

OVERARCHING BILATERAL INDIGENOUS PLAN

BETWEEN

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

AND

THE STATE OF VICTORIA

TO CLOSE THE GAP IN INDIGENOUS

DISADVANTAGE

2010 - 2015

A New Partnership to Close the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage

Preliminaries

1. The Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Victoria (the Parties) are committed to Closing the Gap in disadvantage between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people in Victoria.
2. In August 2007, the first Overarching Agreement on Aboriginal Affairs was signed by the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Victoria. This new plan builds on that first Overarching Agreement on Aboriginal Affairs.
3. In December 2007, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a new partnership between all levels of government to work with Indigenous communities to achieve the target of Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage.
4. Accordingly, COAG have agreed to replace the 2007 Overarching Agreement on Aboriginal Affairs with a new Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan (OBIP) to provide a platform for implementing the new partnership in Victoria.
5. This OBIP establishes how the Parties will work collectively and in partnership with Indigenous communities to realise the COAG commitments and objectives, within the specific circumstances and challenges in Victoria. This will include:
 - progressing the implementation of the National Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy for Indigenous Australians by detailing actions to be taken for each key action area;
 - recognising Indigenous policy and program frameworks and the priority areas for bilateral action already in place in Victoria such as those identified under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) as outlined in **Attachment 3**;
 - outlining partnership and representation arrangements for engagement between governments and Indigenous Victorians;
 - establishing robust and ongoing bilateral governance and oversight mechanisms; and
 - by
 - clearly articulating activities that the Commonwealth and the Victorian Governments will undertake to improve data.

Policy Frameworks

Closing the Gap

6. The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) agreed by COAG has been established to frame the task of Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage and sets out the objectives, outcomes, outputs, performance indicators and performance benchmarks. The NIRA is the national policy framework outlining the COAG agreed Closing the Gap targets and Building Blocks through the National Integrated Strategy for Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage.
7. The COAG agreed National Integrated Strategy for Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage is the identification of and commitment to targets to reduce Indigenous disadvantage and associated building blocks or areas for action. This Strategy acknowledges the importance of Indigenous culture and engagement and positive relationships with Indigenous Australians.

8. The NIRA is being implemented in Victoria through National Agreements and National Partnership Agreements.
9. The COAG Closing the Gap targets will be achieved through activities outlined in the Implementation Plans that support each National Partnership Agreement. A summary of the National Partnerships agreed between the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments and areas of Commonwealth Investment is outlined under each Building Block at **Schedules A – G** of this Plan.
10. The COAG Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy has been agreed to coordinate the delivery of services to Indigenous Australians to address the disadvantage experienced by many Indigenous Australians living in urban and regional areas and will require a multi-faceted approach. This Strategy builds on the experience of all jurisdictions in listening to Indigenous people in urban and regional areas and recognises that approaches to implementation will reflect the different circumstances and needs of Indigenous individuals, families and communities in each State or Territory. It reflects COAG's commitment to working in partnership with Indigenous people to achieve the Closing the Gap reforms agreed by COAG across the health, housing and homelessness, early childhood development, education and employment spheres and recognises this will require the development and maintenance of strengthened partnership arrangements. The Strategy has a particular application in Victoria as this jurisdiction has only urban and regional areas. Implementation of this Strategy is outlined in **Schedule H** of this Plan.

Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework

11. The Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) has been in place since 2006. The VIAF has provided the strategic direction for reforms undertaken with Indigenous Victorian communities.
12. In 2010, the Victorian Government adopted the new Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework 2010-2013. The Plan incorporates national reforms and establishes stringent targets for closing the gaps that are consistent with the national COAG targets. The 2013, 2018 and 2023 Targets adopted under the VIAF are provided in **Attachment 4**.
13. The Parties acknowledge the VIAF is consistent with the COAG Targets, Building Blocks and Service Delivery principles and responds to circumstances specific to Victoria.
14. The Parties note the current Strategic Areas for Action adopted within the VIAF 2010-2013 and where possible commit to working collaboratively to further their implementation. The six Strategic Areas for Action are to:
 - Improve maternal health and early childhood health and development;
 - Improve education outcomes;
 - Improve economic development, settle native title claims and address land access issues ;
 - Improve health and well being;
 - Build Indigenous capacity; and
 - Prevent family violence and improve justice outcomes.

COAG Targets and Building Blocks

15. The NIRA was agreed by COAG in November 2008 and established six agreed targets:
 - Close the life expectancy gap within a generation;
 - Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade;
 - Halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade;
 - Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade;
 - Within five years all four year olds in remote Indigenous communities have access to a quality early childhood education program; and
 - Halve the gap for Indigenous young people in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

16. COAG recognises that overcoming Indigenous disadvantage will require a long term, generational commitment that sees major effort directed across a range of strategic platforms or 'Building Blocks'. The Building Blocks endorsed by COAG underpin reforms developed to achieve the six specific targets aimed at Closing the Gap. The Building Blocks are:
 - Early Childhood;
 - Schooling;
 - Health;
 - Economic Participation;
 - Healthy Homes;
 - Safe Communities; and
 - Governance and Leadership.

17. COAG recognises that strategies aimed at achieving improvements in any particular area will not work in isolation – the Building Blocks must fit together through the integration of policy ideas and an agreed approach to their implementation.

18. Further detail on the agreed Building Blocks are set out in **Schedules A to G** of this Plan and the Parties agree to work together through the appropriate forum to implement the areas of joint interest as agreed in the Schedules.

19. The Parties acknowledge the VIAF as being consistent with the Closing the Gap targets and the Building Blocks. The Parties recognise delivery of the VIAF Strategic Areas for Action and achievement of related targets will significantly contribute to the achievements of the national targets in Victoria.

20. The Parties acknowledge that the Indigenous specific and other mainstream National Partnership Agreements do not represent the totality of government effort required to achieve the national and Victorian targets. The Parties through this OBIP commit to better coordination of the full effort by both governments to achievement of the COAG and VIAF targets.

21. The Parties agree to address drivers of disadvantage in an integrated way. This may include through local and regional agreements.

22. The Parties agree that future COAG and other relevant activity should be incorporated into these Schedules where appropriate.

COAG Agreements

23. In making this Plan, the Parties have regard to the NIRA which captures the objectives, outcomes, outputs, performance measures and benchmarks that all governments have committed to achieving through various National Agreements and National Partnership Agreements in order to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage.
24. The Parties acknowledge the following Indigenous specific National Partnership Agreements that are being implemented within the framework provided by this Plan:
 - National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development;
 - National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes;
 - National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing; and
 - National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation.
25. The Parties agree that where other National Partnership Agreements adopted by COAG for Victoria have particular relevance to the Closing the Gap targets, relevant aspects will be incorporated within this Plan. See **Attachment 1** for a list of relevant National Partnerships and National Partnership Agreements.
26. The Parties acknowledge the role of the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse in helping build the evidence base which contributes to achieving the Closing the Gap targets and objectives in the NIRA.
27. Through the Schedules, the Parties will work in partnership to:
 - Align where possible existing Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government Indigenous specific initiatives, including strategic effort outside the COAG National Partnerships and Agreements;
 - Align where possible the reporting requirements associated with these activities consistent with the need to improve transparency of Commonwealth and State performance while eliminating duplication or unnecessary reporting; and
 - Develop and share an evidence base, including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.
28. Schedules to this Plan include one for each Building Block. These Schedules set out the work being undertaken in Victoria to support the Closing the Gap targets and as expressed through the National Partnerships and Agreements listed in **Attachment 1**.

COAG Service Delivery Principles

29. In making this Plan the Parties have regard to the COAG Service Delivery Principles for Programs and Services for Indigenous Australians (Schedule D to the NIRA). These principles aim to guide the design and delivery of Indigenous specific and mainstream government programs and services provided to Indigenous people. These Principles are shown at **Attachment 2**.
30. Consistent with these principles, the Parties are committed to building on existing bilateral arrangements and to working cooperatively and in good faith towards achieving mutually agreed objectives.

Principles Underpinning this Bilateral Plan

31. All activities under this Plan will be clearly linked to the Closing the Gap targets, recognising that relevant activities can include functions of either Party that are not currently encompassed by the NIRA.
32. The Parties acknowledge that the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) 2010 - 2013 is consistent with and furthers the achievement of the COAG Closing the Gap targets. The Parties have regard to the targets outlined in the VIAF and where possible are committed to using this Plan to support their achievement.
33. **Attachment 3** outlines the relationship between the COAG targets and building blocks and the VIAF 2010 - 2013.

Indigenous Context in Victoria

34. The Parties acknowledge the very particular profile of Indigenous Victoria as described below.
35. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) projections suggest that in 2010 there are around 36,700 Indigenous Victorians. They comprise close to 0.7 per cent of the Victorian population and around 6.0 per cent of Indigenous people across Australia. The estimated median age of Indigenous Victorians is 21.8 years old.¹
36. The population is growing with significantly higher birth rates than that experienced by the rest of the Victorian population.
37. The Indigenous Victorian population is widely dispersed across Victoria with close to half living in Melbourne and the rest in regional and rural Victoria. Many Indigenous Victorians do not live on their own country, including those whose traditional lands are in other States and Territories. Migration from other States and Territories has expanded the numbers of Indigenous Victorians.
38. The Indigenous population of Victoria is diverse in cultural background with approximately 10 per cent of the Indigenous population in Victoria identifying their cultural heritage as being Torres Strait Islander (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006).
39. There are significant gaps in perinatal care, early education, primary, secondary and further education as well as in labour market, housing, health, justice and household income outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians. The Parties note that reforms undertaken by COAG and through the VIAF to close the gaps require significant improvements to service delivery systems funded or delivered by both Parties.
40. While important to improve outcomes for every Indigenous Victorian, the Parties note the particular demographic profile of Indigenous Victorians emphasises the need to particularly focus on those measures that will generate better outcomes for Indigenous children and young people. Focus in this area offers the best prospects of breaking the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.

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<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/allprimarymainfeatures/4EF9B192CB67360CCA256F1B0082C453>

41. From colonisation through to the Stolen Generations, Indigenous Victorians have experienced significant dislocation and separation. It is testimony to Victorian Indigenous culture and heritage that it has not simply survived but is strengthening and prospering. In Victoria the strengthening of Indigenous culture is intrinsic to the efforts of community and governments in closing the gaps for current and future generations of Indigenous Victorians.
42. Indigenous Victorians are actively engaged in the expression of their culture and its transfer to future generations through diverse activities including recreation and the arts, justice, health, community services and education systems through to the operation of Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. The passage of the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* marks the commencement of an alternative, less costly and litigious process for negotiating Native Title settlements in Victoria.
43. The Parties acknowledge that the size and complexity of the task required to Close the Gap in disadvantage between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians requires concerted and sustained effort now and in future years utilising the considerable expertise that exists within Victoria.

Existing Initiatives

44. In making this Plan, the Parties specifically acknowledge the need to align and build on existing initiatives that aim to create a better future for Indigenous people in Victoria.
45. These initiatives may include other programs and expenditure operating outside the COAG Agreements, National Partnerships and Agreements which are highly relevant to the achievement of better outcomes for Indigenous Victorians and to meeting the Closing the Gap targets.
46. In addition, where possible the Commonwealth is already supporting and will continue to support existing initiatives in Victoria through local projects between individual Commonwealth agencies and Victorian Government departments.

Victorian Initiatives

47. In addressing the Strategic Areas for Action outlined in the VIAF, the Victorian Government has implemented initiatives in:
 - Victorian Government Leadership;
 - Improving maternal health and early childhood health and development;
 - Improving education outcomes for Indigenous Victorian School Students;
 - Preventing family violence and improving justice outcomes;
 - Improving economic development and employment;
 - Native Title Settlement Framework; and
 - Building Indigenous capacity.

These initiatives are explained in more detail under each Building Block in **Schedules A to G** to this agreement.

48. As with the COAG Building Blocks, the VIAF recognises the interrelationship between the Strategic Areas for Action. The VIAF is a long term strategy designed to redress disadvantage that is intergenerational. The VIAF has a 15 year timeframe with targets

specified on each Strategic Change Indicator to be met in 2013, 2018 and 2023. A full list of targets is included in **Attachment 4**.

