans include actions that pertain to the prioritising of cultural activities and languages. | * The first stage of the Aboriginal Languages Program was completed in June 2024 with the design and contextualisation of courseware for the Certificate II, Certificate III and Certificate IV First Nations Language courses, in partnership with Swinburne University, Tauondi Aboriginal College (SA) and VAEAI. |
| Department of Government Services |  |
| Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021-2026 (VALGS) | * Victorian councils were surveyed in July 2024 to assess councils’ awareness of VALGS and build a baseline data on where councils are in their VALGS implementation. The survey received a high response rate and DGS is considering actions in collaboration with local government peak bodies to support ongoing implementation of the VALGS. * The VALGS Strategic Working Group (SWG) made up of representatives from the Victorian Aboriginal community, local government, and the Victorian Government to support and monitor VALGS implementation concluded in 2024. The advice of the SWG will continue to inform the actions of Local Government Victoria and the sector in progressing VALGS in 2025 and beyond. |

Table C

Priority Reform Three – Transforming government organisations

National Agreement Clause 59:

1. Identify and eliminate racism
2. Embed and practice meaningful cultural safety
3. Deliver services in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and people
4. Increase accountability through transparent funding allocations
5. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
6. Improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

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| **Action** | **Key achievements in 2024** |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet – Whole of Government |  |
| Establish an Anti-Racism Taskforce which will identify and eliminate racism through a state-wide Anti-Racism Strategy (Strategy). | * The Victorian Government publicly released Victoria's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2029 on 27 November 2024. * The Local Anti-Racism Initiatives grant program was launched on the same day as Victoria's anti-racism strategy. The grant focused on providing local First Peoples, multicultural and multifaith community organisations the opportunity to design and implement projects on eliminating racism. Recipients of the grant would be announced in the second quarter of 2025. * The Anti-Racism Taskforce provides advice on a range of topics for the effective implementation of Victoria’s anti-racism strategy. * The Anti-Racism Taskforce is led by two co-chairs, one of whom is Sheena Watt MP, Member for Northern Metropolitan Region and a proud Yorta Yorta woman. |
| Self-Determination Reform Framework (SDRF) Implementation | * The 2023 DPC SDRF Report was approved by the DPC Board of Management on 11 September 2024. This is DPC’s fourth annual report. * DPC’s existing commitments under the SDRF have been consolidated and expanded for DPC-wide implementation. There are a total of five new commitments which seek to introduce a department-wide focus on embedding self-determination considerations across all areas of work and emphasise building and supporting the First Peoples workforce. * The 2024 SDRF reporting period has been extended to support meaningful reporting on new commitments. * DPC has continued to collect quarterly updates from each of DPC’s groups to track progress under the SDRF, including the new DPC-wide commitments which came into effect on 13 November 2024. |
| Establishment of the Yoorrook Truth and Justice Commission | * The State publicly released the Victorian Government Implementation Progress Report: Yoorrook for Justice on 18 October 2024. * The Inquiries Amendment (Yoorrook Justice Commission Records and Other Matters) Bill 2024 passed the Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2024 and the Legislative Council on 18 February 2025. The bill received Royal Assent on 25 February 2025. * The Commission’s final interim report is due by 27 June 2025. This report is expected to contain the Commission’s findings and recommendations in relation to its Land Injustice and Social Injustice lines of inquiry. * The Commission is required to deliver its final report, including an official public record as part of its obligations under the Letters Patent, by 30 June 2025. * The Government remains committed to engaging proactively and transparently with the Commission to support its truth-telling objectives. |
| Department of Treasury and Finance |  |
| Work to ensure DTF’s priorities under the Treasurer portfolio are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal Victorians. | * The Early Intervention Investment Framework (EIIF) Cultural Safety Framework aims to improve outcomes for First Peoples, including through supporting culturally safe partnerships, improving the design and implementation of EIIF programs, and contributing to advancing self-determination, and has been published on the DTF website. * The *Advancing Self-Determination in DTF Plan* has been promoted internally through the DTF intranet’s Aboriginal Matters page, along with other relevant resources including the *Aboriginal Cultural Capability Toolkit, Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners* and the *Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Plan*. * DTF’s Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan contains four areas of focus: improving attraction and recruitment, creating a culturally safe workplace, enhanced support for Aboriginal staff, and creation of progressive career experiences. DTF is currently developing an updated Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan. |
| Advancing self-determination through the Budget | * DTF has continued to refine business case templates through the budget process to encourage further collaboration between departments and First Peoples in Victoria when developing business cases on initiatives that directly affect or involve First Peoples. The templates developed by DTF sought the following information from departments: * Greater specificity on the First Peoples’ involvement and engagement in developing proposals * Accompanying reports, advice and/or letters of endorsement from First Peoples in Victoria. * DTF provided budget process advice to departments to encourage increased community engagement and influence on policy development and service designs that directly affect First Peoples in Victoria. * DTF collected data regarding what level of engagement departments undertook with First Peoples when developing proposals. Through collection of this data, DTF informed decision-makers of the extent to which First Peoples’ views had been taken into consideration while developing proposals. These changes provided a foundation to facilitate First Peoples engagement in budget processes. * DTF has continued to provide guidelines to analysts to determine if a budget proposal is aligned with Government’s commitment to self-determination. These guidelines support analysts in applying cultural safety and self-determination principles in their analytical work, policy advice and funding recommendations. * DTF held information sessions to inform analysts from both DPC and DTF on the updated requirements in business case templates and how analysts should use this information when briefing on budget proposals that affect or involve First Peoples. Analysts were advised that these budget proposals and briefing positions should demonstrate the impact of the proposed policy on First Peoples and how they align with Closing the Gap priority reforms. |
| Department of Education |  |
| Employment and support of the Koorie Education Workforce (KEW) | * The Koorie Staff Network totals 253 members and is made up of Koorie staff across corporate areas and schools. The network is run by Koorie staff for Koorie staff, and provides mentorship, collegiate support, celebrates cultural strength, and contributes to a culturally safe work environment. * DE has invested $13.6 million in the Aspiring Koorie Teachers (AKT) Now initiative to attract and retain more First Nations people to the school workforce. AKT Now will provide employment and wrap-around supports for Certificate IV vocational students, undergraduate Initial Teacher Education students, and postgraduate students who seek to enter Education Support roles and the teaching profession, including paid placement in a Victorian government school. Additionally, the program will seek to re-engage Koorie teachers who are not currently teaching back into the teaching workforce, including through financial incentives and other support. * DE’s annual Koorie Conversations Conference occurred in November 2024. This event supported the Koorie Education Workforce to come together for professional growth, learning and networking. * DE organised two yarning circles during the Yoorrook Justice Commission hearings to support its Koorie staff. Positive feedback suggested the yarning circles provided a place of safety and support for Koorie staff to connect and learn from one another. * To access further support, Koorie staff were provided access to specialist counsellors through DE’s revised Employee Wellbeing Support Services. These specialised counsellors either identify as Koorie or are extensively trained to ensure cultural safety. |
| Provision of anti-racism professional learning for department and education staff | * DE has provided a series of anti-racism and active bystander training sessions for both departmental and school-based staff. The anti-racism eLearn course remains on offer until December 2025. DE also progressed work to develop the next round of training sessions to support Koorie cultural safety, awareness, and inclusion. |
| Adherence to Child Safe Standard One | * In 2024, DE assessed 380 schools under Clause 5 of *Ministerial Order 1359*, which prescribes how Child Safe Standard 1 applies to schools. Of those 380 schools, 332 schools were assessed as compliant on initial assessment and 48 schools were identified as needing to take further action to meet their obligations under Clause 5. All government schools are supported by the department to achieve full compliance with their obligations under *Ministerial Order 1359* by the conclusion of the compliance assessment process. |
| Rollout of Community Understanding and Safety Training | * DE completed the rollout of Community Understanding and Safety Training (CUST) to almost all government schools, with school staff at 1,558 of the 1,692 Victorian government school campuses having undertaken CUST. CUST builds the capacity of all schools to better support Koorie learners, support a positive learning environment for Koorie learners and promote the Koorie culture. The 2016-17 State Budget provided $2.7 million over 4 years with $1.2 million ongoing to deliver CUST. * DE has approved timelines to commence a review of CUST, with a Marrung working group to be established. This group will review the current CUST program and will implement the recommendations from the resulting evaluation report. |
