Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory

Six-Monthly Progress Report
1 July 2012 to 30 December 2012
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Highlights

Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory is the Australian Government’s 10-year commitment to work with Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to build strong, independent lives, where communities, families and children are safe and healthy.

Stronger Futures is a $3.4 billion investment responding directly to the priorities that Aboriginal people in the Territory have told the Government are important to them.

Increased transparency and accountability

Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory have been very clear that in addition to significant investments in important services and infrastructure, they want greater transparency and accountability in relation to how money is being spent by the Australian and Northern Territory governments in their communities.

The Australian Government has committed to increased accountability and transparency though the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory.

This Agreement will deliver $1.5 billion in funding for services through the Northern Territory Government and drive the delivery of reforms to improve the lives of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.¹

The Australian Government has now secured agreements with the Northern Territory Government for all nine implementation plans as part of the National Partnership Agreement.

These plans set out how the Stronger Futures measures are to be delivered and how progress will be assessed and reported. A key feature of the plans includes improved transparency, ensuring that funding and outcomes are made public.

The Australian Government consulted with key stakeholders in the Northern Territory including Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory in the preparation of the National Partnership Agreement and its nine implementation plans.

As part of the National Partnership Agreement, the Australian and Northern Territory governments have committed to publishing six-monthly reports on the implementation and delivery of Stronger Futures against a set of performance indicators.

This report is the first six-monthly Stronger Futures report and covers the period from July 2012 to December 2012.

It provides detail on the services and activities being delivered under each Stronger Futures measure with sections 2 to 10 of this report structured around the measures covered by the nine implementation plans.

In addition to the funding being provided under the National Partnership Agreement, the Australian Government is providing around $1.9 billion of funding through Commonwealth Own Purpose

¹ A summary of funding is provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.
Expenses (COPE). The Australian Government has committed to publishing COPE implementation plans and is consulting Aboriginal organisations on their development.

**A partnership approach**

As part of Stronger Futures, the Australian Government has made a strong commitment to continue to improve the way we work with Aboriginal people and to support and strengthen Aboriginal organisations so they can have a greater role in designing and delivering services that are important to them.

Stronger Futures is backed by a 10-year investment by the Australian Government and gives Aboriginal people and communities an assurance that the Government is not walking away from its commitment to them.

We know that funding certainty enables Aboriginal organisations and communities to plan more effectively for the future, without worrying about whether the funding will be there next year.

With this in mind, we have provided funding to enable longer-term support to Aboriginal organisations so that they can effectively deliver services to communities and employ local Aboriginal workers.

And we are investing in strong Aboriginal governance, supporting Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory through funding so that it can employ Aboriginal people to provide a full range of capacity-building services to Aboriginal organisations.

We are employing more local Indigenous Engagement Officers, creating additional full and part-time job opportunities for up to 60 local Aboriginal people. This is in addition to the 24 Indigenous Engagement Officers who are already employed across the Northern Territory.

Indigenous Engagement Officers help to strengthen the Government’s relationship with Aboriginal people and ensure services and programs are well targeted to meet the needs of the community. They also ensure Aboriginal people have someone in their community who can tell them about the range of programs and services available to support them.

The Government has also continued to support the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service to recruit, train and mentor interpreters. This provides jobs for local people and assists Aboriginal people to get the most out of services, understand their rights and responsibilities, and have their voices heard in the development of policies that affect their lives.

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2 The number of staff fluctuates through the year. There were 24 Indigenous Engagement Officers in June 2013 and there were 30 Indigenous Engagement Officer positions.
Outcomes being achieved through improved services

The Australian Government’s significant investment over the last six years to improve the lives of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory is beginning to make a positive difference.3, 4

Life expectancy

Life expectancy for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory is increasing, with falls in Indigenous mortality rates recorded in the Northern Territory from 2006 to 2011. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reform Council’s 2012 report found that the Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction on track to close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by 2031.5

Educational attainment

The COAG Reform Council’s 2012 report also found that the percentage of Indigenous 20 to 24 years olds who had attained Year 12 or equivalent qualifications rose faster in the Northern Territory than any other jurisdiction between 2006 and 2011.

The census data used to assess progress against the COAG target to halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 20 to 24 in Year 12 or equivalent attainment by 2020, shows that the proportion of Indigenous Territorians aged 20 to 24 with a Year 12 or equivalent qualification rose from 18.3% in 2006 to 28.7% in 2011. This rise of 10.4 percentage points was faster than in any other state or territory.6 The COAG Reform Council concluded that the Northern Territory is on track to meet its target by 2020.

In March this year the Australian Bureau of Statistics released 2011 census data that shows that the proportion of Indigenous 20 to 24 year olds in very remote parts of the Northern Territory with a Year 12 or equivalent level of attainment rose from 9.4% in 2006 to 20.1% in 2011. The equivalent proportions for Indigenous 20 to 24 year olds for remote parts of the Northern Territory were 23.9% and 34.6% respectively.

Employment

The COAG target to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people by 2018 is measured with data on the proportion of 15 to 64 year olds who are employed.

Census data for 2006 and 2011 shows that the proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 to 64 who were employed in a non-Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) job7 rose in all jurisdictions from 2006 to 2011, apart from the Australian Capital Territory. The largest increase,

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3 Australian Government, 2008 to 2012, Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory Monitoring Reports
6 Ibid.
7 This analysis is based on Census data on CDEP participation. As the census data on CDEP is partial it understates the impact of falls in the number of CDEP participants from 2006 to 2011. If CDEP administrative data are used then the rise in the non-CDEP employment rate from 2006 to 2011 is greater than the census suggests. See Indigenous Employment: A Story of Continuing Growth, Matthew Gray, Boyd Hunter and Monica Howlett, CAEPR Topical Issue No 2/2013
9 percentage points, was in the Northern Territory. The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 census data suggest that the proportion of Indigenous people in very remote parts of the Northern Territory who are employed fell slightly from 35.4% in 2006 to 33% in 2011. However, the proportion of Indigenous people aged 15 to 64 in very remote parts of the Northern Territory who were employed in a mainstream, non-CDEP job rose from 10.5% in 2006 to 22.6% in 2011 – a rise of 12.1 percentage points. Mainstream, non-CDEP employment has risen sharply among Indigenous people in very remote parts of the Northern Territory from 2006 to 2011. However, mainstream employment levels remain very low compared to the average for all Australians and for all Indigenous Australians.

Through Stronger Futures, the Government is using a range of strategies to increase job opportunities and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory (see section on Stronger Futures job opportunities below).

**Australian Early Development Index**

The Australian Early Development Index is a population measure of children's development as they enter their first year of formal full-time schooling. Information for the Australian Early Development Index is collected across five domains that are closely linked to the predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes:

- physical health and wellbeing;
- social competence;
- emotional maturity;
- language and cognitive skills (school-based); and
- communication skills and general knowledge.

In the Northern Territory, the proportion of Indigenous children who are vulnerable on one or more of the domains fell from 65% in 2009 to 59% in 2012. This fall of 6 percentage points is statistically significant, and is greater than the fall for all Indigenous children nationally. Across Australia as a whole, the proportion of Indigenous children vulnerable on one or more of the domains fell from 47% in 2009 to 43% in 2012, a fall of 4 percentage points.

The proportion of Indigenous children in the Northern Territory who are vulnerable on two or more domains fell from 47% in 2009 to 38% in 2012. This fall of 9 percentage points is also statistically significant and is greater than the equivalent fall for all Indigenous children across Australia.

The proportion of all Indigenous children across Australia who are vulnerable on two or more domains fell from 30% in 2009 to 26% in 2012. However, despite the recent improvements, the proportion of Indigenous children in the Northern Territory who are vulnerable on one or more, or two or more, domains is still considerably higher than the national proportion of Indigenous children across Australia.

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8 ACT unchanged at 0.0% points from 63.6% in 2006 to 63.6% in 2011, Tas rose 0.2% points from 54.2% in 2006 to 54.4% in 2011, SA rose 0.7% points from 40.4% in 2006 to 41.1% in 2011, WA rose 2.0% points from 37.6% 2006 to 39.6% in 2011, Qld rose 0.5% points from 47.1% 2006 to 47.6% in 2011, Vic rose 0.5% points from 50.1% in 2006 to 50.6% in 2011 and NSW rose 1.8% points from 44.9% 2006 to 46.7% in 2011.
Stronger Futures Job Opportunities

The Australian Government is committed to increasing employment outcomes for Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.

As part of Stronger Futures all service providers are expected to employ local Aboriginal people wherever possible. The Australian Government has also required that Aboriginal employment targets be set for all Stronger Futures measures to encourage service providers to invest in employing Aboriginal staff and developing their skills.

To assist in this work, the Australian and Northern Territory governments are developing an Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy. Further information on employment targets is in section 11.

Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, there were around 760 Indigenous people employed in Stronger Futures related services. This figure includes:

- 350 employed in Community Night Patrols;
- 189 employed in the School Nutrition Program;
- 47 Youth in Community workers;
- 24 Indigenous Engagement Officers employed;
- 28 working in playgroups;
- 26 employed in crèches;
- 24 traineeships;
- 22 employed in Intensive Family Support Services;
- 20 Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers;
- 13 employed in women’s safe houses; and
- 12 filling the new Indigenous ranger positions.

In addition to these existing jobs, it is worth noting that:

- the number of Indigenous Engagement Officer positions will increase from 30 to between 60 and up to 90 full and part-time positions by 2014;
- the number of traineeships under the Local Jobs for Local People initiative in remote communities will increase from 24 to 100 by June 2016; and
- the number of additional Indigenous ranger positions under the Working on Country program will increase from 12 to 50 over the next four years. A total of 240 Indigenous people are currently employed as rangers in the Working on Country program in the Northern Territory.

This report will continue to monitor Indigenous employment against agreed targets and goals.
2. Health
2. Health

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Health Implementation Plan was signed on 15 April 2013

The Health Implementation Plan aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory through:

- an integrated hearing health program for Aboriginal children under 16 years across the continuum of care (continuum of care involves an integrated system of care that guides and tracks a patient over time through a range of health services);
- an integrated oral health program for Aboriginal children under 16 years across the continuum of care;
- child abuse trauma counselling and support services for Aboriginal children under 18 years and their families in remote communities;
- a Territory-wide integrated and comprehensive primary health care system;
- continuing reform of the Aboriginal primary health care system;
- a short-term health professional placement program that supports the primary health care sector;
- additional alcohol and other drug workers in primary and other health care services; and
- access to high quality and healthy food in remote communities.

The Australian Government is pursuing these aims in partnership with the Northern Territory Government, the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations sector and Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.

Project elements for the Health Implementation Plan reported in this section include:

2.1 Hearing Health Services;
2.2 Oral Health Services;
2.3 Mobile Outreach Service Plus Program;
2.4 Primary Health Care Service Delivery;
2.5 Primary Health Care Reform;
2.6 Remote Area Health Corps (RAHC);
2.7 Alcohol and other Drug Workers;
2.8 Food Security.
2.1 Hearing Health Services

What is being done?
To reduce the proportion of Aboriginal children with ear disease and hearing loss, the Australian and Northern Territory governments are implementing an integrated hearing health program for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory across the continuum of care.