49. Within the Victorian Government, clear whole of government arrangements are in place to drive implementation of the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework – a Ministerial Taskforce is in place to drive reform and implementation is managed through a Secretaries' Group.
50. Improving perinatal outcomes and early childhood health and development are key priorities where major initiatives have been implemented. These include:
 - The Koori Maternity Strategy which has been expanded to deliver via Indigenous controlled health organisations better access to antenatal care, hospital liaison and postnatal care. Further extensions and three new services are enabled through the National Partnership on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Early Childhood Development;
 - Tailored smoking cessation programs for pregnant Indigenous mothers;
 - Increasing the proportion of Indigenous children attending Maternal and Child Health services at key age milestones between birth and their second birthday;
 - Increasing Indigenous three year old and four year old kindergarten participation; and
 - Initiatives directed to reducing the over representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system.
51. The outcomes Indigenous students obtain are vital in breaking the cycle of disadvantage. Victoria's *Wannik* strategy is reforming the educational experience Indigenous students receive by:
 - Each Indigenous student (year seven and below) is to have tailored individual learning plans and those in year eight and above are to have tailored managed individual pathways to enable smooth transitions to further education, training and employment.
 - Indigenous specific literacy coaches and tutorial assistance scheme for primary and secondary students.
 - Funding under the National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy is being applied to accelerate improvements in these areas.
52. Strong Culture, Strong People, Strong Families is Victoria's 10 year plan to tackle Indigenous family violence. The plan was developed through an ongoing partnership between Indigenous communities and government. The Aboriginal Justice Agreement initially established in 2000 and renewed in 2006 is Victoria's primary partnership between government and community to reduce over representation of Indigenous Victorians in the justice system. The Agreement targets prevention, early intervention, diversion and measures to prevent reoffending.
53. On 26 May 2010 the Victorian Government announced a four year commitment of \$33.7 million to fund a new approach to Aboriginal economic development focused on:
 - keeping Aboriginal children at school;
 - assisting Aboriginal people and their families into sustainable employment;
 - growing Indigenous businesses;
 - realising economic opportunities connected to native title settlements;
 - building a vibrant Aboriginal tourism industry; and
 - growing the pool of role models and mentors.

This agenda is in response to the *Moonda Wurrin Gree* report from the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group. Membership of this group includes 13 high-profile members of the Aboriginal, not-for-profit and business communities. Implementing this new agenda will require cooperation from and coordination with Commonwealth Government investment in all areas of Aboriginal economic development.

54. *Karreeta Yirramboi* the Victorian Aboriginal public sector employment and career development action plan 2010-15, was launched alongside the *Moonda Wurrin Gree* report.
55. Victoria has set a one per cent Indigenous employment target for the Victorian public sector to be achieved by 2015. Under the National Partnership Agreement for Indigenous Economic Participation the Commonwealth will match this target for the Australian Public Service in Victoria. It will be important to ensure that State and Commonwealth efforts to increase Aboriginal employment in Victoria are complementary.
56. Victoria has developed the Native Title Settlement Framework and the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* as an alternative, less costly and litigious process for negotiating Native Title settlements in Victoria. As with other major Victorian initiatives the new process was developed collaboratively between government and the community, in this case the peak body for Traditional Owners in Victoria, Victorian Traditional Owner Land justice Group and Native Title Services Victoria.
57. The Commonwealth Government has supported Victoria's new Framework approach as it is consistent with the Commonwealth Government's policy to support less technical, faster and broader settlements of Native Title.
 - The Victorian Government acknowledges that as first respondent to applications it must negotiate the settlement terms and benefits with applicants.
 - The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments acknowledge that they have entered into a National Partnership Agreement which can provide, on a case-by-case basis, financial support from the Commonwealth as a contribution towards reaching settlement agreements.
 - Victoria has adopted the position that it will seek a financial contribution from the Commonwealth to support the timely resolution of priority applications before the Federal Court.
 - Under the National Partnership Agreement, the Commonwealth Government can consider requests from States and Territories on a case-by-case basis for financial contributions towards particular settlements, but has not agreed any predetermined cost sharing arrangement. The Commonwealth has also been working with Victoria to facilitate access to existing Commonwealth programs which may value-add and support settlement agreements under the Framework.
 - Victoria has adopted the position that a financial contribution from the Commonwealth on a 50/50 cost sharing basis is a pre-requisite to it making a formal settlement offer (under its new Framework that provides broader benefits without the need for a determination of native title) to applicant groups.
58. Strong, capable Indigenous-managed organisations are an essential element to improving outcomes for Indigenous Victorians. Victoria has recognised through the VIAF the need to strengthen the governance skills of boards and senior management of Indigenous organisations and to increase Indigenous representation on Victorian Government boards and committees.

Commonwealth Initiatives

59. Although Commonwealth initiatives in Victoria are primarily delivered through the National Agreements and National Partnerships (see **Attachment 1**), additional initiatives include:
60. The Parental and Community Engagement program (PaCE) Program focuses on the development of creative and innovative approaches to improve the educational outcomes of Indigenous young people through enhancing Indigenous parental engagement with schools and education providers.
61. Supplementary recurrent assistance, a per capita amount of funding is provided to pre-schools that have Indigenous three to four year olds participating in their pre-school programs.
62. Locational Supported Playgroups which are targeted to vulnerable Indigenous families with young children living in isolated areas. They aim to provide positive outcomes for Indigenous families by providing playgroup services, parenting and early childhood development support.
63. Intensive Supported Playgroups aim to provide positive early childhood development by contributing to increased child safety and well being for particularly disadvantaged families with young children. This service provides extensive support to assist isolated and disadvantaged families to stabilise their circumstances by building linkages to a wide range of community services.
64. The Indigenous Children's Program aims to prevent children from entering the child protection system by supporting the child and their family to manage and protect themselves from crisis situations within their families or circle of friends.
65. The Indigenous Parenting Support Service aims to help Indigenous parents to overcome barriers to good family relationships and support through transitions to child care, pre-school and primary school. They pro-actively address social, cultural, personal, historical, financial and health factors that can present barriers to effective parenting.
66. Job Services Australia replaces previous employment services such as Job Network and provides new opportunities for Australians to receive one-on-one assistance and tailored employment services.
67. The reformed Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) contributes and supports the development of Indigenous employment and economic development opportunities across Victoria. This is achieved either by directly funding employers or through the use of IEP panel members in sourcing, providing pre-employment training, mentoring and employment placement and also providing business development and support activities.
68. Initiatives under the Keep Australia Working – Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package also contribute to improved employment outcomes for Indigenous Victorians.
69. The Commonwealth has provided financial assistance to the Victorian Government to implement a range of initiatives aimed at increasing employment and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Victoria,

these include in partnership funding the Kinaway project, the Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development/Dean Rioli Aboriginal Employment Services employment project and the funding of five employment broker positions in identified priority areas across the state.

70. The Indigenous Legal Aid and Policy Reform Program (LAPR) funds projects that deliver high quality, culturally sensitive, equitable and accessible legal aid services for Indigenous Australians, so that they can fully exercise their legal rights as Australian citizens. It also funds projects that seek to support law reform and policy development and the delivery of community legal education, as well as projects that support the ongoing development and continuous improvement of the program and its outcomes.²
71. Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS) provide culturally sensitive assistance to Indigenous victim-survivors of family violence and sexual assault through the provision of legal assistance, court support, casework and counselling. Other services delivered by FVPLS units include child protection and support, community engagement, referrals, early intervention and prevention, and community legal education.³
72. The Indigenous Justice Program provides funding to facilitate the development and implementation of effective, culturally relevant projects, especially where youth are at risk. It aims to support and reduce the number of Indigenous Australians coming into adverse contact with the criminal justice system. The program also encourages early resolution of disputes, including through restorative justice practices that contribute to crime prevention and to building safer family and community environments.⁴
73. The Indigenous Women's Program is a grants program which provides funding for activities that respond to the particular needs and circumstances of local Indigenous women. The Indigenous Women's Program contributes to the Government's priorities for reducing Indigenous disadvantage through enhancing Indigenous women's leadership, representation, safety, wellbeing and economic status.⁵
74. The Community Support Service program supports Indigenous community members and their families by providing linking and referral services to a range of mainstream and Indigenous services which may include welfare and social support, family violence, health (including drug and alcohol services), housing, child care and legal services.

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http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Indigenouslawandnativetitle_Indigenouslawprograms_LegalaidforindigenousAustraliansprogram

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http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Indigenouslawandnativetitle_Indigenouslawprograms_Familyviolencepreventionlegalservices

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http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Indigenouslawandnativetitle_Indigenouslawprograms_Theprevention,diversionandrehabilitationprogram

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http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/families/Pages/indigenous_womens_program.aspx

75. The Public Awareness Program funds initiatives that raise public awareness in the wider community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and culture.
76. The Land Rights Program (*Aboriginal Land (Lake Condah and Framlingham Forest) Act 1987*) provides for the grant and administration of 11.85 square kilometres of lands in western Victoria, in two parcels, and a scheme of governance for its Aboriginal owners.
77. The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples will provide national leadership in advocating for the recognition of the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Nations peoples. The Commonwealth Government has committed \$29.2 million to the setting up and initial operation of the National Congress until December 2013. Support for the National Congress underpins the Government's commitment to resetting and strengthening its relationship with Indigenous Australians.⁶
78. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation Ltd is an Indigenous-run, national not-for-profit organisation. It was established in 2009 to support community-based healing initiatives to address the traumatic historical legacy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of colonisation, forced removals and other past government policies. It aims to provide practical and innovative healing services, with a particular focus on Stolen Generation members and their families. The Commonwealth Government is providing funding of \$26.6 million over four years to 2013-14 to assist the establishment and operation of the Healing Foundation.⁷
79. The Indigenous Culture Support (ICS) program (ICS) supports the maintenance and continued development of Indigenous culture at the community level with an emphasis on community participation, the transmission of knowledge and skills across age groups, new forms of cultural expression and projects that increase public awareness of Indigenous culture.⁸ The program provides support for the sustainable development of community organisations involved in cultural activities by strengthening Indigenous governance. The ICS program encourages culturally vibrant Indigenous communities and contributes to the wellbeing of Indigenous individuals and communities.
80. The Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records (MILR) program addresses the steady erosion and loss of Australia's estimated 250 original Indigenous languages by providing funding to support a broad range of community based projects. These include documentation and recording of Indigenous languages and the development of language resources and databases to assist with the development and delivery of programs through language centres.⁹ The program provides support for the sustainable development of language organisations building Indigenous capacity. It also contributes to strong cultural identity and individual and community wellbeing.

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http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/leadership/nat_congress_australian_first_peoples/Pages/default.aspx

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http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/engagement/Pages/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_healing_foundation.aspx

⁸ <http://www.arts.gov.au/Indigenous/ICS>

⁹ <http://www.arts.gov.au/indigenous/MILR>

81. In 2009 the Commonwealth Government announced its National Indigenous Languages Policy to coordinate action among the bodies involved in support of Indigenous languages, including government, Indigenous language organisations and educational and research institutions. The policy confirmed the Commonwealth Government's commitment to keeping Indigenous languages alive and helping Indigenous Australians connect with their language and culture. The policy aims to bring national attention to Indigenous languages; to reinforce use of critically endangered Indigenous languages; to make sure that government recognises and works with Indigenous languages in its agenda to Close the Gap; to strengthen pride in identity and culture; and to support and maintain the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages in Australian schools. Commonwealth Government departments are currently implementing the policy.
82. The National Arts and Crafts Industry Support (NACIS) Program provides direct funding support to Indigenous art centers and arts support and advocacy organisations. The program's overall objectives are to assist art centers to become stronger and to build a more sustainable Indigenous visual arts industry.¹⁰ In Victoria this program addresses the Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the Indigenous Art Centres Strategy and Action Plan. The four KRAs are: Business Management, Employment & Training, Professional Art Practice, and Community Capacity and Maintenance of Culture.
83. The Indigenous Broadcasting Program (IBP) supports Indigenous community radio broadcasting and provides funding support to address the broadcasting needs of Indigenous people living in remote, regional and urban areas of Australia.¹¹ The program assists in developing an Indigenous owned and controlled community radio service and broadcasting sector that meets all governance and business management requirements through having an efficient and effective management and operational regime; providing training for Indigenous broadcasters; and supporting broadcasting services that are able to inform and educate Indigenous Australians on accessing the range of health, legal, education and housing services available to them.
84. The Indigenous Heritage Program (IHP) supports the identification, conservation and promotion (where appropriate) of Indigenous heritage places – landscapes, sites and areas that are particularly important to Indigenous people as part of their customary law, developing traditions, history and current practices. The IHP may also help identify places likely to have outstanding Indigenous heritage value to Australia, suitable for inclusion on the National Heritage List.

Joint Commitments

85. The Parties recognise that for both Commonwealth and Victorian Governments programs and services to be effective they must be applied within the cultural specificity of Indigenous Victorians and their communities.
86. The Parties are committed to working together in partnership with Indigenous Victorians and communities in order to take action and address entrenched levels of disadvantage among Indigenous people in Victoria. The Parties both recognise such partnerships are intrinsic to progress and therefore give primacy to engagement and partnership with Indigenous Victorians.

¹⁰ <http://www.arts.gov.au/indigenous/NACIS>

¹¹ <http://www.arts.gov.au/Indigenous/broadcasting>

87. The Parties further recognise the importance of better coordination of existing effort, programs and services and commit to the preservation and maximum use of existing levels of effort within the boundaries of Victoria.
88. Both Parties recognise that there may be joint areas of interest such as information provision to Indigenous Victorians and funding of Victorian Indigenous organisations. Both Parties are committed to exploring opportunities for a more coordinated approach to information provision and where possible funding for organisations.
89. The Parties agree that strong Indigenous communities are vital to improving life expectancy and quality of life and the capacity of Victorian Indigenous communities and their organisations are integral to efforts in Victoria to Close the Gap. Accordingly the Parties agree to jointly work together in supporting Indigenous community efforts to strengthen culture and capacity, where possible.
90. Both Parties recognise the potential impact of their funding arrangements on the other Party and where possible will reduce the administrative burden on the Indigenous sector.
91. The Parties acknowledge the need to improve the level, quality and accuracy of information to better inform the development and implementation of policies and programs aimed at improving outcomes for Indigenous Victorians, as outlined in **Schedule I**. The Parties also recognise the need to share data with Indigenous Victorians and Indigenous organisations where possible.
92. The Parties agree to explore options for joint measures that can be implemented to ensure the questions about Indigenous identification are asked and recorded consistently and that members of the Victorian Indigenous community are encouraged to identify as outlined in **Schedule I**.
93. The Parties recognise that Indigenous Victorians can face particular barriers that impede access to the mainstream services for which they are entitled, including lack of skill and inclusivity among mainstream services. While both levels of government are undertaking work designed to ensure mainstream services are culturally inclusive and welcoming of Indigenous Victorian clients, the Parties acknowledge that further joint work can be done to scope improvements.