| Self-Determination in Education Reform | * The *Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education* report was officially released by the Minister for Education and VAEAI President on 30 May 2024. * The Report outlined what was shared by Koorie communities through the statewide Campfire Conversations process undertaken in 2022 and 2023. It identified 6 reform directions to ensure Victoria’s education system better reflects the experiences, cultures, and histories of Koorie people, amplifying their voice and expertise through genuine partnerships and shared decision-making in partnership with community. |
| Embedding Koorie perspectives in the curriculum | * DE is supporting schools and educators to embed and teach Koorie perspectives across the curriculum. The pilot *Koorie Curriculum Clusters* project has established relationships between schools and Registered Aboriginal Parties in 4 areas across the state, creating high-quality curriculum resources, increasing teacher confidence, and sharing best practice. * Schools in Phase 1 of the Koorie Curriculum Clusters completed a Teacher Reflection Tool (the tool), providing an opportunity for participating teachers to reflect on 9 classroom-based characteristics that are typically found in quality teaching and learning programs, as well as 5 whole-school characteristics. * The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in the VCE Vocational Major and Victorian Pathways Certificate – Resources Project* is currently being developed by VCAA to provide teachers of the VCE Vocational Major (VCE VM) and Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) with clear advice, professional learning, and support materials for integrating Koorie perspectives in the Applied Learning senior secondary certificates. * Established in 2023, a reference panel for the *Victorian Curriculum F-10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures Cross-curriculum Priority* met regularly in 2024 to provide advice on the revision for this curriculum area. The panel also provided advice to Curriculum Managers at VCAA to strengthen the representation of Koorie content within the content descriptions and elaborations of the 8 curriculum areas of the *Victorian Curriculum 2.0* which were published in Term 3 2024. The panel is co-chaired by Aunty Merle Miller from VAEAI and includes Koorie representatives from all school sectors and academic institutions. * VCAA collaborated with VAEAI on how to approach using Koorie perspectives within the revision of Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). This included VCAA’s Early Years Unit working with Annette Sax and Sue Atkinson to include a First Nations lens over the Ecological Model and Planning Cycle, using imagery of native plants to such as the Shea-oak. VCAA also worked with key stakeholders and experts to develop an Acknowledgement of Country for the front cover of the revised VEYLDF documents. * Within VELYDF, VCAA also incorporated Koorie cultural knowledge and perspectives by: * Including a cultural knowledge story to be at the forefront of the framework. * Redesigning the ecological model to include a cross section of the Shea Oak, with additional Koorie content and renamed as the Bioecological model. * Reimagining the teaching and learning approaches graphic using Koorie imagery to incorporate Koorie pedagogies, and reflect how integrated teaching and learning approaches, including play and intentionality, are weaved into early years education. * Expanding the planning cycle to incorporate learning and planning each as a continuum. A Koorie image will reflect how learning unfolds, with further exploration of ideas using culturally significant imagery such as the tree fern or the yam daisy. * Commencing planning for the production of resources to support the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures Cross Curriculum Priority*. Resources being planned include an introductory video and guidance documentation. |
| Department of Transport and Planning |  |
| Increased engagement with Transport and Planning First Peoples Staff Network | * In May 2024, DTP held the third annual Transport and Planning Portfolio First Peoples Staff Conference on Wadawurrung Country in Torquay. * The conference is a key support and retention initiative of the Yani Bangal Transport and Planning Portfolio First Peoples Careers Strategy 2023 – 2028. It provides First Peoples staff a chance to connect, network, participate in cultural and professional development workshops and encourages relationship building to enable peer-to-peer support. * The conference was attended by 32 First Peoples employees from across DTP and its portfolio agencies, including Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority, Suburban Rail Loop Authority, V/Line, Development Victoria, Yarra Trams and Metro Trains. * The conference supported procurement from First Peoples Victorian-owned businesses, including Blak Wattle Coaching and Consultancy, Jacinta Keefe Photography, a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony from Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Corporation and Wayapa Facilitator, Thaedra Frangos. * The conference featured workshops focused on enhancing First Peoples career development, supporting peer to peer connections and connecting to Traditional Owners through immersive localised cultural activities. |
| Advancing Cultural Safety Reforms on the transport and planning networks | * The Transport and Planning Portfolio First Peoples Cultural Safety Framework (Cultural Safety Framework) and DTP Action Plan 2024 – 2028 were launched at the 2024 Reconciliation Week event on 30th May 2024 by the DTP Secretary. The purpose of the Framework is to advance the cultural safety of First Peoples who work in or engage with the portfolio, and who use the Transport and Planning Networks. The Framework enacts the portfolio’s commitment to increasing cultural safety and supports DTP’s strategic goals of thriving places and connected communities. * The Framework’s vision is for First Peoples employees and transport users to thrive and feel culturally safe in the environments we manage. To achieve this, the Framework will commit the Transport and Planning portfolio to actions centred on four domains consistent with the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 and the Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Self-Determination Plan 2020-2023 (Self Determination Plan): People, Systems, Outcomes and Accountability. * The Framework comprises 22 actions which range from specific programs, systemic reviews, policy changes and accountability mechanisms. Since its launch, three actions have been completed and nine are in progress. * Work continues to progress on the Cultural Safety eLearn Module Development, as a key action under the Framework. The purpose of the eLearn is to advance cultural education and awareness and improve cultural proficiency, while driving positive transformation across the Transport and Planning Portfolio. Training will comprise various modules covering topics such as pre and post colonisation, history of First Peoples and the State, including government policies and an examination of the current climate with reference to the Victorian Treaty process and the Portfolio’s commitment outlining practical actions to progress self-determination. Content for the eLearn was developed by First Peoples business Nerdu Badji Education in consultation with Transport and Planning’s First Peoples Staff Network and Careers and Cultural Safety Working Group to ensure well-informed learning outcomes. * DTP’s portfolio agencies are developing their own Action Plans based on the Framework that will outline their commitment to embedding cultural safety within their specific workplaces and transport systems. |
| Providing First Peoples staff with appropriate support systems | * In 2024, the Girraway Ganyi Pilot Program was extended for an additional 12 months, reinforcing DTP’s commitment to supporting First Peoples wellbeing across the Transport and Planning Portfolio. First Peoples employees continued to opt in to Girraway Ganyi’s Employee Assistance Program, with the rate of First Peoples Staff accessing the services doubling in 2024. * Managers and senior leaders engaged in a series of workshops facilitated by Girraway Ganyi throughout 2024, focusing on key themes such as promoting cultural safety, addressing unconscious bias, analysing First Peoples employment statistics in Victoria, understanding historical contexts and their lasting impacts, providing effective workplace support for First Peoples, and implementing strategies to manage an inclusive workforce. |
| Grow and strengthen the First Peoples workforce across the Transport and Planning Portfolio through increased access to scholarship programs | * In 2024, the Yani Bangal First Peoples Scholarships Program continued to provide financial assistance for First Peoples enrolled in secondary school, TAFE and university for its fourth consecutive year. The program is funded by entities across the Transport and Planning Portfolio, with DTP and its agencies contributing $152,000 per annum in shared pooled funding. * The scholarship awards are tiered from $1,250 to $15,000 per recipient, per annum. Increasing by 25% for the forecasted additional three years, to account for the rising cost of living in Victoria. * In 2024, the program was extended by three years until 2026 with a significant emphasis on facilitating the transition of recipients into various employment opportunities. * Under the program, nine secondary school, eight university and one TAFE student received scholarships in 2024. A total of 60 scholarships have now been awarded from 2020 to 2024, comprising of 45 secondary school, two TAFE and 13 university scholarships. * In 2024, the program had the largest intake of university students since the inception of the scholarship program, with a strong focus on providing career opportunities and employment pathways into the transport and planning sector. |
| Department of Health |  |