The Australian Government is providing funding for more than 2000 hearing checks and follow-up services and the Northern Territory Government is delivering a community education program to educate families about their children’s ear and hearing health.

Hearing health program components include:

- audiology services working with primary health care services;
- complex case management services including coordination of services in the Northern Territory; and
- hearing health prevention in general health care, focusing on mothers and carers of infants.

Why is it important?
Ear disease and hearing loss have a significant impact on both a child’s life and their future life chances by affecting their ability to learn at school and their employment opportunities in later life. There is significant ear disease among Indigenous children in the Northern Territory.

What has been achieved?
This program continues the success under the previous hearing health program, with a greater focus on prevention.

The Northern Territory and Australian governments have continued to provide hearing health services during the reporting period concurrent with the implementation of the expanded hearing health program funded under Stronger Futures.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has been funded to design, manage, analyse and report data collected through the Oral and Hearing Health components of this Stronger Futures measure. Data will be provided in future six-monthly reports.

2.2 Oral Health Services

What is being done?
To reduce the proportion of Aboriginal children with decayed or missing teeth, the Australian and Northern Territory governments are implementing an integrated oral health program for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory across the continuum of care.

More than 12,000 Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory will have access to preventive oral health services through outreach services.
Program components include:

- dental clinical services including services under general anaesthetic where required;
- preventive oral health programs including fluoride varnish and fissure seals;
- training of clinicians such as remote area nurses and Aboriginal health workers to apply fluoride varnish;
- dental health education as part of school-based tooth brushing; and
- oral health promotion in general health care, focusing on mothers and carers of infants.

The program also includes funding for dental outreach services provided by Aboriginal community controlled health organisations in the Northern Territory. This program targets children under 16 years and aims to increase access in areas of high need.

The following six Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations are being funded to deliver dental services to children with oral health needs:

- Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation;
- Katherine West Health Board;
- Wurli Wurlingjang Health Service;
- Marthakal Homelands Health Services;
- Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation; and
- Danila Dilba Health Service.

Why is it important?

More and better dental services were frequently requested during the 2011 Stronger Futures consultations with Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory.9

The oral health status of Northern Territory Aboriginal children is poorer than that of non-Indigenous children in the Territory or nationally. It is estimated that:

- around 80% of children treated had decayed, missing or filled teeth; and
- around 40% of children who do get treatment are returning with new caries.

What has been achieved?

This program continues the successful oral health program, with a greater focus on prevention through the inclusion of a fluoride varnish and dental fissure seals program.

The Australian and Northern Territory governments have continued to provide oral health services during the reporting period concurrent with the implementation of the expanded oral health program funded under Stronger Futures.

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Data on this program element will be available in the next progress report when analysis by the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare is completed.

2.3 Mobile Outreach Service Plus Program

What is being done?
The Australian Government is continuing to fund child abuse trauma counselling and support services for Aboriginal children and their families in remote communities through the Mobile Outreach Service Plus program.

This service conducts about 480 visits each year providing counselling and education to children, their families and communities experiencing trauma from child abuse and neglect.

This service will help more than 200 Aboriginal families across the Northern Territory, with many more families reached through community education and information sessions that deal with child abuse and neglect.

To complement the work of the Mobile Outreach Service Plus program, funding has been provided to build remote primary health care workforce capacity in responding to child abuse. Funding has also been provided for an evaluation of Mobile Outreach Service Plus program outcomes.

Why is it important?
There is evidence of a relationship between childhood abuse and later experiences of substance abuse, depression, anxiety and suicidal behaviour.

An independent evaluation of the Mobile Outreach Service Plus program, published in January 2012, concluded that it was a successful approach and recommended it be continued.

What has been achieved?
The Mobile Outreach Service Plus program service capacity has been maintained for 2012-13. Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, 175 visits were made to remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities to deliver 374 case-related services and 772 non-case-related services such as community education and external professional development.

2.4 Primary Health Care Service Delivery

What is being done?
The Australian Government is continuing to fund Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations and the Northern Territory Government to deliver comprehensive primary health care services. This involves more than 250 full-time staff delivering medical, nursing and allied health services in 80 primary health care clinics.

This service is continuing to fund the employment and training of staff, as well as activities to improve the quality of service delivery through continuous quality improvement processes and monitoring of key performance indicators. This will improve the sustainability, quality and
effectiveness of service delivery across all Indigenous health service providers in the Northern Territory.

Funds to build and upgrade staff housing facilities or clinics are also included, as well as funding for provision of training programs targeted at Aboriginal people in administrative, management and Aboriginal health worker roles.

Why is it important?
Health is a key determinant of life expectancy. Improving health outcomes is a key contribution to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Strengthening comprehensive primary health care services is central to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory.

What has been achieved?
Primary health care service delivery
Primary health care service delivery continued in around 80 clinics across the Northern Territory, including 26 Aboriginal community-controlled clinics.

From 1 July to 31 December 2012, the Northern Territory Aboriginal Health Forum partners worked together to produce a list of possible building upgrade and repair projects for health clinics in remote areas of the Northern Territory. The projects to go ahead include:

- an upgrade and refurbishment of a dedicated consultation and practice room in Santa Teresa;
- refurbishment of the clinic office, the toilets and kitchen in Tennant Creek;
- repair and replacement of plumbing in clinic and in staff housing in Kintore;
- painting of clinics’ service delivery areas in Katherine; and
- an urgent repair of damaged flooring in Maningrida.

Improving the quality of service delivery
Aboriginal Medical Service Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT), the Northern Territory Department of Health and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing have been working to improve patient experience of services and health outcomes through progressing clinical continuous quality improvement in the Aboriginal primary health care system since 2008. The Northern Territory Continuous Quality Improvement program funds regional facilitators across the Northern Territory to implement activities to improve quality and effectiveness in both Northern Territory clinics and Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations.

The Northern Territory Aboriginal Health key performance indicators are fundamental to the clinical Continuous Quality Improvement program. Funds have been provided to the Northern Territory Government for the ongoing maintenance and development of these key performance indicator systems. All Indigenous Northern Territory health service providers supplied data for the 2012 calendar year data collection.
An independent evaluation of the Northern Territory Continuous Quality Improvement Investment Strategy commenced in August 2012 and is expected to be finalised by the end of July 2013.

2.5 Primary Health Care Reform

What is being done?

Reform of the primary health care sector in the Northern Territory will continue to deliver more efficient and sustainable service delivery through economies of scale and better coordinated planning and service delivery.

Both the Australian and Northern Territory governments fund Aboriginal primary health care services in the Northern Territory. They are working together to deliver a responsive, comprehensive and integrated primary health care system that works effectively and efficiently in remote Territory locations. This includes:

- the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory working together to plan and implement a territory-wide approach. This will minimise duplication of effort and gaps in service delivery;
- developing regional structures that deliver community ownership and participation, collaboration and improved governance;
- establishing and supporting clinical governance to enable integration and coordination of health services; and
- ensuring appropriate health infrastructure is in place to support regional service delivery.

The regional reform agenda for delivery of primary health care services is progressing with priority health service delivery areas (HSDAs) across the Northern Territory. The priority areas are: West Arnhem, East Arnhem, Alyawarra and Arrente-Anmatjerre.

Why is it important?

Regionalisation of primary health care services will contribute to improving patients’ experiences of services and health outcomes. The regional governance structures facilitate Aboriginal people’s role in decision-making and the establishment of clinical and public health advisory groups will ensure that they are informed by the most up to date clinical information.

What has been achieved?

The West Arnhem HSDA has become a fully incorporated board and is in the process of developing its final regionalisation proposal. The East Arnhem HSDA is also developing its final regionalisation proposal. Both HSDAs are establishing clinical and public health advisory groups.

The two Central Australian HSDAs (Alyawarra and Arrente-Anmatjerre) have established executive steering committees to work with the partners and key stakeholders to develop a final regionalisation proposal.
2.6 Remote Area Health Corps

What is being done?
The Australian Government is continuing funding for the Remote Area Health Corps (RAHC), a short-term health professional placement program that supports the primary health care sector. The RAHC help meet critical primary health care workforce shortages in remote areas, with about 450 health professional placements each year.

Funding will enable recruitment, training, professional development and transport of health professionals.

Why is it important?
By reducing workforce shortages in the health workforce in remote Northern Territory communities, primary health care programs can be better delivered in those communities.

What has been achieved?
RAHC service capacity has been maintained into 2012-13. RAHC contributed to reducing workforce shortages in remote health services through the 259 deployments shown in Table 1 for the period 1 July – 31 December 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 RAHC contribution to workforce shortages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of Deployments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear Health Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7 Alcohol and Other Drug Workers

What is being done?
Under a new program, alcohol and other drug workers will provide support in 20 communities as part of local alcohol management plans initiatives.

Up to 20 full-time equivalent locally based workers will provide holistic care including prevention, early intervention, referral and follow up in communities of greatest need. The workers will increase the capacity of existing health and substance use services to support those communities.
introducing alcohol management plans and contribute to the success of these plans for the communities as a whole.

**Why is it important?**

Alcohol misuse is a major contributing factor to Aboriginal disadvantage in the Northern Territory, resulting in low life expectancy, poor health, poor education and poor employment outcomes. Alcohol continues to devastate the lives of too many Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. It can lead to violence, make it hard to hold down a job and get the kids to school, and can destroy the health of families and communities.

**What has been achieved?**

Australian Government agencies have identified several communities where alcohol and other drug workers are needed and could be placed, or where existing contracts may be able to be extended. Australian Government agencies are working with service providers to take on new, or extend existing, workers and employ up to 20 alcohol and other drug workers in communities where they are needed most.

### 2.8 Food Security

Community stores are a key source of food and beverage supplies for Aboriginal communities and people living in remote areas in the Northern Territory. These stores and other similar outlets, where they exist, can often be the main source of food for people who have limited access to transport or are a long distance away from major retail centres.

**What is being done?**

The *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012* enables special measures to be taken to promote food security for Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and particularly to enhance the contribution made by community stores to achieving food security for Aboriginal communities. The legislation establishes processes for assessing, monitoring and licensing stores, as well as compliance arrangements.

The licensing scheme applies to stores in the ‘food security area’ that are an important source of food, drink or grocery items for an Aboriginal community. Under Stronger Futures, the whole of the Northern Territory is a food security area except those areas that have been prescribed as excluded. The *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (Food Security Areas) Rule 2012* was signed in October 2012. It excludes the regional centres of Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Nhulunbuy from the food security area.

The community stores licensing scheme has been improved under Stronger Futures. As well as expanding the food security area, the licensing scheme now provides for a wider range of penalties for licence breaches. Removing a licence is no longer the only option for dealing with persistent non-compliance. This approach discourages rogue traders and encourages better performance and service from stores.