Arrangements for Indigenous Consultation and Representation

94. The Parties are committed to working together and in partnership with Indigenous Victorians and communities in order to take action and address entrenched levels of disadvantage among Indigenous people in Victoria.
95. The Parties intention is to use existing representational structures where possible at local, regional, statewide levels and existing program partnerships in areas such as health, human services, education, justice, native title, natural resource management (NRM) and primary industry to further the development, implementation and evaluation of agreed initiatives where possible.
96. Through the NIRA, COAG have agreed a position on engagement with Indigenous Australians (NIRA, pp. A22-23) including agreement on a range of key mechanisms

through which governments will engage and build partnerships, all of which are to be utilised as appropriate, including:

- jurisdictional advisory groups and representative bodies;
- Indigenous advisory groups – sector specific;
- Indigenous expert organisations on specific topics; and
- informal or ongoing relationships.

97. Victorian arrangements for Indigenous representation, participation, engagement and partnerships are well established at local, statewide and program levels. These partnerships are central to the implementation of the VIAF and efforts to close the gap in Victoria.

98. Local Indigenous Networks (LINs) are fully implemented with 38 local arrangements established around the State. By the end of 2009 around 1,200 Indigenous Victorians had become involved in the Networks, many of whom may not previously have been direct participants in Indigenous Co-operatives or other Indigenous managed organisations. The LINs enable local people to identify and tackle local issues that affect their families and community and provide the key local mechanism that governments (on a whole of governments basis) can respond to and work with at a 'place based' level.

99. Place based initiatives already underway in Victoria include:

- Shepparton Partnership – former COAG trial site;
- Lake Tyers – Community Renewal Project Interdepartmental Committee;
- Whittlesea - Victorian Secretaries Project;
- Casey - Victorian Secretaries Project;
- Lakes Entrance - Victorian Secretaries Project;
- Mildura - Victorian Secretaries Project; and
- Regional Closing the Health Gap initiatives.

100. The Parties agree that where additional place based need is identified, where possible the Parties will work together and with the Community through existing representative and consultation mechanisms, including but not limited to the groups listed below to develop and implement solutions.

- Victorian Indigenous Representative Arrangements;
- Native Title Services Victoria;
- The Victorian Secretaries Group on Aboriginal Affairs;
- The Victorian Aboriginal Justice Forum;
- The Victorian Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee (RAJAC);
- National Partnership Agreement Committees;
- OBIP Committee;
- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples; and
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation.

Agreement on joint effort in additional place based arrangements will be resolved by the OBIP Committee by end of December for each year that this agreement is in place.

101. During 2011, eight Regional Indigenous Councils (RICs) will be established with members from the 38 LINs. In turn the RICs will nominate members of the Premier's Aboriginal Advisory Council. The RICs will have a key role in identifying regional priorities. The Parties are committed to working collaboratively with the RICs and other

102. The Premier's Aboriginal Advisory Council (PAAC) provides the Victorian Government with high level advice on policy and issues impacting Indigenous Victorians. PAAC provides the opportunity for Indigenous representatives to advise the Premier on the priorities, aspirations and needs of Victorian Indigenous communities and how to improve engagement with Indigenous communities to achieve better outcomes.
103. There are also well established partnership arrangements between Indigenous managed service providers, community members and departments across all key areas of government, including health, human services, justice, education and further education.
104. Where possible the Parties will utilise the Victorian arrangements for Indigenous partnerships, consultations and representation at the regional, local and program level. In doing so, the Parties will also be guided by:
- The implementation plans to the National Partnerships listed in **Attachment 1**;
 - A major focus on capacity development at the local level;
 - Engagement with Local Indigenous Networks and Regional Indigenous Councils where the Parties will work with Indigenous communities on local and regional issues, solutions and priorities;
 - Periodic attendance of Commonwealth officers on request to out of session meetings of the Premiers Aboriginal Advisory Committee; and
 - Invitation to participate in reference groups where appropriate.

Joint Machinery

105. The Parties will ensure effective implementation and evaluation of measurable outcomes under this Plan. This will include:
- joint Ministerial oversight and reporting including meetings between Victorian and Commonwealth Government Ministers as appropriate;
 - establishment of an Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan Committee (OBIP Committee) to facilitate activities and jointly report on progress of this Plan; the OBIP Committee Terms of Reference are at **Attachment 5**;
 - agreed accountability and outcomes measures underpinned by developing and implementing a shared data collection framework;
 - partnership arrangements between governments and Indigenous communities working together to achieve better outcomes;
 - arrangements that enable regular measurement and consideration of outcomes of all programs and services targeting Indigenous communities in Victoria;
 - identifying opportunities to establish or strengthen joint coordination arrangements, such as those outlined in the various National Partnerships; and
 - arrangements for regular engagement of key stakeholders within the Victorian Government.

Term of Plan

106. The term of this Plan will be for five years with an option to renew. It will be jointly reviewed after five years and can be amended by agreement in writing between the Parties.

**NATIONAL AGREEMENTS, NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS,
STRATEGIES AND FRAMEWORKS APPLICABLE TO VICTORIA**

- [National Indigenous Reform Agreement](#)
- [National Education Agreement](#)
- [National Healthcare Agreement](#)
- [National Disability Agreement](#)
- [National Affordable Housing Agreement](#)
- [National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on an Indigenous Clearinghouse](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on TAFE Fee Waivers for Childcare Qualifications](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan – Schedule D: Building the Education Revolution](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Hospital and Health Workforce Reform](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing](#)
- [National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan – Schedule C: Social Housing](#)
- [National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children](#)
- [Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy](#)

SERVICE DELIVERY PRINCIPLES FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS¹²

Purpose

These principles draw upon the National Framework of Principles for Government Service Delivery to Indigenous Australians agreed to by COAG in 2004. These principles are to guide COAG in the:

- (a) design and delivery of Indigenous specific and mainstream government programs and services provided to Indigenous people; and
- (b) development and negotiation of National Partnership Agreements, National Agreements and reform proposals.

Principles

Priority principle: Programs and services should contribute to Closing the Gap by meeting the targets endorsed by COAG while being appropriate to local community needs.

Indigenous engagement principle: Engagement with Indigenous men, women and children and communities should be central to the design and delivery of programs and services.

Sustainability principle: Programs and services should be directed and resourced over an adequate period of time to meet the COAG targets.

Access Principle: Programs and services should be physically and culturally accessible to Indigenous people recognising the diversity of urban, regional and remote needs.

Integration principle: There should be collaboration between and within Governments at all levels and their agencies to effectively coordinate programs and services.

Accountability principle: Programs and services should have regular and transparent performance monitoring, review and evaluation.

Principles in Detail

Priority principle: Programs and services should contribute to Closing the Gap by meeting the targets endorsed by COAG while being appropriate to local community needs. The COAG targets are:

- (a) close the 17 year life expectancy gap within a generation;
- (b) halve the gap in mortality rates for children under five within a decade;
- (c) halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade;
- (d) halve the gap in employment outcomes and opportunities within a decade;
- (e) halve the gap for Indigenous young people in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020; and

¹² These principles form Schedule C to the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery.

- (f) within five years provide access to a quality early childhood education program to all Indigenous four year olds in remote Indigenous communities.

Indigenous engagement principle: Engagement with Indigenous men, women and children and communities should be central to the design and delivery of programs and services. In particular, attention is to be given to:

- (a) recognising that strong relationships/partnerships between government, community and service providers increase the capacity to achieve identified outcomes and work towards building these relationships;
- (b) engaging and empowering Indigenous people who use Government services, and the broader Indigenous community in the design and delivery of programs and services as appropriate;
- (c) recognising local circumstances;
- (d) ensuring Indigenous representation is appropriate, having regard to local representation as required;
- (e) being transparent regarding the role and level of Indigenous engagement along a continuum from information sharing to decision-making; and
- (f) recognising Indigenous culture, language and identity.

Sustainability principle: Programs and services should be directed and resourced over an adequate period of time to meet the COAG targets. In particular, attention is to be given to:

- (a) service system orientation, particularly:
 - i. using evidence to develop and redesign programs, services and set priorities;
 - ii. recognising the importance of early intervention; and
 - iii. including strategies that increase independence, empowerment and self management;
- (b) ensuring adequate and appropriate resources, particularly:
 - i. setting time-frames for meeting short, medium and longer-term targets and outcomes;
 - ii. considering flexibility in program design to meet local needs;
 - iii. considering workforce supply and future planning;
 - iv. considering sustaining or redesigning services to best use existing resources, as well as the need for programs and services to meet the COAG targets;
 - v. minimising administrative red tape to enable greater integration of program and service delivery;
 - vi. ensuring that programs and services are efficient and fiscally sustainable; and
 - vii. ensuring that infrastructure is appropriate and adequately maintained;
- (c) building the capacity of both Indigenous people and of services to meet the needs of Indigenous people, particularly:
 - i. developing the skills, knowledge and competencies, including independence and empowerment of Indigenous people, communities and organisations;
 - ii. supporting Indigenous communities to harness the engagement of corporate, non-government and philanthropic sectors;
 - iii. building governments' and service delivery organisations' capacity to develop and implement policies, procedures, and protocols that recognise Indigenous people's culture, needs and aspirations;

- iv. ensuring that programs and services foster and do not erode capacity or capability of clients; and
- v. recognising when Indigenous delivery is an important contributor to outcomes (direct and indirect), and in those instances fostering opportunities for Indigenous service delivery.

Access Principle: Programs and services should be physically and culturally accessible to Indigenous people recognising the diversity of urban, regional and remote needs. In particular, attention is to be given to:

- (a) considering appropriate and adequate infrastructure and placement of services (including transport, IT, telecommunications and use of interpreter services);
- (b) minimising administrative red tape that may be a barrier to access; and
- (c) providing adequate information regarding available programs and services.

Integration principle: There should be collaboration between and within Governments at all levels, their agencies and funded service providers to effectively coordinate programs and services. In particular attention is to be given to:

- (a) articulating responsibilities between all levels of government;
- (b) identifying and addressing gaps and overlaps in the continuum of service delivery;
- (c) ensuring services and programs are provided in an integrated and collaborative manner both between all levels of governments and between services;
- (d) ensuring services and programs do not set incentives that negatively affect outcomes of other programs and services; and
- (e) recognising that a centrally agreed strategic focus should not inhibit service delivery responses that are sensitive to local contexts.

Accountability principle: Programs and services should have regular and transparent performance monitoring, review and evaluation. In particular, attention is to be given to:

- (a) choosing performance measures based on contribution to the COAG targets and report them publicly;
- (b) ensuring mainstream service delivery agencies have strategies in place to achieve Indigenous outcomes and meet Indigenous needs;
- (c) clearly articulating the service level to be delivered;
- (d) ensuring accountability of organisations for the government funds that they administer on behalf of Indigenous people;
- (e) periodically measuring/reviewing to assess the contribution of programs and services to the above, and adapting programs and services as appropriate;
- (f) clearly defining and agreeing responsibilities of government and communities;
- (g) supporting the capacity of the Indigenous service sector and communities to play a role in delivering services and influencing service delivery systems/organisations to ensure their responsiveness, access and appropriateness to Indigenous people; and
- (h) evaluating programs and services from multiple perspectives including from the client, Indigenous communities and government perspectives and incorporating lessons into future program and services design.