| Advancing cultural safety reforms, standards and reporting across hospitals and primary providers. | * The Department of Health (DH) hosted the 14th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health (NATSIEH) conference. The NATSIEH conference is held biennially and is the first time since it began in 1998 that it has been held in Victoria. More than 160 delegates attended and included a strong focus on community-led initiatives, co-design, collaboration and engagement. Throughout a wide variety of presentations, the conference advocated the need for ongoing and further measures to monitor and act on the health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples with a clear purpose of reducing inequities. * The Department of Health reset its Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) for public health services from 1 July 2024 so that health services’ cultural safety performance can be assessed more effectively. One requirement is for health services to deliver mandatory cultural safety training. Other changes to the PMF include:   + Setting minimum standards and expectations for health services to meet their cultural safety commitments, including more specific guidance to meet the requirement of ‘high-quality’ training, such as having this training delivered by independent community-controlled organisations.   + Specific measurement and analysis of leave event data, such as ‘Did Not Wait’ (DNW) and ‘Leave/Discharge Against Medical Advice’ (LAMA) in Emergency Department settings are to be reviewed by DH to inform discussions with health services about their cultural safety performance. |
| Implement the Victorian Cultural Safety Framework and embed cultural safety in mainstream health responses with a priority on hospitals and response to public intoxication | The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Isander Cultural Safety Framework is under review to assess its utility, influence, and effectiveness, with opportunities for continuous improvement at the Department of Health (DH) and across all publicly funded Health Services. Analysis of DH Divisional Plans, 2024 People Matter Survey results, Cultural Safety eLearn survey results and Yoorrook Justice Commission papers will build on the achievements of 2024, which include:   * From July 2024, all hospitals and health services were mandated to report on their cultural safety training journeys as per the 2024-25 Statement of Priorities. This reporting ensures that cultural safety training is of strong quality and tailored to the healthcare setting with local community input. * VACCHO developed Cultural Safety Accreditation Standards as part of its Cultural Safety Accreditation Framework to inform the way cultural safety training is delivered across the health system. The approach is being trialled in three mainstream health services to finalise and implement the standards * DH engaged with six hospitals as part of the Aboriginal Cultural Safety in Hospitals Collaboration. This collaboration focused on finding practical solutions to improve cultural safety in hospitals, with the first focus area being emergency departments. * Both the collaboration and strengthened reporting on the 2023-24 Cultural Safety Fixed Grants has informed a new approach to actively engaging with hospital CEOs about their cultural safety performance. Monthly conversations and periodic health service forums now include a specific focus on cultural safety.   The Victorian Government has made significant progress in implementing the public intoxication reforms. Key updates include:   * The 2023-24 Budget provided $88.3 million over three years for a health-based response to public intoxication. This included $78.796 million over three years in output funding for DH to deliver the dedicated public intoxication service response. * Public intoxication outreach services commenced in metropolitan Melbourne and eight regional locations in November 2023. By end April 2024, there were 7,489 outreach engagements with 1,553 of those supporting Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. * Services became fully operational in metropolitan Melbourne, offering both Aboriginal-specific and general population outreach and sobering up services 24/7. Most regional locations were still working towards full-service delivery due to commissioning delays, workforce availability and the lead time required to establish places of safety. * A Monitoring and Oversight Group (IMOG) was established and is responsible for ongoing monitoring and oversight of the reforms. The group consists largely of Aboriginal Victorians and provided regular reports directly to the Minister for Mental Health. |
| Implementation of the Aboriginal Leadership in Cultural Safety initiative (State Government funded) to support Aboriginal leadership and self-determination to improve the cultural safety of Victorian health services. | * The ALICS initiative has been integrated and absorbed into the broader health reforms aimed at improving cultural safety across the health system, including the Cultural Safety Accreditation Framework (see above). * VACCHO continues to be funded as Secretariat of the Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Forum to support self-determined approaches to improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes a key priority to improve cultural safety of Victorian health services, where Aboriginal leadership remains a key enabler for the provision of culturally safe services. |
| Embedding cultural safety in mainstream health responses to public intoxication in alignment with the decriminalisation of public drunkenness reforms | Over the period November 2023 to 30 April 2024 period, there have been 7,489 instances of Outreach and Sobering Centre services provided to Victorians across the state, of which 81.5 per cent have been provided to Aboriginal community members. Of the 499 Sobering Centre and Place of Safety services 9.8 per cent have been to deliver to Aboriginal community members. Development of a health-led service model for the Public Intoxication Reform (PIR) which included:   * Developing a health-led model and a Service Framework to guide operations in consultation with an Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG) and First Peoples stakeholders. * Reviewing the Service Framework with key stakeholders including the PIR Aboriginal Advisory Group, the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and Victoria Legal Aid. * A multidisciplinary, time-limited advisory group was formed to guide discussions on clinical aspects of the PIR service model. Representatives included members from Lived and Living Experience Hub and departments’ Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Division. * The Service Framework will be updated and developed collaboratively as experience working within the model is better understood through monitoring and evaluation, in line with Treaty, Yoorrook Justice Commission recommendations, future Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) and mental health and wellbeing system reforms. |
| Grow and strengthen the Aboriginal workforce across the health sector through increased access to training through cadetships and scholarship programs. | * The Victorian Government has funded 10 dedicated Koorie Mental Health Liaison Officer (KMHLO) positions in Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Services. * Since the Aboriginal Mental Health Traineeship program was established, twelve trainees have graduated from the program as qualified Aboriginal Mental Health Clinicians and have entered full time employment in either an area mental health service or within an ACCHO working in the field of social and emotional wellbeing. * Continued funding and support of the Aboriginal Maternal Child Health program, supporting 15 Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) operating across 17 sites. This includes funding for Aboriginal Maternal Child Health service delivery; additional funding to boost flexible support to meet the growing Aboriginal population; and funding to enable staff to undertake lactation training and provide lactation support. * The Institute of Physical Activity and Nutrition at Deakin University was funded to partner with VACCHO to deliver training for the INFANT program, with VACCHO playing a lead role in the program’s implementation and evaluation. |
| Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action |  |
| Implement improvements to DEECA systems and processes to enable self-determination | * In 2024 DEECA developed a new self-determination reporting suite to enhance accountability in the delivery of DEECA’s Pupangarli Marnmarnepu Self-Determination Strategy and Implementation Action Plans. These system improvements support more comprehensive reporting updates and tracking of Key Performance Indicators, enabling greater transparency on the progress of DEECA’s self-determination commitments. * DEECA has played a key role in supporting the Yoorrook Justice Commission’s (the Commission’s) (the Commission) inquiries into historical and ongoing injustices experienced by First Peoples in Victoria. As part of the land injustice inquiries, DEECA supported three of its ministers to give evidence on the legacy of their portfolios, produced over 1700 documents, prepared 5 background papers, and responded to various requests for information. DEECA will continue learn from the Commission’s truth telling process as a driver for change in the next phase of delivering on DEECA’s Pupangarli Marnmarnepu Self-Determination Strategy. |
| Incorporate Government response from the First Principles Review for continuous improvement of DEECA engagement with Traditional Owners to enable Self-Determination | * DEECA continues to work with DPC as the lead agency for First Principles Review implementation. * DEECA will support DPC to implement revenue sharing for existing Public Land Authorisations on Country at the time of entry into a new or renegotiated Recognition and Settlement Agreement. It is anticipated that these recommendations will be operationalised from mid-2026 onwards following the required amendments to the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* *2010* and changes to National Resource Agreement and Land Use Activity Agreement templates. |
| Include actions towards self-determination in the DEECA Group Business Plans and Executive annual performance plans | * DEECA developed guidelines for all groups to embed Traditional Owner self-determination and consideration of legal obligations into business planning processes. * Aboriginal self-determination goals were embedded in the Executive Performance Planning process in October 2024 for the 2024–25 cycle. All DEECA executives are required to have an Aboriginal Self Determination measure under the mandatory “DEECA Priorities” goal in their performance development plan. |