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Stores that are performing well no longer have to apply for renewed licences every year or more frequently as in the past.

Funding of $13.4 million is available over 10 years for activities to improve food security under the Stronger Futures food security measure. A draft implementation plan for the Stronger Futures food security measure has been published on the Australian Government's Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs’ website and public comments were invited by 24 May 2013.

Program guidelines for the funding have been published and the funding round for 2012-13 closed on 31 May 2013. Grant funding of around $1.4 million in 2012-13 is available to assist store owners and operators to meet acceptable standards for community stores licensing, including in regard to the range, quantity and quality of goods, and the retail, governance and financial integrity of their operations.

**Why is it important?**

In May 2011, an independent evaluation of the community stores licensing scheme found that licensing had resulted in significant improvements to the availability, range and quality of fresh and healthy food; stores’ environment; financial transparency; and consumer protection and service practices. This measure will help to sustain the benefits to Aboriginal communities of improved food security.

**What has been achieved?**

At 31 May 2013 a total of 92 community stores had been licensed. Between 16 July 2012 and 31 May 2013, over 120 monitoring or licensing assessment visits to community stores were undertaken. Over this period, no community store licences were revoked or refused. A store in Yuendumu was the first to be licensed under the new licensing requirements. Funding has been provided to a wide range of community stores. This funding supports things like upgrades to minor infrastructure and equipment (for example generators at Nyirripi and Milyakburra) and training for local Aboriginal people so they can work in their community store or takeaway outlet (for example in Wadeye, where local people are gaining cooking skills). This funding also supports governance and financial management training for community store managers and operators.

**Links to other programs and activities that support food security in remote Aboriginal communities**

The Australian Government has a range of initiatives that are directed at improving food security in remote Aboriginal communities and the Stronger Futures food security measure builds on and complements these. Two key initiatives are Outback Stores Pty Ltd (Outback Stores) and the Aboriginals Benefit Account community stores infrastructure project.
3. Schooling
3. Schooling

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Schooling Implementation Plan was signed on 13 March 2013

The Schooling Implementation Plan includes the following elements:

3.1 Building a Quality School Workforce;
3.2 School Enrolment and Attendance Measure (SEAM); and
3.3 School Nutrition Program.

3.1 Building a Quality School Workforce

What is being done?

Building a Quality Workforce will continue to provide students in remote communities with access to quality education. Building a Quality School Workforce has three sub-elements that will be delivered through the Northern Territory Government and the non-government sector:

- Quality Teaching initiative – initiatives that build a skilled and sustainable Aboriginal and remote education workforce and provide responsive and innovative approaches to improving education outcomes in remote communities. This includes provision of quality teaching support for literacy and numeracy, English as an additional language, and hearing and other difficulties;

- Additional Teachers - the intent of the additional 200 teachers (170 Government and 30 non-Government) funding is to employ additional teachers to be allocated to and retained in remote community schools. This supports increased access to quality teaching, directly engages young people in education and supports the aspirations of Aboriginal communities; and

- Teacher housing - getting the best teachers to commit to teach in remote locations, and stay on long enough to make a real difference, depends on a number of critical factors. The provision of housing is an important component of the overall package offered to teachers in remote and very remote communities. Under the Stronger Futures Schooling Implementation Plan there is a commitment to build up to 125 houses (22 through the residual commitment under the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement and new investment of 88 Government and 15 non-government) in remote communities under Stronger Futures.

The Quality Teaching and Additional Teachers initiatives are implemented in 102 government and non-government schools in remote communities throughout the Northern Territory. Teacher houses are being constructed in selected communities as agreed to between the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and non-government schools. The government sector has constructed four of the 22 houses that are a residual obligation of the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement, with the remaining 18 to be completed by December 2013. The government sector will commence construction of up to 88 houses from...
new investment in 2013-14 through until 2022. The non-government sector fully met its obligations under the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement and will receive additional investment to construct up to 15 houses from 2014-15 through until 2019-20.

Why is it important?
The deliverables under Building a Quality School Workforce support a range of reforms that aim to improve school readiness, attendance and attainment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in remote communities. Achieving education outcomes is crucial to closing the gap.

What has been achieved?
In the period 1 July to 31 December 2012 the target of recruiting 200 additional teachers was achieved. The Northern Territory Government successfully recruited and maintained the additional teacher allocations to schools with 166 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teachers being deployed across 83 eligible remote and very remote schools, with an additional four FTE being employed as Teacher Support Officers to provide targeted support to improve teacher retention and length of stay in remote areas. The non-government sector successfully recruited and maintained the employment of 30 additional teachers.

Under the teacher housing measure, the Northern Territory Government has a residual obligation from the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement to construct 22 teacher houses. Four were constructed in 2011-12 and the remaining 18 are to be completed by December 2013. The non-government sector has no teacher housing construction obligations within this reporting period.

In the period 1 July to 31 December 2012, the Northern Territory Government provided a capital works schedule detailing its plans to meet its residual obligations to construct 18 houses. Table 2 below provides a summary of this schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Houses Planned</th>
<th>Anticipated completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angurugu School</td>
<td>Angurugu</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlparra School</td>
<td>Arlparra</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunbalanya School</td>
<td>Gunbalanya</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harts Range School</td>
<td>Harts Range</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalkaringi School</td>
<td>Kalkarindji</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maningrida School</td>
<td>Maningrida</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngukurr School</td>
<td>Ngukurr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherdson College</td>
<td>Galiwinku</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31 December 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 School Enrolment and Attendance Measure (SEAM)

What is being done?
The new model of SEAM is about supporting parents and families to ensure their children are enrolled in and attending school. It provides an additional policy lever that complements and supports the Northern Territory’s Every Child Every Day strategy, to help parents to work through the complex issues that surround the challenges of enrolment and attendance. SEAM is aligned with Every Child Every Day to provide clear shared processes and strong support services to enable families in the Northern Territory to address barriers and work towards having their children enrolled in school and attending regularly.

The new model of SEAM promotes a collaborative approach to working with the family and others in the community who might have a role in influencing the child. Every attempt is made to assist and support parents get their child to school. As a last resort, if parents do not comply with their requirements and no special circumstances apply, a parent’s income support payment may be suspended.

The new model of SEAM is being introduced in four phases over two years and will operate in the Northern Territory until June 2022. Over this period, SEAM will be rolled out to 23 communities in the Northern Territory.

Why is it important?
A good education leads to better health, better income and a better life with more choices and opportunities. To get a decent education, children need to go to school every day and stay until they finish their schooling.

SEAM makes parents, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, aware of their responsibilities and provides extra support to families to ensure that their children are attending school regularly and benefiting from an education.

What has been achieved?
SEAM is being rolled out across 23 communities over four phases. SEAM has been rolled out to all Phase One communities and community information sessions have occurred in both Phase One and Two communities.

The milestones below and as outlined in the Schooling Implementation Plan up until and including 1 March 2013 have been completed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Houses Planned</th>
<th>Anticipated completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warruwi School</td>
<td>Warruwi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• agreement on SEAM Phase One communities, to commence in Term 1, 2013;
• community information sessions have been conducted in the following phase one locations: Katherine and Katherine Town Camps (week commencing 12 November 2012) Numbulwar and Milyakburra (18 February 2013), Groote Eylandt (Umbakumba, Angurugu, Alyangula - 25 February 2013), Wadeye (12 March 2013), and Ntaria (Hermannsburg) and Wallace Rockhole (29 April – 3 May);
• completion of Northern Territory Department of Education and Children’s Services consultations with Groote Eylandt communities; and
• participation in SEAM steering committee and related Working Groups.

The first SEAM attendance conferences for parents living in phase one locations commenced in the week of 25 March 2013.

In May and June 2013, SEAM community information sessions were conducted in phase two locations: Alice Springs, Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Ngukurr and Tennant Creek.

The remaining SEAM locations are Tiwi Islands, Maningrida, Galiwin’ku, Gapuwiyak, Gunbalanya, Milingimbi, Yirrkala and Nhulunbuy. The details about which of these communities will be in phases three and four will be negotiated between the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments and provided as milestones in the Schooling Implementation Plan under the Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement. Phase Three will commence in Term 3, 2014 and Phase Four in Term 1, 2015.

3.3 School Nutrition Program

What is being done?

The School Nutrition Program is a meal service for school-aged children attending school in identified communities under the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory.

The Australian Government’s Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations funds providers to employ local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to prepare and deliver the meals, support professional development activities, and ensure kitchen facilities and equipment are adequate and maintained. There are 40 contracted providers delivering the School Nutrition Program in 67 schools in the Stronger Futures communities.

The School Nutrition Program aims to achieve two main policy goals:

• contribute to improved school engagement and learning by providing meals to children enrolled in school from Transition to Year 12 in Stronger Futures communities; and
• provide for employment opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.
Why is it important?

The School Nutrition Program is an important element of Stronger Futures as it improves the engagement and learning of school-aged children through the provision of meals at school.

The KPMG Evaluation of School Nutrition Program October 2011 showed that “…there is consistent anecdotal evidence that [the School Nutrition Program] SNP is having a positive impact on student behaviour and engagement”. Further, “there is strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that most parents, community members, educators and health providers believe that the SNP has a positive impact on children’s health”.

The evaluation also reported that the program “represents a solid platform from which government and communities can build other health and education initiatives, as well as increase avenues for local employment for community members”.

The School Nutrition Program provides a positive mechanism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents/carers’ involvement through employment and training opportunities in the delivery of meals in schools.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to the cost of meals for each child and parental contributions are a voluntary opt-in arrangement with Centrelink encouraging parents to contribute to the cost of meals through income management deductions, Centrepay and Electronic Funds Transfer. Parental contributions have continuously decreased since the implementation of the program. For the period January to March 2013, 38% of parents contributed to meals for their children.

To ensure children are provided with meals regardless of non-payment by parents, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations provides extra funding to providers to cover the costs of meals. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations is liaising with Centrelink to educate their employees about the School Nutrition Program and to encourage parents and carers to contribute to their children’s meals. A fact sheet has been developed along with education sessions with Centrelink remote engagement teams to assist in promoting the School Nutrition Program to parents in communities.

What has been achieved?

School Nutrition Program meals are provided to school-aged children each school day. In the period July to December 2012, an average of 2837 breakfasts and 4882 lunches (7719 meals in total) were provided each day to children attending the 67 schools.

An employment target to maintain a minimum of 75% Indigenous employment was achieved in 2012. Out of a total of 257 people directly employed by the program in meals delivery, 189 were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

4. Community Safety and Justice
4. Community Safety and Justice

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Community Safety and Justice Implementation Plan was signed on 8 May 2013

The Community Safety and Justice Implementation Plan supports continued improvements in community safety in remote Northern Territory communities through remote policing, community night patrols and supplementary legal assistance services.