Relationship between the COAG Framework and the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF)

Closing the gap in Indigenous life outcomes

- Close the life expectancy gap within a generation
- Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade
- Halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade
- Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade
- Within five years all four year olds in remote Indigenous communities have access to a quality early childhood education program
- Halve the gap for Indigenous young people in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020

Early Childhood	Schooling	Economic Participation	Health	Healthy Homes	Safe Communities	Governance and Leadership
<p>Indigenous children are born and remain healthy; have the same health outcomes as other Australian children; benefit from better social inclusion and reduced disadvantage; acquire the basic skills for life and learning; have access to affordable quality early childhood education in the year before formal schooling. Quality early childhood education and care supports parents workforce participation choices in the years before formal schooling. Increase access to antenatal care, pre-pregnancy and teenage sexual and reproductive health.</p>	<p>Indigenous children and youth meet basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy are improving. Indigenous young people successfully transition from school to work and/or study. Schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children.</p>	<p>The Indigenous working age population has the depth and breadth of skills and capabilities required for the 21st century labour market. Indigenous people of working age participate effectively in all sectors and at all levels of the labour market.</p>	<p>Indigenous Australians and those living in rural and remote area or on low incomes achieve health outcomes comparable to the broader population. Indigenous people have ready access to suitable and culturally inclusive primary health and preventive services. Indigenous people are healthy and free of preventable disease.</p>	<p>Indigenous children's living environments are healthy. Indigenous families live in appropriate housing with access to all basic utilities. Indigenous people have improved housing amenity and reduced overcrowding particularly in remote areas and discrete communities. Indigenous people have the same housing opportunities as other people.</p>	<p>Indigenous children and families are safe and protected from violence and neglect in their home and communities. Alcohol and substance abuse among Indigenous people is overcome. Breaking cycles of criminal behaviour and violence normalisation.</p>	<p>Indigenous communities are empowered to participate in policy making and program implementation. Indigenous communities are represented through credible, consultation/governance mechanisms. Connecting the way government agencies work in remote areas (the governance of governments) and developing community capacity.</p>
<p>Improve maternal health and early childhood health and development Reduce reported smoking and alcohol use in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers Reduce the Indigenous perinatal mortality rate Decrease the percentage of Indigenous babies with birth weight below 2500 grams Increase Indigenous 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten participation Reduce the rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations Increase the proportion of Indigenous children attending Maternal and Child Health services at key age milestones</p>	<p>Improve Education Outcomes Improved school attendance rates for Indigenous students Improve literacy and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Indigenous students Improve transition to Year 10 for Indigenous students Increase completion of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications for Indigenous students Note: Youth Transition indicator under "Economic Participation"</p>	<p>Improve economic development, settle native title claims and address land access issues Increase the successful transition of Indigenous people aged 18-24 years to employment and/or further/higher education Increase Indigenous labour market participation Increase workforce participation by Indigenous people in the public sector in ways which can drive improvements in the Victorian Strategic Areas for Action Increase the proportion of Indigenous people with access to their traditional lands</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Reduce smoking rates of Indigenous people Improve the levels of physical activity, healthy weight and healthy eating of Indigenous people Reduce the rates of chronic conditions among Indigenous people Reduce rate of self harm among Indigenous people Reduction risky alcohol consumption among Indigenous people</p>	<p>Incorporated under 'Health and Well Being"</p>	<p>Prevent family violence and improve justice outcomes Increase the police response to and taking action on any Indigenous family violence incident reported to them Reduce repeat police call outs for Indigenous family violence incidents Reduce the number of times Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) are more likely to be processed by police than non Indigenous young people Increase the proportion of Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) cautioned when processed by police Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody Reduce the proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison rather than other alternatives Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction</p>	<p>Build Indigenous capacity Increase participation of Indigenous people in local representative arrangements Increase the representation of Indigenous people on Boards and Committees Increase the proportion of board members from key Indigenous community organisations completing governance training</p>
<p>10 Year Plan for Aboriginal Children and Young People</p>						
<p>Early Years Strategy*</p>	<p>Wannik: Education Strategy for Koorie Kids</p>	<p>Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Agenda* Public Sector Strategy* Wurreeker Strategy Native Title Settlement Framework</p>			<p>Aboriginal Justice Agreement Indigenous Family Violence 10 Year Plan</p>	<p>Leadership and Capacity Building * Aboriginal Inclusion Framework*</p>
<p>NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Early Childhood Development • Early Childhood Education • TAFE Fee Waivers for Childcare Qualifications <p>FRAMEWORK/STRATEGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy 	<p>NATIONAL AGREEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Education Agreement <p>NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarter Schools - Improving Teacher Quality • Smarter Schools - Literacy and Numeracy • Smarter Schools Low Socio Economic Status School Communities • Building the Education Revolution – Schedule D to the Nation Building and Jobs Plan 	<p>NATIONAL AGREEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and Workforce Development <p>NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Economic Participation • Youth Attainment and Transitions • Native Title 	<p>NATIONAL AGREEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Healthcare Agreement • National Disability Agreement <p>NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes • Hospital and Health Workforce Reform • Preventative Health 	<p>NATIONAL AGREEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Affordable Housing Agreement <p>NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote Indigenous Housing • Homelessness • Social Housing • Social Housing Initiative – Schedule C to the Nation Building and Jobs Plan 	<p>STRATEGY/Framework</p> <p>National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children</p>	
<p align="center">National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) National Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy for Indigenous Australians</p>						

ATTACHMENT 4

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS FRAMEWORK 2010-2013

In 2010 the Victorian Government adopted the new Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) 2010-2013. The VIAF incorporates national reforms and establishes stringent targets for closing the gaps that are consistent with the national targets.

The VIAF 2010-2013 outlines the six Strategic Areas for Action, which are underpinned by Strategic Change Indicators and targets for achievement by 2013, 2018 and 2023.

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
1. Improve maternal and early childhood health and development.	1.1 Reduce reported smoking in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers.	Reported smoking in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers will be reduced to 25 per cent.	Reported smoking in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers will be reduced to 20 per cent.	Reported smoking in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers will be reduced to 14 per cent.
	1.2 Reduce the Indigenous perinatal mortality rate.	The Indigenous perinatal mortality rate will reduce to no more than 16 per 1000 births.	The Indigenous perinatal mortality rate will reduce to no more than 10 per 1000 births.	There will be no gap between the Indigenous and non Indigenous perinatal mortality rate.
	1.3 Decrease the percentage of Indigenous babies with birth weight below 2500 grams.	The percentage of Indigenous babies with birth weight below 2500g will decrease to 13 per cent.	The percentage of Indigenous babies with birth weight below 2500g will decrease to 12 per cent.	The percentage of Indigenous babies with birth weight below 2500g will decrease to 7 per cent.
	1.4 Increase Indigenous 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten participation.	75 per cent of Indigenous 3 year old children will be participating in funded kindergarten programs. The gap between Indigenous and non Indigenous 4 year old children participating in funded kindergarten programs will be closed.		
	1.5 Reduce the rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations.	The rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations will be reduced to 51 per 1000 children.	The rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations will be reduced to 34 per 1000 children.	The rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations will be reduced to 17 per 1000 children.
	1.6 Increase the proportion of Indigenous children attending Maternal and Child Health Services at key age milestones.	The gap in participation at MCH key age and stage visits, between Indigenous and non Indigenous children will be at least halved.		

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
2. Improve education outcomes.	2.1 Improve school attendance rates for Indigenous students.	<p>There will be no gap in attendance for Years Prep - 6 between Indigenous and non Indigenous students.</p> <p>There will be no gap in attendance for Years 7 - 10 between Indigenous and non Indigenous students.</p>		
	2.2 Improve literacy and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Indigenous students.	<p>For Year 3 Reading, the gap in the percentage of students in bands 1 or 2 between Indigenous and non Indigenous students will be reduced by 75 per cent.</p> <p>For Year 5 Numeracy, the gap in the percentage of students in bands 3 (or below) or 4 between Indigenous and non Indigenous students will be reduced by 75 per cent.</p> <p>For Years 3, 5 and 7 Reading and Numeracy, the percentage of Indigenous students in the top two bands will increase by 10 per cent.</p> <p>For Year 9 Reading and Numeracy, the percentage of Indigenous students in the top two bands will double.</p>		
	2.3 Improve transition to Year 10 for Indigenous students.	95 per cent of Indigenous students will commence Year 10.		
	2.4 Increase completion of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications for Indigenous students.		By 2020, the gap for Year 12 completion or equivalent between Indigenous and non Indigenous young people will be at least halved.	

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
3.Improve economic development, settle native title claims and address land access issues.	3.1 Increase the successful transition of Indigenous young people aged 18-24 years to employment and/or further education.	The gap in transition to employment and/or further education between Indigenous and non Indigenous young people will be reduced by at least 20 per cent.	The gap in transition to employment and/or further education between Indigenous and non Indigenous young people will be halved.	There will be no gap in transition to employment and/or further education between Indigenous and non Indigenous young people.
	3.2 Increase Indigenous labour force participation.	140 sustainable employment outcomes in State funded employment programs.	50 per cent reduction in the gap between Indigenous and non Indigenous participation in the labour force.	There will be no gap in labour force participation between Indigenous and non Indigenous people.
	3.3 Increase workforce participation by Indigenous people in the public sector in ways which can drive improvements in the Strategic Areas for Action.	Employment of Indigenous people in the Victorian public sector will increase to 1 per cent of total employees by 2015.		
	3.4 Increase the proportion of Indigenous people with access to their traditional lands.	Five new native title settlements and Native Title resolved over 50 per cent of Crown land.	Native title resolved over 75 per cent of Crown land.	Native title resolved over 100 per cent of Crown land.

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
4. Improve health and wellbeing.	4.1 Reduce smoking rates of Indigenous people.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are current smokers will reduce to 26 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are current smokers will reduce to 23 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are current smokers will reduce to 21 per cent.
	4.2 Improve the levels of physical activity, healthy weight and healthy eating of Indigenous people.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are overweight or obese will reduce to 52 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are overweight or obese will reduce to 50 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who are overweight or obese will reduce to 48 per cent.
		The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of vegetable intake will reduce to 87 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of vegetable intake will reduce to 85 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of vegetable intake will reduce to 80 per cent.
		The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of fruit intake will reduce to 58 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of fruit intake will reduce to 56 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who do not meet healthy levels of fruit intake will reduce to 51 per cent.

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
		The proportion of Indigenous adults who have healthy levels of physical activity will increase to 55 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who have healthy levels of physical activity will increase to 60 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults who have healthy levels of physical activity will increase to 65 per cent.
	4.3 Reduce the rates of chronic conditions among Indigenous people.	The separation rate for selected chronic conditions will be reduced to 43 per 1000 people.	The separation rate for selected chronic conditions will be reduced to 41 per 1000 people.	The separation rate for selected chronic conditions will be reduced to 37 per 1000 people.
	4.4 Reduce rate of self harm among Indigenous people.	The rate of presentations for self harm will be reduced to 4.05 per 1000 people.	The rate of presentations for self harm will be reduced to 3.2 per 1000 people.	The rate of presentations for self harm will be reduced to 2.35 per 1000 people.
	4.5 Reduce risky alcohol consumption among Indigenous people.	The rate of presentations due to alcohol consumption will be reduced to 12.6 per 1000 people.	The rate of presentations due to alcohol consumption will be reduced to 9.4 per 1000 people.	The rate of presentations due to alcohol consumption will be reduced to 6.2 per 1000 people.

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
5. Build Indigenous capacity.	5.1 Increase participation of Indigenous people in local representative arrangements.	The number of registered Local Indigenous Network participants will increase to 1800.	The number of registered Local Indigenous Network participants will increase to 2500.	The number of registered Local Indigenous Network participants will increase to 3000.
	5.2 Increase the representation of Indigenous people on Government Boards and Committees.	The representation of Indigenous people on Government Boards and Committees will increase to 1 per cent.	The representation of Indigenous people on Government Boards and Committees will remain at 1 per cent or match Indigenous population share, whichever is greater.	The representation of Indigenous people on Government Boards and Committees will remain at 1 per cent or match Indigenous population share, whichever is greater.
	5.3 Increase the proportion of board members of large Indigenous organisations having undertaken rigorous governance training.	The proportion of board members of large Indigenous organisations having undertaken rigorous governance training will increase to 70 per cent.	The proportion of board members of large Indigenous organisations having undertaken rigorous governance training will increase to 90 per cent.	The proportion of board members of large Indigenous organisations having undertaken rigorous governance training will remain at 90 per cent.

ACTION AREA	INDICATOR	2013 TARGET	2018 TARGET	2023 TARGET
6. Prevent family violence and improve justice outcomes.	6.1 Increase the police response to and action taken on any Indigenous family violence incident reported to them.	There will be no difference in the police response and action taken to Indigenous family violence incidents.		
	6.2 Reduce repeat police call outs for Indigenous family violence incidents.	There will be no difference in repeat police call outs for Indigenous family violence incidents.		
	6.3 Reduce the number of times Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) are processed by police.	The number of times Indigenous young people will be more likely to be processed by police compared to non Indigenous young people will decrease to 3.5.	The number of times Indigenous young people will be more likely to be processed by police compared to non Indigenous young people will decrease to 3.0.	The number of times Indigenous young people will be more likely to be processed by police compared to non Indigenous young people will remain at 3.0.
	6.4 Increase the proportion of Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) cautioned when processed by police.	The proportion of Indigenous young people cautioned when processed by police will increase to 35 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous young people cautioned when processed by police will increase to 45 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous young people cautioned when processed by police will increase to 50 per cent.
	6.5 Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody.	The proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody will decrease to 20 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody will decrease to 18 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody will decrease to 17 per cent.
	6.6 Reduce the proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison rather than other alternatives.	The proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison rather than other alternatives will decrease to 28 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison rather than other alternatives will decrease to 27 per cent.	The proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison rather than other alternatives will decrease to 26 per cent.
	6.7 Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction.	The proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction will decrease to 50 per cent. The number of times Indigenous prisoners will be more likely than non Indigenous prisoners to return to prison within two years of discharge will decrease to 17.0.	The proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction will decrease to 49 per cent. The number of times Indigenous prisoners will be more likely than non Indigenous prisoners to return to prison within two years of discharge will decrease to 14.6.	The proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction will decrease to 47 per cent. The number of times Indigenous prisoners will be more likely than non Indigenous prisoners to return to prison within two years of discharge will decrease to 12.6.