| Deliver mandatory Cultural Safety Training package to DEECA staff | * In 2024, 77 sessions of Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training were delivered to 1227 DEECA staff. * DEECA reported 1.83% Aboriginal employment at the end of Quarter 2 (December 2024), a decrease from 1.89% in Quarter 1 (September 2024), against a target of 3%. The proportion of Aboriginal staff in leadership roles has increased from 11.5% in Quarter 1 2024–25 (September 2024) to 17% in Quarter 2 of 2024–25 (December 2024), and monitoring towards the 20% target will continue. * Progress has been made in increasing the number of DEECA people leaders who have completed Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training (ACST), rising from 37% in Quarter 1 of 2024–25 to 60% in Quarter 2, 2024–25. DEECA is working towards 100% completion rate for people leaders by the end of 2024–25. * The Aboriginal Cultural Capability Framework Implementation Plan is nearing finalisation and will be completed by June 2025. |
| Identify ways in which Traditional Owner values can be better reflected in DEECA’s planning systems | * In 2023–24, an overall improvement in the positive level of satisfaction of TOCs with the department’s progress in enabling self-determination was reported, reaching 65 per cent, up from 60 per cent in 2022–23 and 50 per cent in 2021–22. * DEECA introduced a new target of 70 per cent Traditional Owner satisfaction with DEECA’s progress in enabling self-determination, to come into effect in 2023–2024. DEECA has worked with the TOC Caucus Secretariat to complete a review and restructure of DEECA’s annual survey on Traditional Owner satisfaction with DEECA’s progress in enabling self-determination. The new survey will be delivered in early 2025. |
| Identify the potential DEECA legislative improvements to support the principles of self- determination | * DEECA has made progress with the renewal of Victoria’s public land legislation, including provision of briefings to the Yoorrook Justice Commission, First Peoples’ Assembly, and the TOC Caucus on the proposed reforms. DEECA anticipates undertaking further engagement with Traditional Owners in April and May 2025 on the proposed Bill. * TOCs continued to engage with the Great Outdoors Taskforce and the Forests Strategy to ensure the objectives of the Cultural Landscapes Strategy are embedded. * In October 2024, DEECA met with seven formally recognised Traditional Owners to provide updates on public land legislation reforms. Discussions included additional legislative amendments to align with government policy on the cessation of native timber harvesting. Written updates were also provided to ensure all formally recognised Traditional Owners were informed of progress. |
| Department of Families, Fairness and Housing |  |
| Transitioning greater control to Aboriginal Community control | * The department has commenced development of a monitoring framework to support ongoing implementation of the Statement of Recognition. The framework is positioned to review existing implementation activities which have been completed or are underway and to support the recommendation of future activities for DFFH and CSO staff. A draft framework has been developed and presented to the ACCO Advisory and Monitoring group on 19 November 2024. * The expansion of Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care continues. There are four ACCOs authorised to operate under the Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care program, Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC), and the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Care Community Agency (VACCA), Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC) and Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative. There are two ACCO’s currently undertaking pre-authorisation and are progressing to become fully authorised in 2025. * An evaluation with University of Melbourne for the Community Protecting Boorais evaluation has commenced and started to consult with Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency and, Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative. |
| Work undertaken to improve cultural safety of mainstream services including Government departments | * Achievements against the DFFH Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2026 and Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework, include:   + DFFH has exceeded the 4% Aboriginal executive target ahead of the 2026 deadlines. 8% of the executive workforce are Aboriginal. This includes representation on the executive board. DFFH has increased progress to the 3% Aboriginal workforce target, 2.6% of the department’s workforce are Aboriginal.   + A dedicated Aboriginal Child Protection Retention and Wellbeing project is being delivered, ensuring cultural safety for the workforce. The Aboriginal CP workforce has grown to 75 staff, from 48 in just two years. The program provides dedicated check ins with new staff, monthly CP wellbeing group meetings, and a dedicated Aboriginal Child Protection Aboriginal Staff Network. Pilots have commenced for Cultural supervision for Aboriginal Child Protection Workforce   + The Aboriginal Staff Network and annual conference provide a culturally safe space for staff to undertake development, networking and engagement.   + A dedicated Aboriginal Women in Leadership Fast Track program has been delivered, this ensures more of our women are supported to progress their careers. It includes, acting opportunities and dedicated executive coaching. In the first intake of the program, 80% of participants achieved their career goals, including career progression. * DFFH worked with ABSTARR consulting to develop the first Aboriginal Cultural Safety Measurement and Assessment tool for the internal workforce, the tool provides an index rating on how the department is tracking on cultural safety indicators aligned to the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework. It enables the department to prioritise focus areas for improvement.   + Aboriginal cultural safety facilitated training is mandatory for all staff and people leaders. The training aligns with recommendations from the Yoorrook for Justice: Report into Victoria’s Child Protection and Criminal Justice systems recommendations. * DFFH launched the Anti-racism action plan, to address systemic and individual racism. The plan is complemented by mandatory people leader training. |
| Establishment of Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Branch | * In December 2023, Homes Victoria brought together a range of functions and programs to form a newly established Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Branch. * During 2024, an Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Executive Director function has been appointed that supports the elevation of the Aboriginal portfolio response to support the delivery of the Closing the Gap priority reform agenda. |
| Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 2018-2028 Agreement | * In May 2024, the Women’s Safety Package provided additional investment to Aboriginal sexual assault services to ensure that Aboriginal people who are victim survivors of sexual assault including Aboriginal children and young people can access culturally safe and appropriate holistic services delivered by Aboriginal-led services. * DFFH and the Aboriginal Sexual Assault Working Group commenced work to determine how the investment will be implemented. The working group is Aboriginal-led and membership consists of the four ACCOs delivering the sexual assault services to community. * DFFH continued to work with Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus and the ACCO Family Violence Sector Forum to co-design a demand-based method to allocate $6.1 million in ongoing funding for Aboriginal frontline family violence services from the 2023-24 State Budget outcome. |
| Department of Justice and Community Safety |  |
| Strategies to effect structural transformation | **Aboriginal Justice Agreement (Burra Lotjpa Dunguludja) Phase 4 Evaluation and Monitoring**   * The evaluation of AJA4 sought to understand the performance of the AJA partnership over the past five years, progress against milestones to reduce over-representation of Aboriginal people in the Victorian justice system, and where focus and effort will be required under the next iteration of the Agreement (AJA5). The evaluation sought to measure the accountability of government and identify how the AJA is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal Victorians. * The framework for the evaluation was developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus in 2020 to ensure the evaluation was undertaken in a self-determined manner and accountability and oversight by Aboriginal stakeholders. * To measure and examine the impact of governance mechanisms under the AJA, on enabling greater Aboriginal involvement in justice decision-making, policy and legislative development, the Aboriginal Justice Partnership Survey was established in early 2021 on an annual basis (to the end of 2024). The survey sought responses from Aboriginal community leaders including Caucus members, to understand how the partnership is performing at both the statewide and regional level and how the structures are enabling Aboriginal self-determination in the justice system.   **Wirkara Kulpa, Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy**   * + Wirkara Kulpa, Victoria’s first Aboriginal Youth Justice strategy, has continued efforts to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people in Victoria’s youth justice system.   + Wirkara Kulpa is Victoria's first Aboriginal Youth Justice strategy. It is a strategy written for and by Aboriginal children and young people and led by the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, under the umbrella of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement. It is a 10-year strategy focused on supporting Aboriginal children and young people, so they remain outside the youth justice system and live culturally rich lives.   + The Aboriginal Justice Caucus and the Youth Collaborative Working Group (YCWG) (a sub-group of the Aboriginal Justice Forum) oversee the implementation of Wirkara Kulpa. In 2024, the YCWG reviewed and revised the Wirkara Kulpa implementation plan to ensure that work aligned with Aboriginal community priorities.   + Implementation of all 75 actions contained in Wirkara Kulpa will be completed in four tranches, with all actions commenced by 2027-28.   + All tranche 1 actions have fully commenced. Tranche 2 actions are underway, including:     - Development of an Aboriginal Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy     - Exploring on-Country alternatives to remand     - Embedding Aboriginal-specific principles in the new Youth Justice Act   ***Wirkara Kulpa* Performance Framework**   * + The *Wirkara Kulpa* Performance Framework (the framework) seeks to measure the outcomes and impact of *Wirkara Kulpa*, Victoria's first Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy, as a key action under Tranche 1. The framework will also increase transparency and set justice-related targets and accountability measures to improve Aboriginal children and young people’s outcomes. The framework will provide comprehensive data about the experiences of Aboriginal children and young people, with some data points dating back to the year 2000, when the Aboriginal Justice Agreement was first developed.   + To respect Aboriginal self-determination of key decision making and advice for framework development, a Project Control Group (PCG) was devised and made up of self-nominated Aboriginal Justice Caucus and YCWG members. The PCG participated in workshops and one-on-one engagements focussed on advising on the scope, measures and indicators, methods, and process for endorsement of the framework. The Youth Collaborative Working Group will guide implementation to ensure the Wirkara Kulpa Performance Framework best meets Aboriginal community priorities. The framework received endorsement from the Aboriginal Youth Collaborative Working Group and Aboriginal Justice Caucus in late 2024.   + The Framework strengthens accountability towards achieving outcomes within *Wirkara Kulpa* and furthers transparency with Aboriginal stakeholders.   The Framework is now being implemented and will set justice-related targets and accountability measures to improve Aboriginal children and young people’s outcomes, under guidance from the YCWG.  **Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer Recruitment and Retention Strategy (AWO Strategy)**   * + The AWO Strategy, developed and approved in consultation with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, was launched by Corrections Victoria in 2024.   + It recognises the significant and critical roles and responsibilities of the AWO position. It guides attraction and recruitment of suitable people to these positions, including a focus on support during initial engagement, expanded training and professional development opportunities and fostering connections with broader Aboriginal staff and community.   + The strategy has a target of a minimum 80% of AWO positions filled.   + The AWO Strategy was developed and presented to members of the R&R CWG. Aboriginal Justice Caucus (AJC) were consulted and approved the AWO Strategy. An Action Plan will be developed in early 2025.   + As a key deliverable under the AWO Strategy, CV is developing an AWO Handbook that will support staff to navigate and deliver their role effectively. An initial draft of the AWO Manual (Handbook) was completed in late 2024 and will be finalised in 2025.   Rolling recruitment for AWO positions is in place to work towards a full complement of AWO positions filled. Recruitment activities commenced in 2024 to fill AWO roles at Western Plains Correctional Centre due to commence prisoner intake on 1 July 2025.  **Financial Assistance Scheme**  In November 2024, an Aboriginal Support Pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of crime was launched as a part of the Financial Assistance Scheme. The Marra Yattakunar Pathway comprises a dedicated phone line and assessment stream that is accessible by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who wish to apply for financial assistance.  **Corrections Victoria Prison Workforce Strategy:**   * + The Prison Workforce Strategy was developed to uplift the capability of the Corrections Victoria workforce, including uplifting cultural safety for Aboriginal staff.   + It was released in October 2024 as part of an integrated approach to enhance the department’s cultural capability, and support the Aboriginal workforce.   + It is intended to guide recruitment, capabilities, training, and leadership expectations within CV. * Enhancing Aboriginal Cultural Safety is a key focus area of the Strategy - to improve how CV grows and supports its Aboriginal workforce and equips its prison workforce to provide culturally responsive services to Aboriginal people in our care. |
| Implementation of the Cultural Review | **Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System Implementation:**   * + The Cultural Review was an independent and comprehensive examination of the adult corrections system, focussing on the culture, wellbeing and safety of staff and those in custody – the review included a particular focus on Aboriginal cultural safety and self-determination.   + The Cultural Review Implementation sub-committee of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Collaborative Working Group (R&R CWG) established in 2023 met regularly in 2024 to guide and oversee development and implementation of Cultural Review initiatives.   + Subgroup consultation supported the shaping of reforms such as the Review of Prison Cultural Spaces, the development of a Cultural Capability Framework for the CV workforce, and a new cultural capability training package for prison General Managers.   + Reforms addressing recommendations from the Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections system in 2024 include:     1. developing the Corrections Victoria Prison Workforce Strategy     2. releasing the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2024-2027     3. appointing the Deputy Commissioner for Workforce and Aboriginal Outcomes, and     4. reviewing the IPV recruitment and retention strategy     5. developing the Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer Recruitment and Retention Strategy.   **Deputy Commissioner for Workforce and Aboriginal Outcomes**   * + The Deputy Commissioner for Workforce and Aboriginal Outcomes was appointed, responsible for leading the Safer Prisons, Safer People, Safer Communities reform agenda in Corrections Victoria (role commenced on 4 November 2024). This designated position, currently filled by an Aboriginal woman, represents a significant increase in Aboriginal leadership within Corrections Victoria and reflects the department’s commitment to self determination.   **Independent Prison Visitor (IPV) Recruitment and Retention Strategy**   * The Strategy was reviewed with a focus on enhancing diversity and coverage across Victorian prisons and recruiting new IPVs.   **Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer Recruitment and Retention Strategy**   * The Strategy was developed with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus and aims to better attract, recruit and retain suitable candidates to the position of Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer in Victorian prisons. |
| Development of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training | * The Aboriginal Justice Policy Reform Unit (AJPRU) developed an Operational Guide for Engaging with Aboriginal Justice Partners. The guide emphasises the importance of self-determination and requires business units to engage with Aboriginal justice partners on the design, development and reform of policies, programs, legislation and services that may have a significant, direct or disproportionate impact on Aboriginal people. * The guide was developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus and Policy and Legislative Change Collaborative Working Group. The internal guide was published in September 2024 with awareness raising sessions for DJCS staff in late 2024. |
| Operational Guide for Engaging with Aboriginal Justice Partners | * The guide emphasises the importance of self-determination and requires business units to engage with Aboriginal justice partners on the design, development and reform of policies, programs, legislation and services that may have a significant, direct or disproportionate impact on Aboriginal people. * The guide was developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus and Policy and Legislative Change Collaborative Working Group. The internal guide was published in September 2024 with awareness raising sessions for DJCS staff in late 2024. |
| Healthcare Services Quality Framework for Victorian Prisons | * In March 2024, the Victorian Ombudsman tabled the ‘Investigation into healthcare provision for Aboriginal people in Victorian prisons’ report including findings about the Healthcare Services Quality Framework. [*From 2023 update].* * DJCS has made progress in implementing the 5 recommendations from the Victorian Ombudsman report. All recommendations have been progressed; many are well progressed as work was already underway in response to the recommendations from the Inquest into the passing of Veronica Nelson. This includes:   + design an Aboriginal-led model of care and develop measures to support the capacity building of Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) to deliver in-reach prison health services (see Priority Reform 2 for further details)   + introduction of Aboriginal health checks in private prisons in 2024 to ensure that custodial healthcare is consistent and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people across all Victorian prisons   + development of cultural safety audit framework and tools in 2024 (for implementation in 2025). * In addition, the new Quality Framework includes a domain specific to Aboriginal children and young people in custody and was developed in consultation with the Aboriginal Youth Collaborative Working Group, Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Sub Working Group, and the Aboriginal Justice Caucus. * Aboriginal community health organisations, Aboriginal Justice Caucus members and Aboriginal people in custody were consulted between 2023-2024 prior to the implementation of Aboriginal health enhancements in Victorian public prisons. |
| Increased number of Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers across the prison system | * The Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer Recruitment and Retention Strategy (AWO Strategy) was launched in 2024 and recognises the significant and critical roles and responsibilities of the AWO position. It guides attraction and recruitment of suitable people to these positions, including a focus on support during initial engagement, expanded training and professional development opportunities and fostering connections with broader Aboriginal staff and community. The strategy has a target of a minimum 80% of AWO positions filled. * The AWO Strategy was developed and presented to members of the R&R CWG. Aboriginal Justice Caucus (AJC) were consulted and approved the AWO Strategy. * As a key deliverable under the AWO Strategy, CV is developing an AWO Handbook that will support staff to navigate and deliver their role effectively. An initial draft of the AWO Manual (Handbook) was completed in 2024 due for finalisation in 2025. * Rolling recruitment for AWO positions is in place to work towards a full complement of AWO positions filled. Recruitment activities commenced in 2024 to fill AWO roles at Western Plains Correctional Centre due to commence prisoner intake on 1 July 2025. |