Project elements for the Community Safety and Justice Implementation Plan reported in this section of the report include:

4.1 Remote Policing Services;
4.2 Completion of police complexes in remote communities;
4.3 Dog Operations Units and Substance Abuse Intelligence Desks;
4.4 Supplementary Legal Assistance;
4.5 Community Night Patrols;
4.6 Support for Northern Territory Child Abuse Task Force;

4.1 Remote Policing Services

What is being done?

The Australian Government has committed $619 million over 10 years to improve community safety in the Northern Territory, including the continued employment of 60 additional Northern Territory police to support remote police work and provide a permanent police presence in 18 remote communities.12 The Australian Government will also continue to support remote communities through investment in Northern Territory police infrastructure for 10 years and the remote policing command services for four years until 30 June 2016, as well as the continued delivery of prisoner air transfer services.

Why it is important?

The deployment of 60 additional police in remote Northern Territory communities improves the safety of individuals, families and communities, including through enforcement of alcohol restrictions, maintaining law and order and working with local residents to keep their community safe.

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12 In all, 18 communities (covering more than 30% of the relevant population) received a resident police presence for the first time in the form of police stations established through the Northern Territory Police Service’s Operation Themis.
What has been achieved?
The employment of an additional 60 police has enabled continuation of a permanent policing presence in 18 remote Northern Territory communities, as well as more policing in other remote Northern Territory communities and additional policing support through the Remote Policing Command, Police College, Katherine Police Station and Police Prosecutions. This benefits all remote communities.

Police members in the 18 remote Northern Territory communities undertake a variety of community engagement activities and initiatives including talking to people about things like safe driving and the importance of wearing seatbelts and conducting regular community patrols.

4.2 Completion of police complexes in remote communities

What is being done?
Through Stronger Futures, the Australian Government is funding four new remote police stations. The locality of these police stations is yet to be determined. Another four police complexes are being constructed at Gapuwiyak, Ramingining, Arlparra and Yuendumu out of residual funding from the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory.

Why it is important?
Improved permanent police infrastructure will provide additional support for remote Aboriginal communities to improve community and prisoner safety. Construction of new complexes will also provide police with resources to more effectively engage with local Aboriginal people in 18 remote communities.

What has been achieved?
The construction and fit-out of the police complex at Gapuwiyak, including a new permanent police station, office and residential accommodation was completed in March 2013.

4.3 Dog Operations Units and Substance Abuse Intelligence Desks

What is being done?
The Substance Abuse Intelligence Desks (SAIDs) coordinate a multi-jurisdictional partnership involving police in the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia, to reduce the supply of substances in the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Lands, the Top End and Central Australia. The SAIDs act as focal points for collating intelligence and coordinating policing activities, principally in detecting and disrupting the supply of drugs, petrol, solvents, kava and alcohol.

The Northern Territory, South Australian and Western Australian police have developed a greater proactive targeted approach specific to the various forms of substance abuse that are prevalent in remote areas and an extensive intelligence network throughout the cross-border region and
Beyond. This network did not exist prior to SAID and now allows for comprehensive information and intelligence sharing across remote areas.

**Why it is important?**

A reduction in the supply of both licit and illicit substances will assist in improving community safety and promoting positive health outcomes. The visible presence of more drug detection dogs as part of the SAID initiative will assist in reducing the amount of illegal substances entering remote communities, as well as being a deterrent for trafficking of these substances.

**What has been achieved?**

There are currently four SAIDs located in Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin in the Northern Territory and at Marla in South Australia. Western Australian police have employed an intelligence analyst to collate intelligence and support the SAIDs.

Table 3 shows the SAIDs and dog operation units (DOUs) outcomes for July to December 2011 and for the corresponding period in 2012. The table shows consistency with the number of remote community visits and the number of arrests for the two periods. The number of charges is down while the number of summons and infringement notices issued has risen. While the seizure of cannabis has halved in the 2012 reporting period, seizure of other harder drugs has increased by 62.5%. This is indicated by the total seizure of amphetamines, MDMA (ecstasy) and other drugs being 240.9 grams in comparison to 150.7 grams for the corresponding period in 2011.

**Table 3 SAIDs and DOUs outcomes for period July and December 2011 and 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>July-Dec 2011</th>
<th>July – Dec 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrests</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summons</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infringement notices issued</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seizures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (litres)</td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>2028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis (kilograms)</td>
<td>82.15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kava (kilograms)</td>
<td>657.5</td>
<td>789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol (litres)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines (grams)</td>
<td>111.9</td>
<td>102.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDMA (Ecstasy) (grams)</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Drugs (grams)</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Northern Territory police have been able to provide more drug dog handlers and drug detection dogs on the front line. This has allowed for greater coverage throughout the Northern Territory.

4.4 Supplementary Legal Assistance

What is being done?
The funding for legal assistance is spread between six legal service providers: the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission; the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service; the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency; the Katherine Women’s Information and Legal Service; the Top End Women’s Legal Service; and the Central Australian Women’s Legal Service.

These service providers are working collaboratively to deliver legal assistance services, including welfare rights, to Indigenous clients in remote communities. Services are provided in around 104 locations, effectively covering the whole of the Northern Territory.

These arrangements are reflected in the Stronger Futures Service Plan as agreed to by all legal assistance service providers funded by the Northern Territory Department of the Attorney-General and Justice.

Why is it important?
Law and justice initiatives play a key role in improving community safety for Aboriginal people living in remote areas, by enforcing alcohol restrictions, maintaining law and order and working with local residents to keep their communities safe.

What has been achieved?
For the period 1 July to 31 December 2012, the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission provided the following assistance to clients referred through the Stronger Futures package: 208 advices, 29 duty lawyer services, and 49 approved applications for grants of aid. A total of 25 communities were visited.

Table 4 shows the level of assistance provided through Stronger Futures funding by the three community legal centres (the Katherine Women’s Information and Legal Service, the Central Australian Women’s Legal Service and the Top End Women’s Legal Service). These three community legal centres provide legal assistance in the form of information, advice and casework services under the Stronger Futures initiative. For the period 1 July to 31 December 2012 matters
primarily dealt with by these centres were civil, wills and deceased estates, injuries compensation, family law and domestic violence.

**Table 4 Assistance provided by community legal centres**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>No of Duty Lawyer Matters</th>
<th>No of Advices</th>
<th>No of Cases</th>
<th>No of Outreach Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Australian Women’s Legal Service</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Women’s Information &amp; Legal Service</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top End Women’s Legal Service</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows the level of assistance provided by the two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services (the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service). Supplementary legal assistance covers legal advice, referrals, representation and community legal education in criminal, civil, and family law matters and welfare rights cases.

**Table 5 Assistance provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>No of Duty Lawyer Matters</th>
<th>No of Advices</th>
<th>No of Cases</th>
<th>No of Outreach Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.5 Community Night Patrons

**What is being done?**

The Australian Government provides funding for community night patrols across 80 communities in the Northern Territory. Community night patrols undertake activities such as early intervention to prevent disorder in communities, transportation of vulnerable people to safe places and referral to information and services.

The service operates by patrolling community areas and identifying people at risk of committing an offence or becoming a victim of harm.

The program has been in operation for over five years. During that time the Australian Government has been working closely with service providers to enable continuous improvement and support delivery of effective and efficient community patrol services.
Funding has been provided for a period of 10 years from July 2012 under Stronger Futures.

**Why is it important?**

Community night patrols help break the cycle of violence and crime in communities.

They do not replace the work of police and do not have policing powers, but provide intermediate intervention to limit the need for police to respond while working together with the police and other services to improve community safety.

Community night patrols also provide employment opportunities for local Aboriginal men and women as night patrollers and team leaders.

**What has been achieved?**

The Australian Government is working to further refine and improve the delivery and efficiency of community night patrols, in partnership with service providers and remote communities.

The level of community involvement in delivery of the service is being increased and the program will be more flexible to ensure greater responsiveness to individual community needs and priorities.

Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, night patrol services in the Northern Territory funded by the federal Attorney General’s Department assisted in approximately 70,000 incidents. This assistance included transporting people to a recognised safe place (such as a safe house), or another safe place (such as a family member’s home), referral to other services, ensuring children are not out late at night, or prevention or limiting of antisocial behaviour, including fighting, domestic violence, gambling and/or arguments.

The Community Night Patrol program provides funding for up to 350 full-time positions for Indigenous people in remote communities. Transitioning individuals into full-time employment rather than job-share arrangements is a focus of program development.

A training package has been developed and is awaiting accreditation to support consistent, efficient and effective skills development for night patrollers.

**4.6 Support for Northern Territory Child Abuse Task Force**

The Australian Federal Police will be funded until 30 June 2014 to continue to maintain a presence in the Northern Territory as part of the multi-agency Child Abuse Taskforce. During this period, it is expected Northern Territory police will have developed the specialist skills to assume responsibility for the Child Abuse Task Force from 1 July 2014.

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13 The Attorney General’s Department continues to work with service providers to improve the accuracy of data collected by night patrols. This data is incomplete in some areas and does not include all activities of night patrol services.
4.7 Support for National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force (NIITF)

Funding has been continued to maintain the operation of the National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force for a further two years, enabling the Government to continue to be informed about the situation of vulnerable Indigenous communities across Australia. During this period, a framework will be developed for intelligence-based reporting on child abuse and violence issues to continue following the cessation of the task force at the end of 2013-14.
5. Tackling Alcohol Abuse
5. **Tackling Alcohol Abuse**

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Tackling Alcohol Abuse Implementation Plan was signed on 3 June 2013

The Tackling Alcohol Abuse Implementation Plan includes the following elements:

5.1 Community alcohol management planning;

5.2 Enhanced long-term licensing and compliance and respectful signs;

5.3 Legislative review.

Since July 2012, the focus of this measure has been the development of a comprehensive approach to combatting alcohol abuse in the Northern Territory.

The elements of this comprehensive approach include:

- a commitment of more than $75 million over 10 years for the Stronger Futures tackling alcohol abuse measure;
- the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory legislation which maintains alcohol restrictions in remote communities, provides for stronger penalties for “grog” running, provides for the assessment of licensed premises that may be causing substantial alcohol-related harm to the community, and which provides for a minimum standards framework for alcohol management plans; and
- the implementation plan under the National Partnership Agreement that sets out the framework for Australian Government collaboration with the Northern Territory Government including on additional licensing inspectors, respectful signage and alcohol management plans.

In August 2012 there was a change of government in the Northern Territory with the incoming government foreshadowing new legislation and policies on alcohol regulation, rehabilitation and treatment. At the time of writing this report, the Northern Territory’s legislation was before the Legislative Assembly and due to commence on 1 July 2013.

### 5.1 Community Alcohol Management Planning

**What is being done?**

Alcohol management plans are plans negotiated at a local community level for the effective management of alcohol use among community members, and for the reduction of alcohol-related harm to individuals, families and communities in the Northern Territory. The provisions of the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012 relating to alcohol management plans are in addition to any Northern Territory Liquor Act provisions. For an alcohol management plan to be approved by the federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, a plan must meet five minimum standards.
The primary purpose of alcohol management plans is to reduce harm arising in the community from misuse of alcohol, by means of locally-tailored whole-of-community plans that have broad acceptance within the community, are feasible to implement and are effective.