A link to the VIAF publication: [Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework 2010-2013](#)

ATTACHMENT 5

VICTORIAN OVERARCHING BILATERAL INDIGENOUS PLAN (OBIP) COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Role and Responsibilities

The Victorian OBIP Committee (the Committee) will facilitate, review and jointly report on progress of activities agreed under the OBIP.

Where possible the Committee will share information about funding initiatives; identify and discuss joint areas of interest and key issues, identify opportunities for joint strategies and effort, monitor the progress of regional and local engagement and align Indigenous reporting obligations.

Committee Chair

The Victorian OBIP Committee will be jointly chaired by the Executive Director of the Victorian Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs and the State Manager of the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Committee Membership

Core membership of the OBIP Committee will consist of:

- Executive Director, Victorian Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs;
- General Manager, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development;
- Executive Director, Victorian Department of Justice;
- Director Aboriginal Health, Victorian Department of Health;
- Executive Director, Victorian Department of Human Services;
- State Manager, Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs;
- State Manager, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing; and
- State Manager, Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Other departmental officers may be invited to attend OBIP Committee meetings as required. Members of the OBIP Committee may from time to time be requested to present papers to or meet with members of the Victorian Premier's Aboriginal Advisory Council (PAAC).

Proxies

Committee members wishing to send proxies to meetings will need to clear the change in attendance with the Committee Chair.

Meeting Frequency

The OBIP Committee will meet twice yearly in months to be determined at the first meeting. The first meeting will be held within three months of the OBIP being agreed.

Secretariat

Secretariat duties will be shared between the Victoria Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat and the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

OBIP Sub-committees

OBIP sub-committees will be established and Terms of Reference for each committee agreed by June 2011. It is anticipated that at minimum sub-committees will be formed for each of the COAG Building Blocks, Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements.

Reporting

The Parties recognise that as Victoria's Indigenous population is urban and regional, the Whole of Victorian Government report to Parliament forms Victoria's key commitment to report on outcomes for urban and regional Indigenous Victorians.

Additional progress information may be sourced from the established National Partnership Agreement reporting processes. Arrangements for monitoring and reporting on the progress and outcomes of activities agreed under this plan will be included in the activity implementation plans.

SCHEDULE A

BUILDING BLOCK: EARLY CHILDHOOD

1. Introduction

For an equal start in life Indigenous children need early learning, development and socialisation opportunities. Access to quality early childhood education and care services, including pre-school, child care and family support services such as parenting programs and supports, is critical.

Appropriate facilities and physical infrastructure, a sustainable early childhood education and health workforce, learning frameworks and opportunities for parental engagement are also important and require attention. Action in the areas of maternal, antenatal and early childhood health is relevant to addressing the child mortality gap and to early childhood development.

The 2006 Census highlighted that 37 per cent of Indigenous Victorians were aged 14 and under. The Loddon Mallee region has the highest percentage of Victoria's Indigenous children (16.6 per cent), followed by the Northern Melbourne Metropolitan region (13.9 per cent) and the Southern Melbourne Metropolitan region (13.5 per cent).¹³

Through COAG the following national Indigenous early childhood outcome targets have been agreed:

- Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade; and
- Halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements within a decade.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Ensure existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve Indigenous early childhood developmental outcomes are complementary;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in Victoria;
- Develop and share an evidence base including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse; and
- Implement and progress the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014* as endorsed by Education Ministers.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build strong foundations for Indigenous children. The targets for Early Childhood under the VIAF are:

- Reduce reported smoking and alcohol use in pregnancy by Indigenous mothers;
- Reduce the Indigenous perinatal mortality rate;
- Decrease the percentage of Indigenous babies with a birth weight below 2500 grams;
- Increase Indigenous three year and four year old kindergarten participation;
- Reduce the rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations; and
- Increase the proportion of Indigenous children attending Maternal and Child Health services.

¹³ Source: Victorian Government Indigenous Affairs Report 2008-09

Victoria is home to 14,578 Aboriginal children aged 0 to 17 years, representing 1.2 per cent of all children residing in the state. This proportion is also the lowest in Australia, well below the national proportion of 4.6 per cent. In Victoria, nearly half the Aboriginal population is under 19 years of age.

Table 1: Number and proportion of Aboriginal children aged 0 to 17 years, states and territories, 2006

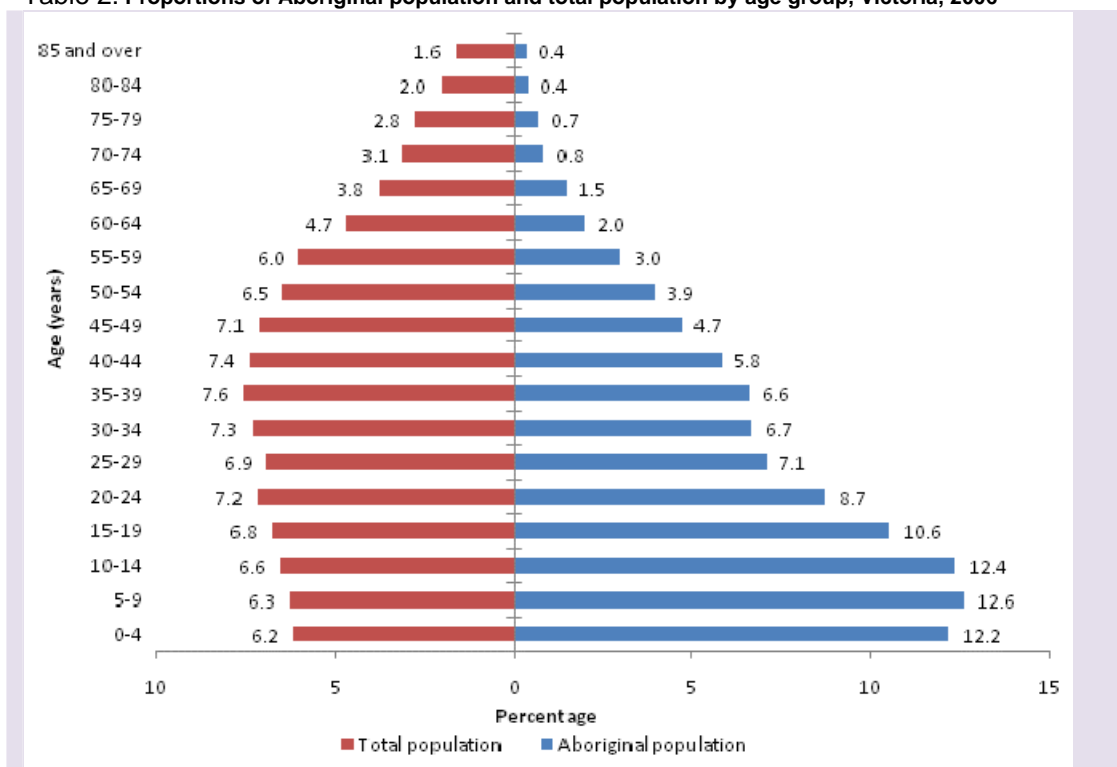
	Children aged 0 to 17 years			Total population		
	Aboriginal	All children	Percentage of children that are Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Total population	Percentage of total population that are Aboriginal
Victoria	14,578	1,183,258	1.2	33,517	5,126,540	0.7
New South Wales	68,196	1,607,803	4.2	152,685	6,816,087	2.2
Queensland	65,484	1,004,795	6.5	144,885	4,090,908	3.5
South Australia	12,121	350,158	3.5	28,055	1,567,888	1.8
Western Australia	30,460	497,808	6.1	70,966	2,059,381	3.4
Tasmania	8,087	116,831	6.9	18,415	489,951	3.8
Northern Territory	26,381	60,845	43.4	64,005	210,627	30.4
Australian Capital Territory	1,832	77,438	2.4	4,282	334,119	1.3
Australia^(a)	227,215	4,899,568	4.6	517,043	20,697,880	2.5

Note:

(a) Total for Australia includes 'Other Territories'.

Source: Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021, Cat. No. 3238.0, ABS, 2009; Population by age and sex, Australian states and territories, Cat. No. 3201.0, ABS, 2007.

Table 2: Proportions of Aboriginal population and total population by age group, Victoria, 2006



Source: Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021, Cat. No. 3238.0, ABS, 2009; Population by age and sex, Australia, 2006, Cat. No. 3235.0, ABS, 2007.

Existing data about service use by Aboriginal children indicate an increase in participation of Aboriginal children in the Maternal and Child Health service from 88.2 per cent in 2006-07 to 91.3 per cent in 2007-08 for home visit and from 37.4 per cent in 2006-07 to 40.3 per cent in 2007-08 for 3.5 year visit. Similarly, enrolments of Aboriginal children in kindergarten have increased to 579 in four year old kindergarten and three year old enrolments have increased from 84 in 2008 to 197 in 2009.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- Balert Boorron: Victorian Plan for Aboriginal children and young people (2010-2020)
- Koori Maternity Services
- Free kindergarten for three and four year old Aboriginal children
- Aboriginal In-Home Support Program and Home Based Learning Program
- Aboriginal Best Start
- Child First

3. Commonwealth Programs

- Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) initiative;
- Supplementary Recurrent Assistance for preschools;
- Locational Supported Playgroups; and
- Intensive Supported Playgroups.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership;
- Early Childhood Education National Partnership;
- TAFE Fee Waivers for Childcare Qualifications; and
- Grow Multifunctional Aboriginal Children Services (MACS) Pilot.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan. A Reference Group for the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development has been established to oversee the implementation of Elements 1, 2 and 3 of the National Partnership Agreement. The Reference Group will involve members of Victoria's peak Aboriginal organisations, and consult with and seek their advice in developing and shaping the work of this National Partnership Agreement. Similarly, an advisory group has been established for the Early Childhood Education National Partnership as a mechanism for consultation and sector input to support the implementation of universal access in Victoria.

A Project Board representing Victorian and Commonwealth Departments has also been established to monitor these two National Partnerships. Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including Joint Initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules of this plan.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To achieve the Closing the Gap targets the following National Partnership Agreements have been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments:¹⁴

- Indigenous Early Childhood Development NP;
- Early Childhood Education NP;
- TAFE Fee Waivers for Childcare Qualifications; and
- Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy.

7. Indigenous National Partnership Agreement Objectives

National Partnership on Indigenous Early Childhood Development:

- To improve the early childhood outcomes of Indigenous children by addressing the high levels of disadvantage they currently experience, to give them the best start in life.

National Partnership on Early Childhood Education:

- Through this agreement the Commonwealth and States and Territories will work together to ensure universal access to quality early childhood education in the year before school.

TAFE FEE Waivers for Childcare Qualifications:

- TAFE and other government providers will not levy fees on students undertaking eligible childcare courses in 2009.

Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy:

- This strategy details the areas where action is required to develop an effective early childhood development system by 2020.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Progress to meet the COAG targets will be measured against the following baselines for Victoria:

Target: halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade.

Baseline:

- The baseline for this target is 2008; and
- Data not available due to lack of adequate levels of Indigenous identification in mortality data.

¹⁴ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

SCHEDULE B

BUILDING BLOCK: SCHOOLING

1. Introduction

Human capital development through education is key to future opportunity. Responsive schooling requires attention to infrastructure, workforce (including teacher and school leader supply and quality), curriculum, student literacy and numeracy achievement and opportunities for parental engagement and school/community partnerships. Transition pathways into schooling and into work, post school education and training are also important. Life-long learning is important and attention is also needed regarding adult literacy and numeracy skills.

Starting school early, improving attendance rates, providing high quality teaching and leaving school later are essential to improving literacy and numeracy skills and therefore providing a good start in life. Preschool and early education programs have been associated with increased levels of school completion and improved literacy and social skills necessary for school success.

Retention rates for Victorian Indigenous students in secondary school appear to be decreasing with 50.9 per cent of students continuing to Years 10-12.¹⁵

Through COAG the following national schooling outcome targets have been agreed:

- Halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements within a decade; and
- Halve the gap for Indigenous young people in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Align existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve Indigenous Schooling outcomes;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in Victoria;
- Develop and share an evidence base including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, and
- Implement and progress the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014* as endorsed by Education Ministers.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build strong foundations for Indigenous Victorians. The targets for Schooling under the VIAF are:

- Improved school attendance rates for Indigenous students;
- Improved literacy and numeracy in Years, 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Indigenous students;
- Improve transition to year 10 for Indigenous students; and
- Increase completion of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications for Indigenous students.

¹⁵ Source: Victorian Government Indigenous Affairs Report 2008-09

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- *Wannik* Koorie Education Strategy; and
- *Balart Boorron* – The Victorian Plan for Aboriginal Children and Young People (2010 – 2020).

3. Commonwealth Programs

- Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) initiative;
- Sporting Chance;
- Youth Connections;
- Indigenous Youth Leadership Program;
- Indigenous Youth Mobility Program; and
- Community Festivals for Education Engagement.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- National Education Agreement;
- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities;
- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality;
- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy;
- Building the Education Revolution; and
- National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and when agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including joint initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules of this plan.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To achieve the Closing the Gap targets the following National Partnership Agreements have been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments: ¹⁶

- National Education Agreement;

¹⁶ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities;
- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality;
- Smarter Schools – National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy;
- National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions; and
- Building the Education Revolution.