| Growing Aboriginal staff and leadership in DJCS | * In 2024 the Aboriginal Workforce Unit transitioned into the Aboriginal Justice Group (AJG), to strengthen its alignment with Aboriginal-led leadership and strategic priorities. This move reflects the departments commitment to embedding cultural authority in driving initiatives that support attraction, recruitment, development and retention of Aboriginal staff. Under Aboriginal leadership, the Aboriginal Workforce Unit is now better positioned to influence and lead whole of department efforts to increase Aboriginal representation, build culturally safe workplaces and deliver on key actions under the departments Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2024-2027. * In October 2024 the department launched its Aboriginal Workforce Strategy (the Strategy) 2024-2027. The Strategy is part of an integrated approach to enhance the departments cultural capability, support its Aboriginal workforce and benefit Aboriginal communities through improved policy making, well informed program design, implementation and evaluation. The strategy addresses key actions from the Aboriginal Justice Agreement: Phase 4 and the Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System – Safer Prisons, Safer People, Safer Communities. * The Strategy is comprised of 3 key pillars that focus on attracting and retaining Aboriginal talent, creating culturally safe and supportive workplaces and creating employment pathways and building stronger careers. * The DJCS Aboriginal workforce has grown from 211 in August 2024 to 224 in April 2025, this represents a growth of 6.16% in less than 12 months. |
| Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Emergency Recovery and inclusion of Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery | * Informed by the principles of self-determination, ERV is using the Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Recovery as a key guide in responding to the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in recovery following an emergency. * The Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery delivered a $2.5 million of flood recovery grants program through two rounds since 2023 that is supporting flood recovery initiatives led by the following Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Traditional Owner corporations and one Aboriginal social enterprise as follows: * Aboriginal Community Elder Services Inc * Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service LTD * Bangerang Aboriginal Corporation * Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation * Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation (DDAC) * Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation * First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation * Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc * Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation * Tati Tati Kaiejin Ltd * Wayapa Wuurrk P/L * Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation * Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation * Emergency Management recovery coordination practices have dedicated governance arrangements to account for the specific relief and recovery needs of Aboriginal Victorians and Traditional Owners. * Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) has embedded the recruitment of Identified Aboriginal Cultural Healing staff across divisions and regions. These positions will support the Aboriginal community-led approach to healing country after fires. The Aboriginal Cultural and Healing Recovery Pillar has two Aboriginal staff members coordinating statewide requirements in the State Recovery Operations and Coordination Division. The Regional Recovery Operations and Programs Division has four Aboriginal positions embedded across the East and West regions – one Manager, Aboriginal Culture and Healing (VPS6) and three Aboriginal, Culture and Healing Coordinators (VPS5). Due to staff turnover, the three VPS 5 positions are currently vacant. * These dedicated ERV staff work with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community Organisations to prioritise culture, support trauma-informed healing, promote cultural safety and transfer power and resources to communities. * In response to the December 2024 fires, development of the Gariwerd Recovery Taskforce began, with membership including the three Traditional Owner Corporations that were impacted. |
| Aboriginal Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy | * The Aboriginal Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy was drafted throughout 2024 (finalised in February 2025). * This was driven by the Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Sub Working Group and informed by consultation with 35 Aboriginal young people across the state in November and December 2024. |
| Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions |  |
| Whole-of-department activities | * In 2024, DJSIR continued its internal transformation by embedding cultural capability, Treaty awareness, and procurement reform aligned to self-determination. Building on the 2023 rollout, over 350 staff completed cultural safety training in partnership with the Koorie Heritage Trust, and DJSIR expanded staff engagement with VACCHO to deepen understanding of how to work respectfully with First Peoples. Social Procurement Strategy updates reinforced prioritisation of Aboriginal suppliers, supporting more inclusive contracting and supplier diversity across departmental programs. This work aligns with DJSIR’s implementation of the Yuma Yirramboi Strategy. |
| Geelong Aboriginal Employment Action Research report | * In 2024, Deakin University, in partnership with DJSIR, progressed work on the Geelong Aboriginal Employment Action Research report. This culturally safe, community-informed research includes data gathered from yarning circles, interviews and focus groups with First Peoples, employers and service providers. The final report will include success factors and strategies to improve employment outcomes in the Geelong region and inform statewide models for First Nations employment pathways. |
| Department of Government Services |  |
| The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM)’s Ochre Strategy – For Our Generations | * BDM is continuing to finalise its Ochre Strategy – For Our Generations. This will replace BDM’s previous Coolamon Strategy 2017-2021, and builds on the Strong Identity, Strong Spirit program achievements. It will embed principles of self-determination, ensure culturally safe service delivery and increase birth registrations and birth certificate possession for all Aboriginal community members who are born in Victoria. |
| The Koorie Records Unit within the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) promotes awareness of Victorian Government records about Aboriginal Victorians within the PROV collection and aims to improve accessibility of these records to First Peoples in appropriate and culturally respectful ways | * The Koorie Records Unit provides dedicated services and support for First Peoples, including Stolen Generations survivors and their families, wishing to access historic Victorian Government records relating to themselves and their families. This includes a Koorie Reference Service in collaboration with the National Archives of Australia’s Victorian office, as Victorian Aboriginal Affairs records are held in both collections. * During 2024, the Koorie Reference Service received 189 requests for Aboriginal family history research assistance, resulting in 1,763 names searched and 3,002 name results located in PROV records using the KIN database. A total of 4,556 copies of records from the PROV collection were provided free of charge to Koorie Reference Service clients. * The Koorie Records Unit provided a number of workshops and advisory services for First Nations clients. * As part of PROV’s ongoing commitment to address legacy issues of description and increase the accessibility of records of high interest to First Peoples, several projects were completed including publication of enhanced item level descriptions, the adoption of new cultural safety protocols to better support the community, and the development resources including:   + topic Guide to records of the Aboriginal Protectorate and Guardian of Aborigines (1838-1860)   + a new edition of Finding Your Mob: a guide to researching Aboriginal family history at the Victorian Archives Centre   + an Aboriginal consultancy was engaged to deliver Cultural Safety and Self-Determination training for staff working with Aboriginal records and delivering services to the public. * PROV has established a Rights in Records Working Group to look at increasing accessibility of records, improving researcher experiences, and consider how to increase people’s rights in public records within the parameters of the *Public Records Act* 1973. * PROV has worked with the Yoorrook Justice Commission and the Department of Premier and Cabinet to ensure First Peoples evidence continues to be managed in accordance with Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles once the Commission has ceased and the records are held at PROV. |
| Improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the Social Procurement Framework. | * DGS works with Kinaway Chamber of Commerce to strengthen government procurement opportunities for certified Aboriginal businesses. Kinaway presented to the Procurement Officers’ Meeting forum on 20 November 2024, which is attended by procurement practitioners from departments and agencies across the Victorian Government. |
| Amendments to the *Local Government Act 2020* | * In 2024, the Victorian Government implemented further reforms to stamp-out inappropriate councillor behaviour and improve overall councillor conduct. Under the new Model Councillor Code of Conduct, councillors are required to support the Council when applying the Council's community engagement policy to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and the Aboriginal community. These reforms will support traditionally underrepresented cohorts to nominate for council elections by creating a more positive environment. |

Table D

Priority Reform Four – Shared access to data and information at a regional level

Clause 72 of the National Agreement: Government Parties commit to implementing the data and information elements, including to:

1. share available, disaggregated regional data and information
2. establish partnerships to improve collection, access, management and use of data
3. make data more transparent by telling people what data they have and how it can be accessed
4. build capacity of organisations and communities to collect and use data.