Alcohol management plans are not about reducing or lifting alcohol restrictions in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, but about assisting Aboriginal communities to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

From September to December 2012, the Australian Government’s Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs developed a consultation process and undertook consultations on draft minimum standards for alcohol management plans from key national and Northern Territory stakeholders and conducted consultations through Government Engagement Coordinators and Indigenous Engagement Officers in Aboriginal communities and town camps across the Northern Territory. This included seeking feedback from community leaders, women’s groups and key community stakeholders such as police, health workers, safe house workers and community alcohol reference groups. Key stakeholders were also invited to consultation meetings held in the following Northern Territory centres:

- Alice Springs, 20 November 2012
- Tennant Creek, 21 November 2012
- Nhulunbuy, 23 November 2012
- Darwin, 27 November 2012
- Katherine, 29 November 2012.

Many views were expressed and the large amount of feedback was summarised into a feedback report which was published on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs’ website.

The feedback was taken into account in the development of the minimum standards, which were finalised in early 2013 (see What has been achieved below).

**Why is it important?**

Alcohol abuse in the Northern Territory is a major contributing factor to Aboriginal disadvantage, including reduced life expectancy, poor health, education and employment outcomes, and has a devastating effect on community safety. To sustain change Aboriginal people need to be involved and take responsibility for reducing alcohol related harm in their communities.

**What has been achieved?**

The Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (Alcohol Management Plans) Rule 2013 came into effect on 25 February 2013. The rule prescribes the minimum standards that community alcohol management plans must satisfy.

The five minimum standards cover:

1. consultation and engagement;
2. managing the alcohol management plan;

3. alcohol management plan strategies – supply, demand and harm reduction;

4. monitoring, reporting and evaluation; and

5. clear geographical boundaries.

The Australian Government has allocated $23.6 million over eight years in the Alcohol Management Plan Community Fund for short-term, non-ongoing community-based projects to support harm reduction and supply and demand reduction strategies as part of an alcohol management plan, and for governance and leadership support for people involved in alcohol management planning.

### 5.2 Enhanced Long-term Licensing and Compliance and Respectful Signs

The Australian Government is providing additional funding to the Northern Territory to support long-term Northern Territory Liquor Act compliance in alcohol-protected areas, community-managed alcohol areas, regional centres and supply routes through inspection and enforcement of liquor regulations in licensed premises. The additional funding will also support engagement with key stakeholders on emerging issues, and maintenance of alcohol and prohibited material signs at key access points in the Northern Territory.

In the July to December period, eight additional compliance workers have continued to be employed by the Northern Territory Government. In the six months to December 2012, a total of 844 inspections have been undertaken of 474 licensed premises.

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in February 2012 wrote to the Northern Territory Chief Minister and the Mayor of Alice Springs concerning the need for major event restrictions to reduce alcohol-related harm in the town when major events such as big football matches are taking place. In March 2013, the Minister gave notice to the Northern Territory Minister responsible for licensing of her intention to request the assessment of certain licensed premises in Alice Springs. This request was declined by the Northern Territory Minister. The Minister urged the Northern Territory Chief Minister to review this decision and to join in the development of an Alice Springs alcohol management plan. This offer has also been declined. The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has also made submissions to the Northern Territory Licensing Commission in relation to several licensing applications from licensees. The submissions have provided evidence-based suggestions aimed at reducing alcohol related harm, for example, supporting low strength beer being available for sale.

The Australian Government has committed to ensuring that alcohol and prohibited material signs in remote communities and town camps are respectful. Funding has been provided to the Northern Territory Government to support this commitment.

All 250 of the blue highway signs notifying alcohol and pornography restrictions have been removed across the Northern Territory and replaced with 49 redesigned, more respectful signs, strategically positioned on borders, major highway intersections, airstrips and barge landings.
Under the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012*, the Northern Territory Licensing Commission is responsible for the wording of signs. The Northern Territory Government will work with the Australian Government to consult with communities on respectful signs. The Northern Territory will then be responsible for installation and maintenance of community signs.

### 5.3 Legislative review

The *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012* provides for an independent review of Commonwealth and Northern Territory laws relating to alcohol, two years after commencement of the Act, that is, from July 2014. The review must be completed by 15 July 2015.
6. Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing
6. Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing Health Implementation Plan was signed on 14 March 2013.

The Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing Implementation Plan program elements are a continuation of existing services. The elements are:

6.1 Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Worker program;
6.2 Women’s safe houses;
6.3 Mobile Child Protection Teams;
6.4 Stronger Communities for Children;
6.5 Playgroups;
6.6 Youth services;
6.7 Child and Parenting services
   - Let’s Start program
   - Child Nutrition program
   - Core of Life program
   - Indigenous Children’s program
   - Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS);
6.8 Crèches.

6.1 Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Worker program

What is being done?

The Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Worker program provides a critical community-based service in 22 remote communities across the Northern Territory including the Alice Springs town camps. The program aims to provide a responsible and culturally appropriate family support service to remote Aboriginal children, young people and their families. Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers also provide outreach services and support to nearby communities that share the same language and family connections.
Why is it important?
Staffed by local Aboriginal people, the majority of Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers live and work in their community, which is a core strength of the model. The Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers program has a strong focus on early intervention, working closely with vulnerable families who are on the verge of entering into the statutory child protection system, are in the statutory system or require support to exit the statutory system. A principle of the program is that through strengthening families it is possible to prevent children from unnecessarily entering the statutory system and assist families to stay together.

What has been achieved?
During the reporting period, the program employed 31 (25.73 FTE) Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers with 66% of staff identifying as Aboriginal. Training provided to workers included orientation, induction and further training to familiarise themselves with the position. There were 14 workers enrolled in the Certificate III in Community Services course, which was due to commence in March 2013.

Service activity indicates that children, young people and families are accessing the program for help as safety issues arise. The Northern Territory Office of Children and Families child protection teams are utilising the Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers to respond to safety issues and strengthen families in remote communities. These workers work with relevant services with specific families to improve child safety and family capacity to protect and raise children. Aboriginal staff are also taking leadership roles in their communities to address child safety issues and strengthen families.

Table 6 shows the total number of referrals and the source of those referrals for the period July to December 2012. The referrals have increased from 271 in July to December 2011 to 355 in July to December 2012.

Table 6 Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers (RAFCW) service activity July to December 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of referral</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community member</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local agency</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community clinic</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory Department of Children and Families</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>355</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of RAFCW communities</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of RAFCW personnel</td>
<td>31(25.73FTE)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Women’s Safe Houses

What is being done?
Women’s safe houses operate across remote communities in the Northern Territory. Through a 24-hour service, women’s safe houses aim to provide crisis accommodation and increase the safety options for women and children affected by violence.

Why is it important?
Women’s safe houses provide short-term crisis accommodation for women and their children, group safety and wellbeing programs, and referrals to counselling, legal and support services. They will also facilitate access to broader family support services under the Stronger Communities for Children model (see section 6.4 below).

Women’s safe houses aim to provide services that are culturally appropriate and reflect Aboriginal ideas, values and spiritual beliefs. The Women’s Safe Houses are staffed by local Aboriginal women and are strongly supported by the communities they operate in.

What has been achieved?
There are currently 16 operational safe houses in the Northern Territory communities of Angurugu, Kalkarindji, Lajamanu, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Ntaria, Peppimenarti, Ramingining, Ti Tree, Wugularr (Beswick), Wurrumiyanga, Yarralin, Wadeye, Gunbalanya, Darwin and Alice Springs. For this reporting period the women’s safe houses reported intakes of 209 women and 236 children accompanying women.

Table 7 shows the length of stay in the women’s safe houses being mostly for two nights and that activity from night patrols and self-referrals account for the primary source of intakes.

Table 7 Women’s safe houses service activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children accompanying women</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

14 From 1 July-31 December 2012 self-identification was used as the indicator to ascertain the percentage of employees that are Indigenous. However, this indicator appears to have produced a result that is not a true reflection of the number of Indigenous employees. To address this, from 1 January 2013 a proxy indicator has been introduced – Proportion of RAFCW workers with appropriate language skills – which is expected to provide more accurate data on the Indigenous workforce working in this program.

15 Note data is for 12 Women’s Safe houses only: Angurugu, Kalkarindji, Lajamanu, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Ntaria, Peppimenarti, Ramingining, Ti Tree, Wugularr (Beswick), Wurrumiyanga and Yarralin.
6.3 Mobile Child Protection Teams

What is being done?

The Mobile Child Protection Team enhances the capacity of the Northern Territory’s child protection system by undertaking child protection investigations in remote communities.

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16 From 1 July -31 December 2012 self-identification was used as the indicator to ascertain the percentage of employees that are Indigenous. However, this indicator appears to have produced a result that is not a true reflection of the number of Indigenous employees. To address this, from 1 January 2013 a proxy indicator has been introduced – Proportion of Women’s Safe House Workers with appropriate language skills – which is expected to provide more accurate data on the Indigenous workforce working in Women’s Safe Houses.
Why is it important?

The Mobile Child Protection Team provides forensic child protection casework support to Northern Territory Child Protection offices and allows for more investigations to take place in remote and regional communities across the Northern Territory.

What has been achieved?

The Mobile Child Protection Team has continued to assist the Northern Territory Office of Children and Families in addressing notifications of child abuse within the Northern Territory in a timely manner.

Since its establishment, the Mobile Child Protection Team has been based in Darwin with child protection workers travelling to regional and remote communities to investigate reports of child neglect and abuse and conduct assessments of children reported to be at risk of harm. From 1 March 2013, the Mobile Child Protection Team will be regionalised with staff members being placed in the regional centres of Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Northern Remote and East Arnhem.

The regionalisation of the Mobile Child Protection Team integrates the child protection work and supports an enhanced frontline service. Efficiencies for the program will also be achieved with less travel to and from Darwin, providing additional resourcing for remote community work.

During the reporting period (July to December 2012) there were 401 child protection investigations closed (316 through Mobile Child Protection teams and 85 through remote service centres), see Table 8 below.

Table 8 also shows that for the same period, the number of Mobile Child Protection Team workers averaged 15.75 FTE and there were seven FTE remote service centre-funded workers accounting for a total of 22.75 FTE child protection workers.

### Table 8 Mobile Child Protection Team service activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of child protection investigations closed by Mobile Child Protection Team practitioners</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Child Protection Teams</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote service centre estimate</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Mobile Child Protection Team practitioners (FTE)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Child Protection Team average</td>
<td>15.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote service centre funded</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total workers</td>
<td>22.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4 Stronger Communities for Children

What is being done?
Stronger Communities for Children creates 15 new Communities for Children services in remote communities in the Northern Territory. It is being implemented in three phases over 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2017-18. These new services give parents skills to make sure their children are growing up in a safe, happy and healthy environment.