7. Indigenous National Partnership Agreement Objectives

National Education Agreement (NEA).

The NEA (and associated NPs) supports the achievement of the following five high-level outcomes identified by the Council of Australian Governments:

- all children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling;
- young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving;
- schooling promotes the social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children, especially Indigenous children;
- Australian students excel by international standards; and
- young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

Objective: All Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy.

Smarter Schools - National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities:

Objectives:

- work towards achieving improvement in high-level outcomes for schooling agreed by COAG and in the 2008 National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians;
- achieve sustained improvements in educational outcomes in participating schools. These outcomes would align with those in the NEA;
- support and achieve innovation and reform at the school level; and foster the dissemination of best-practices through independent monitoring and evaluation;
- test reforms in the way schooling is funded, structured and delivered in low socio-economic status (SES) communities which, if shown to be successful, could be developed into recommendations for system-wide transformational change; and
- contribute to COAG's social inclusion and Indigenous disadvantage agendas through the identification of reforms and models of service delivery that achieve improved educational outcomes for low SES school communities.

Smarter Schools - National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality:

Objective:

This Agreement supports ambitious, nationally-significant reforms, which underpin other national initiatives to improve schooling. The reforms provide the platform for raising student performance and build the foundation necessary to underpin other school reforms endorsed by COAG. The Agreement will contribute to the following outcomes:

- attracting the best entrants to teaching, including mid-career entrants;
- more effectively training principals, teachers and school leaders for their roles and the school environment;
- placing teachers and principals to minimise skill shortages and enhance retention;
- developing teachers and school leaders to enhance their skills and knowledge throughout their careers;
- retaining and rewarding quality principals, teachers and school leaders; and
- improving the quality and availability of teacher workforce data.

Smarter Schools National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy:

Objectives:

- Increased collaboration with state, territory and non-government education systems in achieving national literacy and numeracy reform, with priority focus on those primary aged students most in need of support, especially Indigenous students.
- Identification and implementation of evidence based interventions which achieve accelerated and sustained improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes for students, particularly those falling behind.
- Working collaboratively with state, territory and non-government education systems to inspire a renewed focus and Australia wide awareness of the importance of increasing the literacy and numeracy skills of all students, with a particular focus on lifting performance in numeracy.
- Work towards achieving improvement in outcomes for schooling agreed by COAG and in the National Education Agreement and the National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.
- Achieve sustained improvements in educational outcomes in participating schools/school communities.

National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions

Objectives:

- work towards achieving improvements in high level outcomes for schooling agreed by COAG in the National Education Agreement and in the 2008 National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians;
- work towards increasing the qualifications and skill level of the Australian population as agreed by COAG in the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development;
- achieve improvements in the numbers of young Australians making successful transitions from schooling into further education, training or employment;
- work collaboratively with the non-government school, training, business and community sectors to improve the support provided to young Australians to increase educational outcomes, attainment and improve transitions to further education, training or employment, with particular focus on 15 to 24 year olds and young people at risk; and
- develop a skilled and work ready Indigenous workforce by increasing the educational attainment and engagement of young Indigenous Australians.

Building the Education Revolution:

- As part of the National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan this reform will provide new facilities and refurbishments in schools.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Progress to meet the COAG targets will be measured against the following baselines for Victoria:

Target: halving the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade

Baseline:

- The baseline for this target is 2008.
- For the baseline year of 2008, in Victoria the proportion of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard in:
 - Year 3 reading was 88.1 per cent for Indigenous students and 95.6 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 3 writing was 92.1 per cent for Indigenous students and 96.6 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 3 numeracy was 93.0 per cent for Indigenous students and 96.8 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 5 reading was 83.0 per cent for Indigenous students and 94.0 for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 5 writing was 82.7 per cent for Indigenous students and 94.3 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 5 numeracy was 83.3 per cent for Indigenous students and 95.0 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 7 reading was 85.5 per cent for Indigenous students and 96.1 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 7 writing was 77.6 per cent for Indigenous students and 93.8 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 7 numeracy was 87.9 per cent for Indigenous students and 96.8 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 9 reading was 79.9 per cent for Indigenous students and 95.0 per cent for non-Indigenous students;
 - Year 9 writing was 68.9 per cent for Indigenous students and 90.6 per cent for non-Indigenous students; and
 - Year 9 numeracy was 78.4 per cent for Indigenous students and 95.5 per cent for non-Indigenous students.

Target: halve the gap for Indigenous young people in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020

Baseline:

- The baseline for this target is 2006; and
- For the baseline year of 2006, in Victoria the proportion of the 20-24 year old population having attained at least a year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications

Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above was 56.4 per cent for Indigenous 20-24 year olds and 86.4 per cent for non-Indigenous 20-24 year olds.

SCHEDULE C

BUILDING BLOCK: HEALTH

1. Introduction

Achieving improved outcomes for children requires access to, and delivery of, effective primary and preventative health care. Community primary health services play an important role and also need to be responsive to and accountable for achieving government and community health priorities. Parental health is critical to supporting children and the heavy onset of chronic diseases in the 34 to 45 age range requires concerted effort in prevention, management and treatment. Parents also need the skills to promote healthy, structured lifestyles.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a burden of disease two and a half times that of non-Indigenous Australians. This health disparity has its origins in early childhood development and continues to exert its impact across the life course. Low birth weight, which is twice as common for babies of Indigenous mothers, is a key determinant of infant survival longer term health and education attainment. Increasing access to quality antenatal care, early childhood and maternal health programs, and comprehensive primary health care provides an opportunity to identify and address risk factors for chronic diseases that can commence during pregnancy, in childhood or early adolescence, and persist into adulthood. To halve the gap in the mortality rate between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children under five within a decade, all children need a healthy start to life.

The main contributor to the life expectancy gap is the difference in health outcomes. Chronic diseases such as circulatory disease, cancer, diabetes and respiratory disease account for about two-thirds of excess mortality among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Comprehensive primary health care is fundamental to the prevention, early detection and management of chronic diseases and their risk factors. Closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians will require sustained and concerted effort by all governments working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Through COAG the following national Health outcome targets have been agreed:

- Close the life expectancy gap within a generation; and
- Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Ensure existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve Indigenous health outcomes are complementary;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in the Victoria; and
- Develop and share an evidence base **including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.**

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build strong foundations for Indigenous Victorians. The Strategic Change Indicators for Health under the VIAF are:

- Reduce smoking rates of Indigenous people;
- Improve the levels of physical activity, healthy weight and healthy eating of Indigenous people;
- Reduce the rate of chronic conditions among Indigenous people;
- Reduce rate of self harm among Indigenous people; and
- Reduce risky alcohol consumption among Indigenous people.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

Victorian Aboriginal Health Plan

The Plan outlines a collaborative, evidence based approach to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Victoria. It identifies key health priorities to assist in closing the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians.

Victorian Tobacco Control Strategy

The Victorian Tobacco Control Strategy 2008-2013 was released in December 2008 and includes a specific target to reduce smoking prevalence among Indigenous Victorians from 50 per cent to 40 per cent by 2013.

Victorian Koori Alcohol Action Plan

A whole-of-government plan will be developed to prevent and reduce the harm of alcohol misuse in Indigenous communities and will encompass prevention, early intervention and treatment.

3. Commonwealth Programs

The Commonwealth's \$805.5 million contribution to the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes aims to close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

The Indigenous Chronic Disease Package will reduce chronic disease risk factors, encourage earlier detection and better management of chronic disease in primary health care services, improve follow up care and increase the capacity of the primary care workforce to deliver effective health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes NP;
- National Healthcare Agreement;
- National Disability Agreement;
- Hospital and Health Workforce Reform NP;
- Preventative Health NP; and
- Indigenous Early Childhood Development NP.

The Victorian Advisory Council of Koori Health (VACKH) is the jurisdictional forum for the State and Commonwealth Governments and community sector to work collaboratively to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Victoria.

VACKH members are representatives nominated by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), the Victorian Department of Health (VDH) and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA). The VACKH COAG sub-committee is the jurisdictional health partnership forum in Victoria where the implementation of the Close the Gap chronic disease measures, for both Commonwealth and Victorian Government investments are planned and monitored.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under the OBIP, including Joint Initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed to in the relevant schedules in this Plan.

In Victoria, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership Forum is the Victorian Advisory Council of Koori Health COAG Sub committee. Membership of this forum includes the following organisations:

- VACCHO;
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing;
- Victorian Department of Health; and
- General Practice Victoria.

The forum is the entity responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the Close the Gap chronic disease measures, for both Commonwealth and State Government investments.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To achieve the Closing the Gap targets the following National Partnership Agreements have been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments:¹⁷

- National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes;
- National Healthcare Agreement;
- National Disability Agreement;
- National Partnership Agreement on Hospital and Health Workforce Reform;
- National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health; and
- National Partnership on Indigenous Early Childhood Development.

¹⁷ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

7. Indigenous National Partnership Agreement Objectives

National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes:

- The Agreement sets out specific action to be taken by the Commonwealth Government and complementary action by State/Territory governments to address the gap in health outcomes experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

National Healthcare Agreement:

- The objective of this Agreement is to improve health outcomes for all Australians and the sustainability of the Australian health system.

National Disability Agreement:

- The Agreement provides the national framework and key areas of reform for the provision of government support to services for people with disabilities.

National Partnership Agreement on Hospital and Health Workforce Reform:

- To improve health workforce, hospitals and capacity.

National Partnership Agreement on Preventative Health:

- The agreement reforms Australia's efforts in preventing the lifestyle risks that cause chronic disease.

National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development:

- The Agreement seeks to contribute to the target of halving the gap in Indigenous child mortality within a decade by increasing access to antenatal care, teenage sexual and reproductive health services, child and maternal health services and providing integrated early childhood development and family support services.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Progress to meet the COAG targets will be measured against the following baselines for Victoria:

Target: closing the life expectancy gap within a generation.

Baseline:

- The baseline for this target is 2006 using the three-year average of 2005-2007.
- Indigenous estimates of life expectancy are not produced for Victoria due to the small number of Indigenous deaths reported in this jurisdiction.

Target: halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five years old within a decade.

Baseline:

- The baseline for this target is 2008.
- Current data is not available due to lack of adequate levels of Indigenous identification in mortality data. Activities are occurring under Schedule F to the

NIRA (Agreed Data Quality Improvements) to assess under-identification of Indigenous mortality.

SCHEDULE D

BUILDING BLOCK: ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

1. Introduction

Individuals and communities should have the opportunity to benefit from the mainstream economy – real jobs, business opportunities, economic independence and wealth creation. Access to land and native title assets, rights and interests can be leveraged to secure real and practical benefits for many Indigenous Victorians. Other financial assets, capacity building, employment and training programs, incentive structures and social and physical infrastructure, including communications and transport, are needed to foster economic participation and community engagement.

The design and delivery of welfare (both transfer payments and services) should be positioned as an investment in providing Aboriginal people with the skills and capabilities needed to participate in the economy and society.

This principle underpins the Victorian Government's new Aboriginal economic development agenda which moves away from past welfare based approaches to focus on building economic independence. The new agenda consists of:

- An investment of \$33.7 million over four years in initiatives flowing from *Moonda Wurrin Gree – Pathways to a Better Economic Future*, the report of the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group;
- *Karreeta Yirramboi: the Victorian Aboriginal Public Sector Employment and Career Development Action Plan 2010 -15*; and
- Actions flowing from the implementation plan for the COAG National Partnership on Indigenous Economic Participation.

The new agenda is focused on keeping Aboriginal children at school, assisting Aboriginal people into sustainable employment, supporting the commercial viability of Aboriginal businesses, realising economic opportunities connected to native title settlements, building a vibrant Aboriginal tourism industry and expanding the pool of role models and mentors.

Partnerships with the Aboriginal community, the private sector, philanthropy, the Commonwealth and local government are critical to delivering on the new agenda and contributing to the Building Blocks. In particular, partnerships with the Commonwealth Government funded Indigenous Business Australia and the Indigenous Employment Program will be critical to success.

Both Governments are committed to showing leadership by increasing the number of Aboriginal people employed across the public sector in Victoria. The Victorian Government is also committed to ensuring the private sector plays a leadership role in improving economic outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Through COAG the following national Economic Participation outcome targets have been agreed:

- Halve the gap in employment outcomes within a decade.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Align existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in Victoria;
- Use the Victorian Government's new Aboriginal economic development agenda as a platform to engage in joint strategic planning processes for future investment and activity in Victoria; and
- Identify and pursue opportunities for Aboriginal economic development connected to the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation and more broadly.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build the foundations needed to improve the quality of life of Indigenous Victorians and enable participation in the economy and society. The targets for Economic Participation under the VIAF are:

- Increase the successful transition of Indigenous young people aged 18-24 years to employment and/or further education;
- Increase Indigenous labour market participation;
- Increase workforce participation by Indigenous people in the public sector in ways which can drive improvements in the Victorian Strategic Areas for Action; and
- Increase the proportion of Indigenous people with access to their traditional lands.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Agenda
- Karreeta Yirramboi: the Victorian Aboriginal Public Sector Employment and Career Development Action Plan 2010 -15;
- Wannik Koorie Education Strategy;
- Wurreker Strategy;
- Native Title Settlement Framework; and
- Department of Human Services and Department of Health Aboriginal Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2010-2013.