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| **Action** | **Key achievements in 2024** |
| Department of Premier and Cabinet – Whole of Government |  |
| Develop modelling of the trajectories for each socioeconomic target alongside the anticipated year when parity will be achieved. | * The socio-economic targets are set as ‘national targets’ and require a collaborative approach from all jurisdictions to achieve them. The Productivity Commission’s dashboard includes national trajectories to show the direction and constant speed of change needed from today to meet the target in future. * DPC prepared analysis of Victoria’s performance compared to national trajectories when the Productivity Commission released data for some targets in 2024. Modelling of trajectories may be considered further through Victoria’s new Closing the Gap Implementation Plan. * The Productivity Commission commissioned the Australian National University (ANU) Centre for Aboriginal and Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) to undertake a Review of the Methods for Assessing Progress on Closing the Gap in 2023-24. The Review made 12 recommendations to improve how progress is assessed and how jurisdictional contributions can be evaluated. Victoria is supporting consideration of recommendations to finalise the approach for implementing the recommendations by June 2025. |
| All departments to negotiate sector wide data access and sharing agreements that prioritise long term investment in ACCO data management | * Victorian Government departments have continued to progress work to increase data accessibility including preparing and sharing data packs with respective Aboriginal governance forums and ACCOs. * Further work is underway to support and resource ACCOs to build capacity and expertise in data collection, management, and analysis. |
| Establishing formal data sharing partnerships | * The VACCA (the Partnership Forum's children and families sector representative) is leading a scoping exercise for Victoria’s Place-based Partnership and Community Data Project, in partnership with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo, local communities, key sector representatives and government. * This follows Joint Council's June 2023 endorsement of Gippsland as Victoria's location for a combined Place-based Partnership and Community Data Project, with a focus on child protection. * The aim of a future Community Data Project is to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to:   + Analyse and use regional specific data to help drive their own development and discussions with government on Closing the Gap.   + Enable communities and organisations to collect and access other data which they consider important.   + Be covered by localised agreements, consistent with Priority Reform One between governments and participating ACCOs in the region to ensure data sovereignty. |
| Department of Education |  |
| Sharing data about Koorie learners with Koorie stakeholders in education | * DE’s newly established **Data Governance Council** provides executive oversight of its Data Governance model and acts as an advisory body to provide recommendations about how data and information should be governed. Council membership includes DE’s Koorie Outcomes Division, to ensure Council decisions and advice align with Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles. The Council will play a key role in implementing any whole-of-Victorian-government Indigenous Data Sovereignty strategy within DE. * DE has actively reported relevant data to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the Victorian Government Implementation Plan, the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework, the Report on Government Services and the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Report. * In 2023, DE added new questions to the Attitudes to School Survey about student experiences of racism. |
| Alignment with Aboriginal Data Sovereignty Principles | * DE continues to support alignment with the principles of Aboriginal data sovereignty. DE has held several internal workshops to build awareness and capability in Aboriginal data sovereignty. |
| Department of Transport and Planning |  |
| Quarterly reporting to Ministers on First Peoples procurement and employment data | * DTP reports quarterly to all Transport and Planning Portfolio Ministers on Portfolio-wide self-determination commitments under the Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Self-Determination Plan 2020-2023 (Plan). * This includes quarterly reporting on the Portfolio’s performance against Victoria’s Social Procurement Framework. Under the Social Procurement Framework, the Portfolio reports on direct procurement from First Peoples businesses and indirect employment outcomes and workforce participation on Victoria’s major transport infrastructure projects. * The Portfolio has seen strong yearly growth in expenditure with First Peoples businesses:   + 2019-2020 = $1,489,810   + 2020-2021 = $1,339,300   + 2021-2022 = $2,897,530   + 2022-2023 = $7,877,089   + 2023-2024 = $16,355,191 * The Portfolio directly engaged 28 First Peoples businesses in Q1 2024-2025 with total expenditure of $3,859,744. * DTP also reports to its Ministers on progress against the government's commitments in relation to employment of First Peoples, including the 2% employment target. * In 2024, there was a notable 8% increase in self-identifying First Peoples employees across the Portfolio from 86 to 92, bringing the Portfolio average to 0.61% against the 2% employment target. There was also a consistent increase in the rate of staff whose tenure exceeded one year by 3%, to a total of 30 people in Q2 2024/2025. The portfolio successfully increased VPS5 and VPS6 grades by 63% and 50% respectively. |
| Department of Health |  |
| Support VACCHO to deliver a digital transformation of the Victorian Aboriginal health sector including embedding of telehealth, improved client and referral management systems and development of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Information System | * A dedicated First Nations nurse employed by Northern health to support enhanced engagement with Aboriginal Victorians by raising awareness of the VVED to improve health literacy and follow up with patients post consultation. |
| The review and refinement of the Koori Maternity Services (KMS) minimum dataset, in partnership with VACCHO and the KMS workforce, will include the establishment of an agreed format and processes for data reports back to KMS providers (health services and ACCOs) | * The KMS minimum dataset provides comprehensive service delivery and client profile data including information on various aspects of maternity care such as antenatal visits, smoking during pregnancy, vaccination status, and postnatal care. * The review of the dataset involved collaboration with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and the KMS workforce. This partnership ensures that the guidelines and dataset are culturally safe and support Aboriginal health and wellbeing. * The data shows significant increase in attendance at Koori Maternity Services across 2023-24 with 870 women attending KMS, more than doubling the attendance rate in the four years between 2020-21 and 2023-24. This indicates improved engagement and access to culturally safe, holistic, and responsive care for Aboriginal women and their families. * The updated dataset and e-reporting form provide a more informed evidence base for future program development. This helps guide the ongoing integration of services for more flexible, responsive care that is culturally safe. * DH has provided funding to VACCHO and the Royal Women’s Hospital to support the KMS workforce, including approximately $543,000 per year to VACCHO and $148,000 to the Royal Women’s Hospital. |
| Strengthened data monitoring of Statewide Aboriginal cancer screening participation through the Victorian Cancer Screening Data Monitoring Framework | The Victorian Cancer Screening Data Monitoring Framework plays a crucial role in monitoring cancer screening participation among Aboriginal communities in Victoria:   * The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) is a key partner in the Victorian Cancer Screening Framework with funding to lead cancer screening efforts for Aboriginal Victorians. * VACCHO and the Australian Centre for Prevention of Cervical Cancer (ACPCC) have partnered to deliver a suite of culturally appropriate education, resources, and supports to clinicians. This includes the development of self-collection kits and coverings for clinician-collected cervical screening tests. Over 2,000 coverings and almost 3,000 self-collection kits were distributed to over 40 health services in Victoria in 2023-24. * VACCHO has promoted key culturally safe cervical screening messages through social media platforms, reaching over 19,000 followers during Women’s Health Week 2024. Additionally, VACCHO has promoted the alternative bowel cancer screening pathway to Victorian ACCOs, providing demonstration kits to community members to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. * The Beautiful Shawl Project saw a notable increase in breast screening among Aboriginal clients, with a 39.5% increase on the previous 12-month period. In 2023-24, 406 Aboriginal clients had a breast screen, serviced through 22 ACCOs. |
| Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action |  |
| Explore what Indigenous Data Sovereignty, as committed to in the Government's Self- Determination Reform Framework, means to Traditional Owners within Victoria in relation to DEECA | * The Traditional Owner Corporation Caucus was briefed on DEECA’s approach to implementing the Pathway towards an Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDS) Policy at DEECA. * The Pathway Towards an Indigenous Data Sovereignty Policy (PIDSP) is being implemented in line with the Project Management Plan endorsed in September 2024. * A Systems Audit is underway, with broad engagement across DEECA to understand the systems and the complexity of modifying them to account for Indigenous Data. * Process discussions have commenced for the incorporation of PIDSP into Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training. * Principles set out in the PIDSP have also been applied to DEECA’s participation in Yoorrook Justice Commission response. |
| Department of Families, Fairness and Housing |  |
| Establishing formal data sharing partnerships | * The ACF Data Working Group was established in September 2024 to review and align existing and potential data systems/sets with the revised Wungurilwil Gapgapduir strategic actions and address   corresponding data requirements. The Working Group meet fortnightly and are developing a set of proposed  data metrics that align with the updated Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Action Plan and milestones, as well as establish working protocols between the ACCO caucus and the department. |