Why is it important?
Stronger Communities for Children aims to give Indigenous children and young people the best possible start in life through strengthening families and communities, nurturing educational environments, positive participation opportunities and cultural events so that children and young people grow up strong, healthy and confident.

What has been achieved?
The Stronger Communities for Children model builds on the existing Communities for Children program, expanding services provided in remote communities in the Northern Territory beyond early childhood, parenting and family support to include youth activities, women's and men’s programs and capacity development.

The model was developed through extensive consultation with non-government organisations, peak bodies and the Northern Territory Government. The model is designed to include and involve communities through local community boards.

Services will be established in Ngukurr, Galiwin’ku, Wadeye, Ntaria and Santa Teresa from July 2013, with a further roll out in Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Utopia, Engawala and Lajamanu in 2014. Another five communities will benefit from July 2017, meaning that in total 15 communities will benefit from new services under the expansion.

Providers will deliver services that are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal families in their respective communities.

6.5 Playgroups

What is being done?
Eight playgroups are currently operating through funding under Stronger Futures. Of the eight, five playgroups, (including two mobile playgroups), have been operating since 2007-08 and three playgroups became operational in 2009-10.

The five playgroups are located in Numbulwar, Milingimbi, Lajamanu, Gunbalanya and Yuendumu. Of these, three deliver mobile playgroups to communities in Katherine, Tennant Creek and Borroloola.
Why is it important?
These activities contribute to the Closing the Gap Early Childhood building block which seeks to improve access to quality early childhood education and care services, including preschool, child care and family support services such as parenting programs and support.

What has been achieved?
Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, 448 adults, 806 children and 23 youth participated in 616 playgroup sessions across eight playgroups.

6.6 Youth Services

What is being done?
The Australian Government is investing over $100 million to 2022 in the Youth in Communities program, a major youth initiative assisting young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory to become more engaged with school, work and community life.

Youth in Communities supports local diversionary activities for Indigenous youth aged 10-20 years living in remote communities, particularly those at risk of substance abuse, suicide or self-harm, entering the justice system and disengagement from education, training, employment and community. Funding from the Australian Government’s Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is being provided directly to 19 service providers covering more than 60 communities across the Northern Territory.

Why is it important?
Through the Youth in Communities program, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is working to deliver a comprehensive youth strategy in the Northern Territory that provides an effective diversion for young Indigenous people from at-risk behaviours; improves life choices and outcomes; strengthens and improves youth services and builds community capacity through increasing the number of youth workers employed and using the infrastructure developed under the program.

What has been achieved?
A diverse range of programs and activities are being effectively delivered by Youth in Communities service providers, including:

- a case management program which aims to assist youth in improving the general health and wellbeing of each individual referred to the service;
- peer monitoring programs to facilitate the development of dynamic one-to-one interactions to inspire and encourage vulnerable youth;
- youth committees and forums to ensure activities are youth-driven and youth-focused;
- diversion activities including music, art, sport and cultural reconnection to elders/culture;
• alternative education programs which aim to give disengaged youth the social skills and confidence to return to education; and

• employment and training opportunities to expand choices for all possible career aspirations. Some examples of training include Indigenous Mental Health First Aid, media, construction, literacy and numeracy.

From 1 July 2012, 16 of the 17 existing Youth in Communities service providers had funding extended for a further two financial years to continue providing services to youth in priority communities. Between 1 July and 30 December 2012, two additional youth services commenced in Wadeye and Gunbalanya, and Relationships Australia Northern Territory was funded to deliver mentoring and support services to Youth in Communities providers across the Northern Territory from 1 January 2013.

The final report of the Youth in Communities program evaluation was completed in June 2012 and is published on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website. The evaluation found that projects and activities are delivering immediate benefits and are on track to provide intermediate outcomes for youth participants.

Over the period 1 July to 30 December 2012, around 12,683 young Indigenous people participated in Youth in Communities activities and around 106 youth workers and Indigenous youth work trainees were employed in full-time or part-time positions.

This has increased from the same period in 201117 where 9134 young Indigenous people participated in activities and youth workers numbered 80.

6.7 Child and Parenting Services

What is being done?
There are four early childhood activities currently operating. These are provided through the Family Support program Communities for Children Indigenous Parenting Services and all have been operating since 2007-08.

Why is it important?
These activities contribute to the Closing the Gap Early Childhood building block which seeks to improve access to quality early childhood education and care services, including preschool, child care and family support services such as parenting programs and support.

What has been achieved?
From 1 July to 31 December 2012, 266 adults, 190 children and 149 youth participated in early childhood activities. These activities included the Let’s Start program, Child Nutrition program, Core of Life program and the Indigenous Children’s Program.

17 6 monthly Closing the Gap Monitoring Report, July to December 2011.
Let’s Start Program

During the six months to December 2012, Let’s Start staff in Wurrumiyanga continued to conduct follow-ups and home visits, providing an opportunity for families to reconnect and monitor the health and wellbeing of their child. The 10-week program continued to be delivered in Milikapiti, Pirlangimpi and Wurrumiyanga. The program is being delivered by up to three professionally trained local group leaders of the Tiwi community.

Location implementation officers work with parents to develop their strengths and capacities in managing children’s behaviour by promoting reflection on their children’s needs and experience, while supporting them to engage with their children in play and learning.

From 1 July to 31 December 2012, 18 adults and 16 children participated in the Let’s Start program delivered by the Menzies School of Health Research in the Tiwi Islands communities of Milikapiti, Pirlangimpi and Wurrumiyanga.

This program continues to employ local people to support community engagement and culturally appropriate program delivery. The recruitment of a new location implementation officer from the Tiwi Islands aims to strengthen the capacity of the Let’s Start team to assist in supporting and engaging with parents, carers, children and extended families.

Child Nutrition program

The Child Nutrition program provides prevention and intervention sessions in Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Northern Territory communities to at-risk families and children. Service delivery includes individual education, support and case management, community education, and a range of community development strategies to develop the capacity of communities to support vulnerable and at-risk families and children.

The Child Nutrition program primarily aims to support Indigenous families in the NPY region to increase their capacity to care for children. The activity provides a support service to parents of children aged 0-5 years in the NPY lands.

From 1 July to 31 December 2012, 95 adults, 128 children and 23 youth participated in the Child Nutrition program delivered by the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women’s Council.

During the six months to December 2012, the Child Nutrition program provided assistance to families and children in the NPY Northern Territory communities of Imanpa, Docker River, Mutitjulu, and Finke through the provision of case management for children identified as being in need. During the six months to December 2012, staff coordinated regular supervised access for families whose children are in foster care.

Core of Life program

During the six months to December 2012, Core of Life training was delivered in the Peppimenarti and Palumpa communities. Health and nutrition awareness education sessions were held in Numbulwar, Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala, Wallaby Beach, Ski Beach, Peppimenarti, Palumpa, Darwin, Howard Springs and Katherine (King Valley). In addition, Core of Life held community engagement forums in Wadeye, Gapuwiyak and on Groote Eylandt.
From 1 July to 31 December 2012, 104 adults, 24 children and 116 youth were assisted by the Core of Life program delivered by Youth and Family Education Resources.

Youth and Families Education Resource educators met with local representatives and key community stakeholders to assess needs and issues prevalent in each community and discussed the pathways for implementing Core of Life in each site.

**Indigenous Children’s Program**

The Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services Parenting/Family Skills Training activity aims to increase the capacity of parents, caregivers and extended family members to provide a safe, nurturing and functional environment for children.

From 1 July to 31 December 2012, 49 adults, 22 children and 10 youth participated in Indigenous Children’s Program activities delivered by the Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services Incorporated.

Parents and caregivers were supported to apply the skills learned within the parenting programs (such as child needs, child health, child safety, parenting roles, healthy routines) into their everyday routines during the 12 weeks residential rehabilitation.

Children below school entry age were provided with support aimed at increasing school readiness through sessions including art/craft, early learning numeracy and literacy, protective behaviours, fine and gross motor skill development, routines and self-care. Children and families were also assessed for referral to other support agencies where required.

Children currently engaged in schooling were supported through activities including routines and self-care, homework tuition, protective behaviours and holiday programs. The Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services also liaised with families and schools to support ongoing attendance, retention and attainment within the schooling system. Children and families were also assessed for referral to other support agencies where required.

The program is also focusing on strategies that can be implemented to identify possible referrals to early intervention for children who may be affected by Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or other developmental disabilities. As part of this focus, the Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services is liaising with the Northern Territory Department of Early Intervention to include a developmental milestone assessment. The assessment will be conducted on all children entering the program who may qualify for early intervention (0 to 5 years). Referral pathways have also been arranged with this department.

**Intensive Family Support Services**

Stronger Futures will ensure the continued delivery of Intensive Family Support Services which are currently being delivered by five services across 17 locations in the Northern Territory. Additional services will be implemented in up to 15 communities across the Northern Territory as part of Stronger Communities for Children.

The Intensive Family Support Services program is committed to employing, developing and training suitable staff to deliver the program with an emphasis on building up a sustainable locally-
based Aboriginal workforce. Aboriginal employment targets developed include 50% of staff by 2014-15, 60% by 2017-18 and 75% by 2020-21.

Of 43 Intensive Family Support Services staff, 19 identify as being Indigenous.

Intensive Family Support Services established the Intensive Family Support Workforce Development Strategy in 2012-13. The Department has funded a registered training organisation and the Intensive Family Support Services implementation partner to support the implementation of the strategy, which includes:

- delivery of a nationally recognised VET Certificate IV and Diploma in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Family Support) to Intensive Family Support Services workers and support to undertake this work;
- professional development and training plans for all Intensive Family Support Services workers;
- practice coaching and training on the Intensive Family Support Services practice model; and
- identification and development of recruitment pathways into Intensive Family Support Services with a specific focus on an Indigenous workforce.

A total of 14 of the 17 Intensive Family Support Services workers enrolled in the course identified as being Indigenous.

### 6.8 Crèches

**What is being done?**

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory provides ongoing support for the operation of nine crèches. One of these crèches (Lajamanu) was completed in February 2013. The data below is for the eight crèches in operation between 1 July 2012 and 31 December 2012.

**What has been achieved?**

The total enrolment for the period was 157, which is a slight decrease of 0.6% for the same period in the previous year, July to December 2011. The eight crèches are being attended by an average of 72 children daily, which is a decrease of 10% from the same period in the previous year. The number of children attending the crèches can fluctuate as a result of family movement and local cultural activities. There has also been a cohort of children who have transitioned from crèche services to pre-school, driving a change in demand for care.

There were 26 Indigenous people employed in childcare centres for the period, representing 74% of the total number of people employed. This indicates very high levels of Aboriginal employment in the delivery of these crèches.
7. Housing
7. Housing

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Housing Implementation Plan was signed on 29 May 2013

The elements of the implementation plan are:

7.1 Upgrades;

7.2 Asbestos removal.

From 2012-13 to 2017-18, the Australian Government will provide over $280 million to the Northern Territory Government to fund a program of additional housing upgrades and the removal and remediation of asbestos from remote communities.