3. Commonwealth Programs

- Job Services Australia;
- Disability Employment Services;
- Indigenous Employment Program - Initiatives under the Keep Australia Working – National Building Economic Stimulus Package also contribute to improved employment outcomes for Indigenous Victorians; and
- Matching the Victorian public sector one per cent Indigenous employment target for the Australian Public Service in Victoria.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- Initiatives from the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation, in particular those relating to:
 - Strengthening government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;

- Incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into all new major COAG reforms contributing to Closing the Gap targets;
- Supporting sustainable employment through the ‘Deadly Jobs’ Indigenous Employment Program initiative; and
- Reviewing all public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to increase employment to reflect population share by 2015.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations;
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort;
- A capacity and commitment from both levels of government to long term investment;
- Alignment with the principles defined in *Moonda Wurrin Gree – Pathways to a Better Economic Future*, the report of the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group;
- Coordinated and strategic approach to investment; and
- Shared knowledge base.

Potential joint initiatives are:

- Supporting private sector employers to increase employment levels for Indigenous Victorians;
- Supporting projects to deliver sustainable employment outcomes fostered through Aboriginal Employment Broker strategic planning, aligned with the Indigenous Employment Program guidelines;
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal businesses operating in Victoria; and
- Developing flagship Aboriginal tourism initiatives.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including joint initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules, will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules to this Plan.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To achieve the Closing the Gap targets the following National Partnership Agreements have been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments:¹⁸

- National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation;
- National Partnership Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development; and

¹⁸ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

- National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

7. Indigenous National Partnership Agreement Objectives

National Partnership on Indigenous Economic Participation:

- The Indigenous Economic Participation NP will contribute to the COAG target to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a decade.

National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development:

- This agreement identifies the long term objectives of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in the areas of skills and workforce development.

National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions:

- This NP will work increase the qualifications and skill levels of young Australians and improve their capacity to make successful transitions from schooling into further education, training or employment.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Progress to meet the COAG targets will be measured against the following baselines for Victoria:

Target: halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

Baseline:

- The baseline for the target is 2008.
- For the baseline year of 2008, in Victoria the proportion of the Indigenous working age population (15-64 year olds) employed was 55.1 per cent and for the non-Indigenous working age population was 74.6 per cent.
- The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians was 19.4 percentage points.

SCHEDULE E

BUILDING BLOCK: HEALTHY HOMES

1. Introduction

A healthy home is a fundamental precondition of a healthy population. Important contributors to the current unsatisfactory living conditions include inadequate water and sewerage systems, waste collection, electricity and housing infrastructure (design, stock and maintenance). Children need to live in accommodation with adequate infrastructure conducive to good hygiene and study and free of overcrowding. While many of these unsatisfactory living conditions apply primarily to remote Indigenous housing in other jurisdictions, improving Indigenous housing outcomes in Victoria is a strong Victorian and Commonwealth Government commitment.

Housing assistance is provided to a range of people across Victoria including those living in, or in need of, low cost housing who require support to maintain their housing or who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Aboriginal Victorians are able to apply for a range of programs including those specifically targeted to provide Aboriginal outcomes.

It is expected that housing improvements will contribute to the achievement of all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Align existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve Indigenous housing outcomes;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in the Victoria; and
- Develop and share an evidence-base including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build strong foundations for Indigenous Victorians. The targets for Housing under the VIAF are included in the Health and Wellbeing targets, which are:

- Reduce smoking rates of Indigenous people;
- Improve the levels of physical activity, healthy weight and healthy eating of Indigenous people;
- Reduce the rate of chronic conditions among Indigenous people;
- Reduce rate of self harm among Indigenous people; and
- Reduce risky alcohol consumption among Indigenous people.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- Working in partnership with Aboriginal Housing Victoria a registered housing provider with some 1,300 Indigenous specific properties;
- Implementing the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing to transition Indigenous Community Housing Organisations to the Victorian regulatory framework;
- Indigenous tenancies at risk program;
- Aboriginal Young People Leaving Care; and

- Aboriginal family violence initiatives.

3. Commonwealth Programs

Commonwealth contributions to housing outcomes are being delivered by the National Partnership Agreements and National Agreements as outlined in Section 4 - Joint Initiatives.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing;
- National Affordable Housing Agreement;
- National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness;
- National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing; and
- Social Housing Initiative – Schedule C to the National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including Joint Initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules, will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules to this plan.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To achieve the Closing the Gap targets the following National Partnership Agreements have been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments:¹⁹

- National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing;
- National Agreement on Affordable Housing;
- National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness;
- National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing; and
- Social Housing Initiative – Schedule C to the National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan.

7. Indigenous National Partnership Agreement Objectives

National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing:

¹⁹ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

- This agreement aims to facilitate significant reform in the provision of housing for Indigenous people in remote communities and to address overcrowding, homelessness, poor housing condition and severe housing shortage in remote Indigenous communities.
- As no Indigenous housing in Victoria is considered remote the Victorian Implementation plan for the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing focuses on transitioning Indigenous Community Housing Organisations to the Victorian regulatory framework. This will be achieved through registration as Housing Agency, formal partnership with a Registered Housing Agency or accreditation by Aboriginal Housing to deliver housing.

National Agreement on Affordable Housing:

- This agreement provides a framework within which all tiers of government will work together to improve housing affordability for Australians.

National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness:

- This agreement aims to facilitate significant reforms to reduce homelessness.

National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing:

- This agreement facilitates the establishment of a 'Social Housing Growth Fund' that will support reforms to increase the supply of social housing.

Social Housing Initiative – Schedule C to the National Partnership on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan:

- As part of the National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan this reform significantly increases the supply of social housing, particularly for Australians who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- The Agreement also states that:
- Indigenous people are one of the high priority target groups; and
- Priority may be given to projects that specifically support and target the engagement of Indigenous employees.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Targets

COAG has set targets and benchmarks to reduce overcrowding and homelessness, which are set out in the relevant National Partnership Agreements and their Implementation Plans. Housing improvements will contribute to the achievement of all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

Indigenous Specific Outcomes

- Indigenous children's living environments are healthy;
- Indigenous families live in appropriate housing with access to all basic utilities;
- Indigenous people have improved housing amenity and reduced overcrowding, particularly in remote areas and discrete communities; and
- Indigenous people have the same housing opportunities as other people.

SCHEDULE F

BUILDING BLOCK: SAFE COMMUNITIES

1. Introduction

Outcomes for the Safe Communities Building Block are set out in Schedule C to the NIRA:

- Indigenous children and families are safe and protected from violence and neglect in their home and communities;
- Alcohol and other drug abuse among Indigenous people is overcome; and
- Breaking cycles of criminal behaviour and violence normalisation.

COAG has noted that the Safe Communities Building Block will be addressed through three national policy mechanisms:

- National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework 2009-2015;
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020; and
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

Indigenous people (men, women and children) need to be safe and protected from violence, abuse and neglect in their homes and communities. Fulfilling this need involves breaking cycles of criminal behaviour and violence normalisation, improving family and community safety through law and justice responses, early intervention and diversionary strategies to reduce offending particularly by young people, (including accessible and effective policing and an accessible justice system), victim support (including safe houses and counselling), child protection and also preventative approaches. Addressing related factors such as alcohol and substance abuse will be critical to improving community safety, along with the improved health benefits to be obtained.

Strong culture, Strong People, Strong Families is Victoria's 10 year plan to tackle Indigenous family violence. The plan was developed through an ongoing partnership between Indigenous communities and government. Currently there is a network for Indigenous Family Violence Action Groups and a statewide network of Indigenous Family Violence Coordinators. Victoria is committed to implementing the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle with a range of initiatives in place to reduce Aboriginal child protection substantiations.

The Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement has been in place since 2000 and aims to halt the progression of young Koories into the justice system and to reduce reoffending. It also aims to reduce victimisation and provide an accessible and responsive justice system that protects human rights. This landmark partnership agreement between the Koori community and Government is embodied through the Aboriginal Justice Forum and network of nine Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees (RAJACS) and 10 Local Aboriginal Justice Action Groups (LAJACs). Over 52 initiatives have been implemented under the second phase of the Agreement and work has commenced to develop the third phase which will commence in July 2011.

Improving community safety is fundamental to achieving all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Ensure existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve Indigenous community safety outcomes are complementary;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in the Victoria; and
- Develop and share an evidence-base including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build strong foundations for Indigenous Victorians. The targets for Safe Communities under the VIAF are:

- Reduce the rate of Indigenous child protection substantiations;
- Increase the police response to and taking action on any Indigenous family violence incident reported to them;
- Reduce repeat police call outs for Indigenous family violence incidents;
- Reduce the number of times Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) are more likely to be processed by police than non Indigenous young people;
- Increase the proportion of Indigenous young people (aged 10-17 years) cautioned when processed by police;
- Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people remanded in custody;
- Reduce the proportion of Indigenous adults sentenced to prison; and
- Reduce the proportion of Indigenous people who are convicted within two years of their previous conviction.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- Aboriginal Justice Agreement;
- Indigenous Family Violence 10 Year Plan;
- *Balart Boorron: The Victorian Plan for Aboriginal Children and Young People 2010-2020*;
- Every Child Every Chance (Child first);
- Integrated Family Services ;
- Early Intervention and Support (Family perseverance and reservation);
- Out of Home Care reforms (Kinship care);
- Legislative Requirements of the Children Youth and Families Act (Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice and Support Service (ACSASS), Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, Cultural Support Plans, Aboriginal Family Decision Making); and
- Aboriginal Guardianship and a move to self determination (Aboriginal Cultural Competency Framework).

3. Commonwealth Programs

Commonwealth initiatives include:

- Indigenous Legal Aid and Policy Reform Program;
- Family Violence Prevention Legal Services;
- Indigenous Justice Program; and
- Evaluation of Indigenous justice initiatives identified under the Good Practice Appendix of the National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework.

4. Joint Initiatives

Existing joint initiatives include:

- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020; and
- National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework 2009-2015; and
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including Joint Initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules, will be governed by the OBIP Board of Management (BOM) and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules to this Plan.

6. COAG Policy Framework

To contribute to the Closing the Gap targets the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children has been agreed between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments.²⁰

7. National Framework Objectives

National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children:

- The National Framework consists of high level and supporting outcomes, strategies to be delivered through a series of three year action plans and indicators of change that can be used to monitor the success of the Framework.

8. COAG Targets and Baselines

Targets

Improving community safety is fundamental to achieving all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

Indigenous Specific Outcomes

- Indigenous children and families are safe and protected from violence and neglect in their home and communities.
- Alcohol and other drug abuse among Indigenous people is overcome; and
- Breaking cycles of criminal behaviour and violence normalisation.

²⁰ Source: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

SCHEDULE G

BUILDING BLOCK: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

1. Introduction

Strong leadership is needed to champion and demonstrate ownership of reform. Effective governance arrangements in communities and organisations as well as strong engagement by governments at all levels are essential to long term sustainable outcomes. Indigenous people need to be engaged in the development of reforms that will impact on them. Improved access to capacity building in governance and leadership is needed in order for Indigenous people to play a greater role in exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

National and international literature on best practice social and community development programs unanimously conclude that program delivery is more effective when it is informed by, developed with, and implemented in partnership with the community. Improved capacity building in governance and leadership will support communities to engage as equal partners with the Governments.

Indigenous leaders in Victoria have achieved a great deal in increasing the recognition and respect of Victoria's Indigenous people and culture. Much of the change needed to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage will continue to come from within Indigenous communities, and this therefore requires a focus on capacity building, empowerment and strong Indigenous leadership.

Both the Victorian and Commonwealth governments will assist Indigenous communities to continue to build on existing strengths and resilience to achieve their aspirations, and to strengthen the communities they represent. Specific assistance will support and encourage the development of Indigenous capacity and leadership, and this will in turn support the achievement of all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working in partnership through this Schedule to:

- Align existing Victorian and Commonwealth Government activities that aim to improve the governance and leadership of Indigenous community representative structures and organisations;
- Engage in joint strategic planning processes for future activity in the Victoria; and
- Develop and share an evidence base including through contributing relevant research and evaluations to the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

The Victorian Government is implementing strategies under the Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) to build the capacity of Indigenous Victorians. The targets for capacity building under the VIAF are:

- Increase participation of Indigenous people in local representative arrangements;
- Increase the representation of Indigenous people on boards and committees; and
- Increase the proportion of board members from key Indigenous community organisations completing governance training.

2. Victorian Key Strategies and Programs

- **Indigenous Representative Structure**

The three-tier representative structure in Victoria provides the opportunity for Indigenous Victorians to develop governance and leadership capacity at the local community level (Local Indigenous Networks); regional level (Regional Indigenous Councils); and state-wide (Premier's Aboriginal Advisory Council). This initiative enables two-way engagement and communication between Indigenous people and government, and provides structured learning and development opportunities to enable Indigenous Victorians to confidently engage with government, and other structures in their community.