| Increase access and ownership of Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness data | * In 2023-24, Homes Victoria has continued its commitment to the data sharing process through the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum. This offers access to specific Aboriginal housing and homelessness data to support the implementation approach of the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework. Data is provided at a local and statewide level to support the identification of data trends and local needs. * Work is underway to refine the data produced to inform the broader Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework implementation. * Homes Victoria is sharing the data provided to the AHHF to the various Aboriginal governance groups. DFFH is developing a shared approach for all relevant Aboriginal governance mechanisms across DFFH/DH. * This work enables the various ways in which Aboriginal data sovereignty principles can be applied to governance and management of DFFH/DH associated Aboriginal partnership forums and related groups. * In 2025, Homes Victoria is developing a Portfolio Optimisation Model (POM) for Aboriginal housing. The intention of the POM is to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations to analyse and use regional specific data to help drive their own development and empowering these organisations to have informed discussions with governments on Closing the Gap. |
| Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 2018-2028 Agreement | * In April 2024, a dedicated data position in Family Safety Victoria was established to support the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum in accessing and interpreting family violence data with regional profiles. * In October 2024, data from across the family violence and sexual assault service system was provided to each of the 11 Dhelk Dja Regional Action Groups. * The Standard Indigenous Question was mandated within The Orange Door network to better ensure the option for a culturally safe response was provided. |
| Department of Justice and Community Safety |  |
| Continued monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of AJA4 | * The AJA4 outlines a range of measures and indicators developed by the AJF, and expectations for the monitoring and evaluation of commitments and principles under the Agreement. * This contributes to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of AJA4 and provides AJA partners with information on progress, strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned. * All actions under the AJA must be presented to the Aboriginal Justice Caucus before it can be marked as ‘completed’*.* * DJCS, in partnership with Aboriginal Justice Caucus, is finalising the evaluation of AJA4 and is committed to providing transparent results by seeking the endorsement of the Aboriginal Justice Caucus. |
| Regional data sharing through AJF papers, Collaborative Working Groups or regional level frameworks and initiatives | * Following a request from the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Collaborative Working Group of the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, in early 2024 DJSC started publishing (on the Corrections Victoria website) monthly information about the number of Aboriginal people in prison across Victoria. This data goes back to December 2022 and is updated monthly. * Bespoke data packs were developed and provided for the first and second RAJAC meetings throughout 2024 for Community Corrections, Youth Justice, and Victorian crime data. * At AJFs 67, 68 and 69 in 2024, the following data was provided as standing updates, and was distributed across the Forum’s membership and regional networks:   + Corrections Victoria - Complaints of Alleged Mistreatment, Leave Permits, Use of Oleoresin Capsicum Spray   + Corrections Victoria - Incarceration and Self Harm Incidents – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples   + Victoria Police - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Complaints and Allegations Data   + Youth Justice comprehensive data pack - including Trend Analysis, Female Data, Complaints and Program Data. * Arising as an action from AJF 68, a new standing paper on Aboriginal people on parole is now being prepared and was presented for the first time at AJF 69. * Additionally, a yearly data pack is prepared and provided to AJF that outlines trend data and profile information on Aboriginal people in prison and under supervision of Community Correctional Services as of 30 June each year. * In 2024, program data shared at each R&R CWG included:   + Health initiatives (the number of people accessing Aboriginal health checks and culturally appropriate, holistic health care in prisons)   + Remand and Short Sentence initiatives (the number of people involved in programs)   + Program and Transition initiatives (the number of people involved in programs). * Community Correctional Services General Managers, Prison General Managers and the Commissioner for Youth Justice attended RAJAC meetings throughout 2023 and shared regional data with the committees. |
| Crime Statistics Agency’s Aboriginal Data Indicators | * The Crime Statistics Agency released an expanded set of statistics in early 2024 related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Corrections Victoria custody. * Aboriginal specific data reports are now published monthly on the Corrections Victoria public website. * Data sets include the number of Aboriginal people in prison and reporting to Community Correctional Services (CCS), broken down into a range of data categories including age, sentence type, and prison/CCS location. * The Crime Statistics Agency is developing additional statistics to be released to the public which will show the experience of Aboriginal victims of recorded crime. This builds on the interactive data visualisations for key Aboriginal Justice Indicators developed in 2023. In 2025, the Crime Statistics Agency consulted with the AJC on plans to commence public reporting on the new police-recorded Aboriginal victims of crime data. * The Aboriginal Justice Indicators were identified through consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders and contain information relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their interactions with Victoria Police, including data on alleged offenders, victims of crime, and parties involved in family violence incidents*.* |
| Aboriginal Victims of Recorded Crime Data | * Arising from a request from the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, the Crime Statistics Agency is developing additional statistics to be released to the public which will show the experience of Aboriginal victims of recorded crime. This improvement of data availability is in line with data sovereignty principles. * Following statistical development work, the proposed new outputs will be taken to the Aboriginal Justice Caucus for review and any feedback prior to finalisation for public release by the Crime Statistics Agency in 2025. Historically, data quality was inadequate around Victoria Police's recorded crime data, which hindered the release of this data into public reporting. However, improvement in recent years makes this work now possible. Statistical development work is well advanced and due to go back to the Aboriginal Justice Caucus in early 2025. The department will continue to take direction from the Aboriginal Justice Caucus in relation to data sovereignty. |
| Youth Justice data sharing | * Youth Justice has coordinated regional data dashboards regarding Aboriginal children and young people, provided to RAJACs quarterly. * Aligned with the Wirkara Kulpa Performance Framework, this is an improvement from the previous provision of regional data packs within quarters 2 and 4 of the previous financial year. |
| Contribution to national deaths in custody dashboard and implementing additional information sharing step | * Victoria continues to contribute to the enhanced reporting measures of deaths in custody by expediting its reporting procedures. |
| Independent evaluation into the justice impacts of the public intoxication reform | * Monash University is continuing their independent evaluation into the justice impacts of the public intoxication reform in consultation with its Community, Legal and Advisory Services (CLAS) Committee, which includes representatives from the AJC, the Day family and ACCOs. * Monash will share a consultation draft of its interim report with these stakeholders once completed. The interim report is likely to be finalised by April 2025. |
| Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions |  |
| Data sharing with the Yuma Yirramboi Koori Council | * In 2024, DJSIR continued data-sharing arrangements with the Yuma Yirramboi Koori Council, including updates on Jobs Victoria outcomes and Aboriginal participation in employment programs. This supported informed decision-making and aligns with broader efforts to implement the department’s Aboriginal Data Sovereignty Framework, which is being developed in partnership with First Peoples stakeholders. |
| In partnership with VAEAI, DJSIR undertook extensive consultations with Indigenous leaders across Victoria’s TAFE network to discuss the trends and qualitative factors underpinning First Nations participation and engagement in Vocational Education and Training | * In 2024, DJSIR partnered with VAEAI to continue analysing consultation outcomes with Indigenous leaders across Victoria’s TAFE network. This work built on 2023 engagements and focused on data-informed strategies to strengthen First Nations participation, retention and outcomes in vocational education and training. Key themes included access barriers, preferred course types, cultural safety, and gender-responsive pathways. |
| Department of Government Services |  |
| Enhance data development and sharing across Government on community infrastructure provision in discrete indigenous communities to support target 9b of the National Agreement. | * In relation to telecommunications, which is nationally regulated, there is no jurisdictional standard covering the adequacy of mobile and broadband telecommunications services. The Victorian Government advocated for the establishment of a range of Telecommunications connectivity standards in its submission to the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review (RTR). The Commonwealth Government will respond to the RTR in mid-2025. * The Victorian Government submission to the RTR also recommended the Commonwealth Government establish a multi-purpose data platform that would support target 9b of the National Agreement. |
| Maggolee website, developed by Reconciliation Victoria, is a resource for local councils to work more closely with Aboriginal communities | * $130,000 was provided to Reconciliation Victoria in 2023-24 to support to local government workers to strengthen engagement with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, increase First Peoples leadership and governance over the VALGS implementation process, increase local government self-determination awareness and case studies, and improve the functionality of the Maggolee website. |