

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy Statement



**ACT**  
Government

Justice and Community Safety

*Our Vision – To be recognised as the leader in the provision of effective corrective services which positively change lives, reduce reoffending and prevent future victims.*

Achieving our vision means responding to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT criminal justice system through listening and working in genuine partnership and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and through the provision of culturally-appropriate and culturally-safe correctional services that promote healing, rehabilitation, and successful reintegration into the community.

ACT Corrective Services acknowledges that the key issues and drivers for the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system include intergenerational trauma, poverty and unemployment rates, higher levels of family separation and violence, policing practices and more.

ACT Corrective Services provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with access to services that provide cultural engagement, opportunities to maintain kinship relationships, and holistic health and wellbeing in a manner that is culturally competent and appropriate. Connection to family, community and support networks is promoted as far as practicable.

ACT Corrective Services commits to the implementation of the recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* as relevant to the ACT, and to ending Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody in the ACT.

ACTCS employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in identified positions to provide liaison and client support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including welfare support, liaising with family and kinship members, and facilitating cultural practices.

ACTCS aims to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural proficiency in all areas of operations.

ACT Corrective Services is committed to:

- > supporting the distinct cultural and other rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to maintain, protect and develop their cultural heritage, language, knowledge and kinship ties under the *Human Rights Act 2004*;
- > implementing a holistic and culturally appropriate model of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- > providing a broad range of culturally appropriate rehabilitative offender services;
- > facilitating access to appropriate support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- > expanding training and industry opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the Alexander Maconochie Centre that link to employment opportunities in the community;
- > working in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations;
- > developing opportunities for co-design and increasing consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies on changes that affect their community;
- > recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to designated positions that support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and exceeding government targets for the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff;
- > retaining and developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and providing opportunities for progression;
- > realising the development potential of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through dedicated staff forums and committees on service improvement;
- > ensuring staff are trained on the specific cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Jon Peach** | Commissioner, ACT Corrective Services