- **Leadership and Capacity Building Strategy**

This Strategy will promote and support community capacity building approaches across the Victorian Government, and provide a framework to guide future investments in capacity building.

- **Aboriginal Inclusion Framework**

The Victorian Government is developing an *Aboriginal Inclusion Framework* for government departments and agencies. The Framework recognises that inclusion and respect of cultural rights, values, practices and expectations of Indigenous people is at the heart of improved outcomes through all of government's endeavours.

- **Department of Human Services and Department of Health Reconciliation Action Plan**

This inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan 2010 is built upon the foundation principles of Respect, Relationships, Opportunities and Culture and aims to build positive relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The Plan contains a number of measurable targets against each foundation principle.

- **Governance Training**

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, in partnership with the Commonwealth Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV), and Swinburne University delivers three day governance training workshops at locations around Victoria.

The governance training workshops are tailored for Indigenous community organisations and are designed to strengthen Indigenous organisations through development of management and governance skills of board members and key staff.

Participants and organisations undertaking the workshop are fully supported by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Future Directions

Research shows if decisions are made by Indigenous communities, greater improvements in outcomes can be achieved. The Parties will continue to strengthen approaches that enhance the ability of Indigenous communities to be actively engaged in Government policy and services planning and design, be better represented on Government Boards and Committees, and have an increased role in service delivery.

The Victorian Government is also developing a *Cultural Strengthening Strategy* to increase the participation and influence of Indigenous Victorians in the broader community and

support Indigenous communities' cultural aspirations. This will result in a greater acknowledgment and appreciation of the contribution of Indigenous people and culture to Victoria's diverse society. Work is also underway to improve cultural inclusion of Indigenous Victorians by all Victorian government departments.

3. Commonwealth Initiatives

- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples;
- National Healing Foundation;
- Indigenous Leadership Program;
- Governance Training provided by the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations;
- Indigenous Sport and Recreation; and
- COAG agreed frameworks such as the NIRA and Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy.

4. Joint Initiatives

Governance and Leadership are key elements of both the NIRA and Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy. Other Existing joint initiatives include:

- Positioning Aboriginal Services for the Future. This project began on the premise that improving outcomes for Aboriginal people was critically dependent on the best possible services delivered by a strong Aboriginal community controlled sector. A Joint Agency Group comprising representation from Commonwealth, State and community sector progresses this work, which is guided by a Joint Agency Futures Plan that identifies six key areas for action; and
- Joint participation in locality based projects.

New joint initiatives and better ways of working together will be developed subsequent to the agreement of this plan and will be included in this schedule. Potential new initiatives will be sought throughout the life of this Plan and where agreed an activity implementation plan will be jointly developed. New initiatives will be developed against the following agreed criteria:

- Population serviced within Victoria;
- Priority locations; and
- Areas that would benefit from coordinated effort.

High priority will be given to identifying localities and plans for future place based initiatives.

5. Governance and Reporting

Governance and reporting of activities under each National Partnership Agreement will be via the mechanisms agreed in each Implementation Plan.

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including joint initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules, will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules to this Plan.

6. COAG Targets and Baselines

Targets

Stronger governance and leadership will support the achievement of all six COAG Closing the Gap targets.

Indigenous Specific Outcomes

- Indigenous communities are empowered to participate in policy making and program implementation;
- Indigenous communities are represented through credible consultation/governance mechanisms; and
- Connecting the way government agencies work (the governance of governments) and developing community capacity.

SCHEDULE H

URBAN AND REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

In 2008, COAG requested the development of an Urban and Regional Strategy to coordinate the delivery of services to Indigenous Australians. To achieve significant gains in urban and regional locations, COAG requires an active focus across health, housing, early childhood development, education and employment, as a means of achieving progress towards COAG's Closing the Gap targets.

On 2 July 2009, COAG agreed to the National Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy for Indigenous Australians (the Strategy), which forms Schedule B to the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, and states:

- The Strategy will be progressed in each jurisdiction as part of the Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan (OBIP) agreed between the Commonwealth and each State/Territory (either through a specific implementation schedule detailing actions to be taken for each key action area, or through integrated efforts across all schedules under the OBIPs, depending on the circumstances and preferences of each jurisdiction).
- Governments will establish, primarily through OBIPs, appropriate mechanisms to coordinate policy and services in their jurisdiction which contribute to Closing the Gap targets.
- Building on review mechanisms under the OBIP, the effectiveness of this Urban and Regional Strategy will be reviewed after three years.
- Using the Strategy, all jurisdictions reported to COAG late in 2009 on their progress in utilising the Indigenous specific and mainstream National Partnership Agreements in the areas of health, housing, early childhood, education and employment to improve outcomes for Indigenous people in urban and region areas and the progressive roll-out of the Strategy. This report underpins each jurisdiction's commitment to a concerted and ongoing effort, as outlined and monitored through an OBIP agreed between each jurisdiction and the Commonwealth.

The Strategy recognises that 75 per cent of Indigenous Australians live in urban and regional communities. In Victoria 100 per cent of the Indigenous population live in urban and regional areas therefore the Strategy is a key mechanism for Closing the Gap and implementing the NIRA in Victoria. The OBIP documents how the NIRA through the Strategy is to be implemented in Victoria.

The Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (VIAF) 2010-2013, shown at **Attachment 3**, incorporates national reforms and establishes stringent targets for closing the gaps that are consistent with the national targets and is the primary Victorian strategy for achieving the Closing the Gap targets in Victoria.

In addition to activities taking place under the VIAF, National Agreements, Partnership Agreements, Strategies and Frameworks, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are focusing on additional activities that support the Strategy's key areas for action, which are:

1. Integration and Governance:

The Parties will take a more transparent and systematic approach to coordinating services to address Indigenous disadvantage. In Victoria this may for example include joint investment decisions on areas of joint interest and priority.

This will facilitate effective services on the ground for Indigenous people. The Victorian OBIP Committee will have the key governance role in ensuring better coordination.

2. Effective Services:

A range of strategies and approaches needs to be undertaken to support improvements to the way services are delivered to Indigenous people. Fundamental to success will be the engagement of Indigenous people and working in partnership to address barriers to their take-up of services.

3. Focusing on Local Need/Place-Based Approaches:

In Victoria a place-based approach is a practical way to implement initiatives that are responsive to local circumstance and including the input of local communities.

4. Strengthening Indigenous Capacity, Engagement and Participation:

In Victoria participatory and engagement processes are well established. A priority is the development of stronger cultural inclusion practices by both Parties and measures to assist strengthening of community capacity to participate and engage.

In Victoria inclusion of Indigenous culture within the broader Victorian culture is a priority both in reducing social exclusion and ensuring Victoria as a whole benefits from recognition of its Indigenous history and engagement with Indigenous Victorians.

5. Building Effective Accountability and Sustainability:

In Victoria improvements in monitoring and reporting will be undertaken as outlined in Schedule I – Agreed Data Quality Improvements and through regular and transparent performance monitoring, review and evaluation

As Victoria’s Indigenous population is urban and regional there are existing activities and services in operation that support the Strategy’s priority areas for action. The following table outlines the Strategic Areas for Action and examples of current activities in these Strategic Areas for Action.

Priority Area for Action	Examples of Current Activities
Integration and Governance	State and Commonwealth Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mildura Interdepartmental Committee• Lake Tyers Interdepartmental Committee• Robinvale Resilience Forum• Positioning Aboriginal Services for the Future• Aboriginal Justice Forum Indigenous Family Violence Forum

Priority Area for Action	Examples of Current Activities
Effective Services	Community Support Service Program
Focusing on Local Need/Place-Based Approaches	Victorian Representative Structure and Community Plans Victorian Government Secretaries' Projects Joint projects in priority areas Positioning Aboriginal Affairs for the Future Working Group
Strengthening Indigenous Capacity, Engagement and Participation	Positioning Aboriginal Affairs for the Future Working Group Kaelia Planning Council in Shepparton Land Rights Program NAIDOC Celebrations
Building Effective Accountability and Sustainability	Community Support Service Program Victorian Indigenous Funding Agreements – single contract

Joint action plans between the Parties are expected to be developed for new Urban and Regional Service Delivery initiatives developed under this Plan.

The Parties will work together to contribute to future reporting as agreed by COAG and review the effectiveness of the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy after three years from the agreeing of the Strategy in July 2009..

Initiatives agreed under this Plan, including joint initiatives, initiatives under the Urban and Regional Service Delivery Strategy and Agreed Data Quality Improvements schedules, will be governed by the OBIP Committee and governance and reporting agreed under the relevant schedules in this Plan.

SCHEDULE I

AGREED DATA QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

1. Introduction

On 2 July 2009, COAG agreed to a number of actions to improve the performance indicator data required under the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA). Agreed actions and jurisdictional responsibilities form Schedule F to the NIRA, which states:

- In the period up to 30 June 2013, the Commonwealth and States and Territories will undertake the following actions to improve the performance indicator data required under this Agreement; and
- A schedule to each jurisdiction's Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan will clearly articulate the activities that jurisdiction will undertake, in the period up to 30 June 2013, against each action for which that jurisdiction is responsible. Plans will need to include concrete, objectively verifiable activities.

2. Victorian Context

There are particular challenges that will be ongoing in improving the quality and accuracy of performance information and data in Victoria.

Indigenous Victorians reside across the State with just under half living in Melbourne. In Melbourne the population is widely dispersed. In regional Victoria there is a strong Indigenous community presence in some regional centres and rural towns but the population is also dispersed across all other areas of the State.

The Indigenous Victorian population comprises both Indigenous people whose traditional country is in the State and Indigenous people whose country is in other States and Territories. For example around 2,000 people in 2006 Census identified as Torres Strait Islanders.

Evidence, including from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2008 suggests the impact of policies that gave rise to Stolen Generations have been pervasive and felt more widely in Victoria than in other jurisdictions. NATSISS found:

- 11.5 per cent of Victorian Indigenous respondents reported they had been removed from their natural family compared to 7.0 per cent nationally for Indigenous Australian respondents; and
- 47.1 per cent of Victorian Indigenous respondents reported they had relatives removed from their family compared to 37.6 per cent nationally.

The combination of dispersal and disconnection with family means that some Indigenous Victorians are 'hard to find'. Some may not wish or feel sufficiently confident to consistently identify as Indigenous people in the Census or when using particular service systems. This may be a significant contributing factor to undercounts in particular data sets.

Even with better identification and recording, the relatively small size of the population undermines future prospects of reliable data and estimates. The size of the population also means that on a year to year to basis, continued volatility can be expected in particular data sets such as perinatal mortality.

The Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework 2010-13 (VIAF) has 29 Strategic Change Indicators with associated targets for achievement by 2013, 2018 and 2023. The Indicators and targets are consistent with NIRA targets, with most being reported in national collections. Data sources include ABS surveys and Census and administrative data.

A challenge under the VIAF is to improve the availability, currency and accuracy of this data to improve:

- transparency of performance; and
- contribute to informed decision making.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Victorian government have established the Victorian Indigenous Statistics Network to strengthen effort on improving data including in Victorian administrative data sets and in ABS surveys and the Census.

3. Victorian Indigenous Data Improvements

COAG agreed actions for data quality improvement activities in Victoria include:

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will implement improvements to Census Indigenous enumeration procedures to improve the quality of the Census count of Indigenous Australians;
- The ABS will expand the scope of the Census Post Enumeration Survey to include very remote areas and discrete Indigenous communities;
- The ABS and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) will lead analysis of the level of Indigenous identification in key data sets, including a baseline report and ongoing five-yearly studies to monitor identification levels over time;
- Victoria and the Commonwealth will adopt the standard ABS Indigenous status question and recording categories on data collection forms and information systems for key data sets;
- Victoria and the Commonwealth will improve procedures for collecting Indigenous status information in health and, education, community services and justice data by training staff in key data collection positions about how and why to ask the Indigenous status question and to raise awareness about its importance;
- Victoria and the Commonwealth will develop and implement initiatives to raise the Indigenous community's awareness of the importance of identifying as Indigenous when accessing services and to therefore raise the propensity for identification;
- The ABS will link Census records with death registration records to assess under-identification of Indigenous mortality for use in the compilation of Indigenous life expectancy estimates;
- Victoria and the Commonwealth will work on protocols for data sharing where this contributes to improved decision making, transparency and service outcomes;

- The AIHW and ABS will lead, in partnership with the States and Territories, the development of national best practice guidelines for data linkage and an examination of current and planned data linkage work (Commonwealth and State and Territory) relevant to Indigenous identification;
- The AIHW will lead the development of an enhanced Perinatal National Minimum Data Set (PNMDS) collection to capture data in relation to smoking during pregnancy, child and maternal health and the Indigenous status of the baby;
- The AIHW will, with stakeholders, review jurisdictional practices for collecting pathology information and develop a business case for the implementation of a nationally consistent pathology data collection, including Indigenous status; and
- The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, in partnership with State and Territory health departments and in collaboration with AIHW, will develop national Key Performance Indicators for Indigenous-specific primary health care services. A coordinated data collection is also planned.

The activities that will be undertaken to achieve these data quality improvements will be agreed within six months of this Plan being agreed.