7.1 Upgrades

On top of the $1.7 billion already allocated under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH), $230.4 million will be invested on additional upgrades for remote public housing. Since the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing has been primarily directed to larger towns where long-term secure tenure is already in place, this extra funding will be directed to smaller communities that were covered by compulsory five-year leases until August 2012.

To secure this additional investment, the Australian and Northern Territory governments are negotiating voluntary long-term leases with traditional owners in these smaller communities. As at 31 May 2013, 53 smaller communities have entered into 40-year leases with negotiations continuing across a further 11 communities.

Two types of housing upgrades will be funded:

1. Durability upgrades will be available for houses in smaller communities where long-term leases have been executed since August 2012. The exact nature of the works will depend on the condition of the house but could include, for example, durable paint work and floor coverings, vermin proofing, robust cleanable wet areas and better storage.

2. Functional upgrades will be available for all houses in larger communities that have not received any capital works under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing. These upgrades will make sure that a house is safe and secure and meets the requirements of the Northern Territory Residential Tenancies Act.

As a result of this investment, more houses in remote Northern Territory communities will be safe and secure at a minimum and will meet the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act. This in turn means that normalised tenancy management arrangements can be extended to all houses in remote communities, including putting in place formal tenancy agreements, and implementing practices including the payment of rent and regular repairs and maintenance.
The Northern Territory Government is currently in the planning phase and is scheduling works in around 26 communities over 2012-13 and 2013-14. Consultation with individual communities will be conducted ahead of housing works commencing.

7.2 Asbestos removal

Under Stronger Futures, the Australian Government is providing $49.8 million over six years from 2012-13 to help the Northern Territory Government manage asbestos and asbestos-containing material (ACM) where it is found in houses and other community buildings. This includes houses scheduled for demolition under the NPARIH program so that new housing can be built. This funding will also be used to support the Northern Territory Government’s ongoing work in updating and managing the existing Asbestos Register.

This investment builds on the previous Australian Government-funded Asbestos Management program which provided funding to the Northern Territory Government to identify asbestos-containing material in Northern Territory communities and to remove asbestos-containing material that had the potential to pose a risk in the near future. This program assisted the Northern Territory Government to identify and remove asbestos-containing material and to establish, coordinate and maintain an Asbestos Register for all assets in the 73 Northern Territory National Emergency Response communities. This register includes the location and condition of asbestos in remote communities across the Northern Territory.

Since September 2009, asbestos surveyors have visited the 73 communities to complete the task of identifying asbestos-containing material and recording the details into the Asbestos Register.

The Northern Territory Government will continue to ensure that asbestos is managed in line with existing processes to enable a coordinated response across the Northern Territory. Specifically, the Northern Territory Government ensures that at the tender stage, contractors are provided with lot information from the Asbestos Register and are required to price asbestos removal and remediation works into their tenders using sub-contractors appropriately qualified in asbestos removal and disposal. Completed works are then required to be reported back to the Northern Territory Department of Infrastructure, which is responsible for keeping the Asbestos Register up-to-date.
8. Alice Springs Transformation
8. Alice Springs Transformation

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Alice Springs Transformation Implementation Plan was signed 13 March 2013

The Australian Government has invested over $150 million in the Alice Springs Transformation since 2009 and is working in partnership with the Northern Territory Government to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people living in and visitors to Alice Springs, particularly in the town camps. This investment in Alice Springs has already improved housing and infrastructure in the town camps, supported visitor management through additional temporary accommodation facilities, and increased support services available to Aboriginal residents and visitors to Alice Springs.

The Alice Springs Transformation Implementation Plan provides an additional $13.7 million to continue key social services for Aboriginal children, families and individuals in Alice Springs.

The elements of the implementation plan are:

8.1 Alcohol Treatment
   - Safe and Sober program

8.2 School Enrolment and Attendance
   - Families and Schools Together
   - Ready and Willing for School
   - Indigenous Parent and Children School Engagement program

8.3 Safety and Wellbeing of Women
   - Domestic and Family Violence Outreach program
   - Integrated Response to Family Violence program

8.4 Parent Education Support
   - Targeted Family Support Service
   - Youth and Community Centre program

8.5 Tenancy Support
   - Intensive Sustainable Tenancy Enabling program

Stronger Futures funding for the Safe and Sober program commenced on 1 July 2012. The other eight sub-elements or programs will be reported on as Stronger Futures funding commences for these programs. Information is provided on when Stronger Futures funding commences for these programs.
8.1 Alcohol Treatment

Safe and Sober program

What is being done?
The Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation’s (CAAC) Safe and Sober Support Service is a secondary treatment service for Aboriginal people experiencing the effects of harmful alcohol use in Central Australia. The program is funded through Stronger Futures from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2014.

It has been funded as part of the Alice Springs Transformation since 2010. This service aims to provide holistic and culturally appropriate counselling, therapeutic treatment and a support service that strengthens the cultural, social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people and their families.

Safe and Sober Support Services includes a prison in-reach program which provides evidence-based alcohol-related education programs to prisoners in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre.

Why is it important?
Alcohol abuse in the Northern Territory is a major contributing factor to Aboriginal disadvantage, including reduced life expectancy, poor health, education and employment outcomes, and has a devastating effect on community safety.

The support provided by the Safe and Sober Support Service is having a positive effect on the lives of people suffering from alcohol abuse and their families.

What has been achieved?

1. Details of collaborative and integrated service delivery models

The Safe and Sober Support Service receives referrals from a number of service providers within the Alice Springs region. A total of 127 referrals were provided for the reporting period.\(^1\) A breakdown of referrals by source for the six months July to December 2012 is provided in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Referral Source</th>
<th>CAAC</th>
<th>External</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Month (2012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) All clients referred to throughout the report identify as Aboriginal.
Of the external referrals, 21 different organisations referred clients to the Safe and Sober Support Service, with the Alice Springs Hospital, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Central Australia, Central Australia Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (CAALAS), and the Office of Children and Families providing the highest numbers of referrals.

Self-referrals were up from 16% to almost 20% for the same period in 2011. This is seen as positive as it suggests a level of increasing client confidence in the service.

The program links with a wide range of agencies that provide services and referral to the client group. During this reporting period, service staff attended 47 case conferences. In addition 188 case discussions were recorded although traditionally this number tends to be underreported.

During the reporting period service staff attended regular Substance Misuse Assessment and Referral for Treatment Court appearances with their clients, which was well received by the judicial system. Strong functional relationships continue to be maintained with the Office of Children and Families, Probation Services, Centrelink, Territory Housing, Women's Shelter, Central Australia Mental Health Services, Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Central Australia and Aranda House.

The Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit prison in-reach program is delivered in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre and during the reporting period received referrals from Northern Territory Community Corrections, Central Australia Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, the Substance Misuse Assessment and Referral for Treatment Court, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Central Australia, Alice Springs Hospital, Salvation Army, Drug and Alcohol Services Association of Central Australia, Holyoake, Office of Children and Families, Tangentyere Council and self-referrals.

Holyoake delivers the DRUMBEAT program in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre as part of the prison in-reach program and works closely with the correctional centre and the Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit.

2. Number of Aboriginal people accessing programs and services in each of the program elements

The total number of Aboriginal people accessing the Safe and Sober Support Service on at least one occasion during the reporting period was 362 (219 female, 143 male).
Table 10 provides a demographic breakdown of clients who accessed programs and services.

In addition, a total of 3979 client contacts were conducted during the period. Client contacts are widely defined as assessments, therapy sessions, outreach, brief interventions, prison outreach program, and telephone calls.

During the reporting period the Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit delivered 12 alcohol rehabilitation program sessions to 43 clients. Holyoake had 216 DRUMBEAT client contacts.

3. Number of Aboriginal people engaging in programs and services in each of the program elements

Table 10 Total number of engaged clients accessing programs and services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alice Springs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Camps</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The definition of an “engaged” client has changed recently and can now be defined as

- a client who has completed an assessment. The previous definition of an engaged client was anyone who had started the assessment process. Using the previous criteria there were 67 clients who had started an assessment process during the reporting period.

Forty-three clients were engaged in the Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit prison in-reach program and completed alcohol rehabilitation sessions in September (13 participants), October (15 participants), and November (15 participants).

4. Number and types of service interventions provided to Aboriginal families and children

Table 11 shows that of the 362 clients there were a total of 555 contacts for a range of advocacy and support services.

Table 11 Number and types of service interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advocacy/Support Type</th>
<th>Number of Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy services</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief intervention</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural support</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/Community activity</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12 shows that cognitive behaviour is by far the most utilised therapeutic intervention with females outnumbering males accessing services by a ratio of more than two to one.

**Table 12 Therapeutic intervention by type and gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>Contacts Female</th>
<th>Contacts Male</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive behaviour</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family therapy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal therapy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive psycho</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>177</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>258</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of clients who completed a mental health plan in the reporting period was 22 out of 32 engaged clients.

Through the prison in-reach program, a total of 33 clients were seen with a total of 74 sessions provided.

In addition to the alcohol rehabilitation sessions, the Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit also delivered seven group self-help sessions in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre, which were attended by all clients. Topics included money management and budgeting, Certificate I ICT and Digital Media, Cert II Spoken and Written English, Cert II Business, horticulture, manual arts, arts therapy, personal health, and food preparation and cooking.

**5. The number and types of referrals to other services provided to Aboriginal clients**

Data on individual referrals to other services were not recorded for the reporting period.
6. The percentage of people employed in each program element who are Aboriginal
As at 31 December 2012, 66% of staff employed in the Safe and Sober program identified as Aboriginal.

8.2 School Enrolment and Attendance

Families and Schools Together
The Families and Schools Together program in Alice Springs has been funded through the Alice Springs Transformation since 2011. Funding for the program is continuing through Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015.

Ready and Willing for School
The program has been funded as part of the Alice Springs Transformation since 2010. Funding is continuing through Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015.

Indigenous Parent and Children School Engagement program
Funding for the program is continuing through Stronger Futures and commenced from 1 January 2013 through to 31 December 2014.

8.3 Safety and Wellbeing of Women

Domestic and Family Violence Outreach Program
Funding for the program is continuing through Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015.

Integrated Response to Family Violence Program
Funding for the program began in 2011 under the Alice Springs Transformation and will continue under Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016.

8.4 Parent Education Support

Targeted Family Support Service
Funding for the program is continuing through Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2016.

Youth and Community Care Centre Program
The program will receive funding through Stronger Futures commencing from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016.
8.5 Tenancy Support

Intensive Sustainable Tenancy Enabling Program

Funding for the program under the Stronger Futures will commence from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015.
9. Municipal and Essential Services
9. Municipal and Essential Services

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Municipal and Essential Services Implementation Plan was signed 3 June 2013

The elements of this implementation plan are:

a. management of the provision of municipal and essential services in homelands; and

b. management of the provision of municipal and essential services in town camps.

This implementation plan supports the delivery of municipal and essential services in homelands and town camps across the Northern Territory. Aboriginal people live in more than 500 homelands and outstations in very remote parts of the Northern Territory.

Proposed total funding over the 10 years of the implementation plan is $246.742 million, of which the Australian Government is providing $206.4 million with the Northern Territory Government contributing $40.36 million. Australian Government funding will enable the Northern Territory Government to manage and oversee the provision of municipal and essential services to these communities.

The implementation plan commits both governments to working with Aboriginal people, stakeholders and community groups to ensure services more effectively meet community needs, and that mechanisms are in place to provide for ongoing feedback from the community.

Increased community consultation, the public reporting of information on service provision and delivery standards, Aboriginal employment targets and robust performance targets are features of the implementation plan. This increases the level of transparency and accountability for expenditure on services to people living in homelands and outstations.

The implementation plan formally transfers fiscal responsibility for the delivery of municipal and essential services in town camps to the Northern Territory Government as follows:

- Alice Springs and Darwin town camps from 1 July 2012; and
- all remaining town camps from 1 July 2013.
10. Remote Engagement and Coordination
10 Remote Engagement and Coordination

The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Remote Engagement and Coordination Plan was signed on 14 March 2013

The elements of this implementation plan are:

10.1 Aboriginal Interpreter Services;
10.2 Enhancing Communities;
10.3 Remote Engagement Teams;
10.4 Stronger Futures Classification Education Project.

10.1 Aboriginal Interpreter Services

The Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) helps to alleviate the language barriers faced by many Aboriginal people throughout the Northern Territory. More than 100 Aboriginal languages and dialects are spoken in the Northern Territory and for many Aboriginal people, English is their third or fourth language. The Aboriginal Interpreter Service provides interpreter services in all Northern Territory Indigenous languages. It works across the Northern Territory and has offices in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Wadeye, Maningrida, Yuendumu, Nhulunbuy, Gunbalanya, Wurrumiyanga and on Groote Eylandt.

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service provides face-to-face interpreting services, workshops on cross-cultural awareness and working with interpreters, and advice on preparing text for translation into Indigenous languages.

What is being done?

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service recruits, trains and supports Indigenous interpreters to provide services when required. It employs more than 370 on-call, casually-employed interpreters and also employs a number of interpreters on a part-time or full-time basis.

Why is it important?

The Government has continued to support the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service to recruit, train and mentor interpreters. This provides jobs for local people, and assists Aboriginal people to get the most out of services, understand their rights and responsibilities, and have their voices heard in the development of policies that affect their lives.

What has been achieved?

The total hours of interpreting undertaken by qualified or accredited interpreters during the period 1 July to 31 December 2012 was 13,305 hours, of which 5304 hours (or a total of 40%) were undertaken by qualified or accredited interpreters.

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service exceeded the benchmark which requires that 35% of all interpreting is undertaken by qualified or accredited interpreters.
There was a high level of stability among the interpreter workforce, with low rates of staff turnover among the community-based interpreters and interpreter support and development officers. The Aboriginal Interpreter Service has reported that the signing of the Stronger Futures implementation plan and long-term funding provides an opportunity to offer long-term job security for a range of staff.

Of the total hours of interpreting undertaken in the Northern Territory between 1 July and 31 December 2012, 40% was by Centrelink (Welfare); 34% by the legal sector; and 15% for health and children’s services. Some sectors currently make limited use of Indigenous interpreters.

10.2 Enhancing Communities

**What is being done?**

The Enhancing Communities component of Stronger Futures will be used primarily to increase the Government’s investment in governance and leadership development in Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory.

The initiative provides funding and support to build the capacity of local Aboriginal organisations so that they can be involved in the delivery of important community services. It also provides increased opportunities to develop personal, family and community leadership.

During the reporting period, the Australian Government’s Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has been working with key stakeholders including local Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory to finalise the approach and mechanisms for delivering activities under Enhancing Communities. A draft implementation plan has been published on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website for public comment.

In February 2013, the Australian Government announced $4.36 million in Stronger Futures funding to upgrade community infrastructure in the Utopia homelands. The Centre for Appropriate Technology will receive $4 million of the funding and will work with the community to deliver a range of projects to help families in Utopia live more sustainably. The work will make housing safer through electrical and fire safety work, help residents to reduce their energy consumption, and improve the safety and reliability of the local water supply.

Funding of $360,000 over three years has been provided for a coordinator position at the Urapuntja Aboriginal Corporation so that it can better represent the interests of the Utopia homelands.

10.3 Remote Engagement Teams

**What is being done?**

As part of its commitment to strengthen government coordination and engagement with Aboriginal people and communities across the Northern Territory, the Government has committed to increasing the number of staff in remote communities through the establishment of new Remote Engagement teams.
These teams comprise Indigenous Engagement Officers and Government Engagement Coordinators and are part of the Indigenous Coordination Centres. The Remote Engagement teams will focus on strengthening the relationship between government and community to ensure government services are effective, better targeted and coordinated in communities and across regions. The teams will work in over 50 communities including providing support for homelands. The funding commitment over 10 years is aimed at a more sustainable, long-term approach to engaging with communities. The role of the teams is to:

- act as a link between the community and the Australian Government;
- explain government policies and provide comment and concerns from the community back to government;
- help government to engage with communities;
- help with local planning and governance;
- regularly report to the community on the roll out of Stronger Futures commitments and other relevant initiatives; and
- provide a skilled and stable workforce who live and work in the community.

**Why is it important?**

During the Stronger Futures consultations held in 2011, Aboriginal people requested improved face-to face relationships with government so that government can work more closely with them and for their views to be more actively conveyed to government.

The way that government manages its business in communities is important. It can support better local planning processes and governance, ensure that services are effective and accessible and enable government staff to work more effectively at a regional level.

The Remote Engagement teams work will focus on building sustainable relationships, strengthening government’s understanding of local issues and conveying community concerns back to government so that communities will have a greater say in how government services are planned and delivered in their community over the longer-term.

Increasing the number of Indigenous Engagement Officer positions from 30 to between 60 and 90 full and part-time positions is a significant contribution to more employment for local Aboriginal people.

**What has been achieved?**

There is a period of two years to transition to the new Remote Engagement team arrangements. A draft implementation plan to explain how the Australian Government will implement the new arrangements was published on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website for public comment.
10.4 Stronger Futures Classification Education Project

In the extensive consultations undertaken by the Australian Government with remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory since 2008, community members said they wanted to protect their children from seeing images, DVDs or films that might harm or disturb them. The provisions of the Stronger Futures prohibited material restrictions took effect when the Stronger Futures legislation commenced on 16 July 2012. The Australian Government’s Stronger Futures Classification Education Project will help to support these restrictions and will deliver a community education program that will raise community awareness on the National Classification Scheme and the additional classification restrictions applying in remote Northern Territory communities.

What is being done?

The Australian Government has provided $1.1 million in funding over five years for a Stronger Futures Classification Education project to be delivered.

Once the legislation had been passed and came into effect, an implementation plan was developed for the Stronger Futures Classification Education Project. The draft implementation plan was published on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website. Key stakeholders including the Australian Human Rights Commission were invited to make comments on the draft implementation plan. The implementation plan was amended to reflect comments including strengthening the part of the plan that referred to how communities can seek to have the restrictions lifted if certain criteria are met.

Why is it important?

The expected outcome of the community education program is to raise awareness in remote communities of how classifications can be used as a guide for what is suitable or not suitable material for children to see.

What has been achieved?

To help with the development of the classification education project, a small transition project was undertaken to get a better understanding of Aboriginal people’s knowledge of the classification scheme. A fact sheet was developed through a project managed by the former Northern Territory Department of Justice and involved Aboriginal project leaders undertaking consultations in two Aboriginal communities. The fact sheet is now available on the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website.

Engagement with key stakeholders, consultation on the implementation plan and fact sheet, and completion of grant funding for the Stronger Futures Classification Education Project are the milestones for this measure that have been achieved.

On 27 May 2013, it was announced that the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect will receive $1.1 million over the next five years from the Australian Government to deliver the project. As part of this project the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect will work directly with Aboriginal organisations nationally and in the Northern Territory to ensure that information is developed and delivered in a culturally sensitive manner. It will also work to employ Aboriginal people in the delivery of the project.
Engagement Framework

A key feature of Stronger Futures is the focus on effective and ongoing engagement between government agencies and Aboriginal people. The Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement requires both governments, together with Aboriginal stakeholders, to jointly develop an Aboriginal engagement framework that ensures engagement with Indigenous men, women and children and communities will be central to the design and delivery of programs and services. This framework is currently being developed.

A key contribution to strengthening engagement at the local level is the creation of new Remote Engagement teams. These teams will enable better engagement between government and communities, help support local planning processes and help improve the effectiveness of local services (see section 10.3 above).

Over time this report will monitor mechanisms to support improved engagement.

Engagement on community living areas and town camps

The Stronger Futures legislation allows the Australian Government to remove restrictions and impediments in Northern Territory legislation to facilitate the voluntary granting of rights and interests in relation to land in community living areas and town camps and to promote economic development in community living areas and town camps. There are more than 100 Aboriginal communities on community living area land in the Northern Territory.

During the reporting period, the Australian Government engaged with the Northern Territory Government and relevant land councils on a proposed consultation process on community living area land reform. The Australian Government continued to discuss land reform and secure tenure for the town camps with the Northern Territory Government and other key stakeholders with agreement to ongoing responsibility for housing and infrastructure assets being the priority.

The public release of a discussion paper on 15 March 2013 marked the commencement of formal consultations by the Australian Government on community living area land reform. Submissions to the discussion paper closed on 12 April 2013. Consultation meeting were undertaken during April and May 2013.
11. Aboriginal Employment and Development
11. Aboriginal Employment and Economic Development

A priority under Stronger Futures is to increase job opportunities for Aboriginal people. The Council of Australian Governments has set a target to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a decade (by 2018).

Aboriginal employment targets and goals are being set for all Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory elements to encourage government agencies and service providers to invest in employing Aboriginal staff and developing their skills.

To set a pathway for achieving this goal, the Australian Government announced a Stronger Futures Jobs Package in November 2011. An Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy is being developed and employment targets have been established for relevant elements under each Stronger Futures implementation plan.

Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, there were around 760 Indigenous people employed in Stronger Futures related services. This includes:

- 350 employed in Community Night Patrols;
- 189 employed in the School Nutrition Program;
- 47 Youth in Community workers;
- 30 Indigenous Engagement Officers;
- 28 working in playgroups;
- 26 employed in crèches;
- 24 traineeships;
- 22 employed in Intensive Family Support Services;
- 20 Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers;
- 13 employed in women’s safe houses; and
- 12 filling the new Indigenous ranger positions.

In addition to these existing jobs, it is worth noting that:

- the number of Indigenous Engagement Officer positions will increase from 30 to between 60 and up to 90 full and part-time positions by 2014;
- the number of traineeships under the Local Jobs for Local People initiative in remote communities will increase from 24 to 100 by June 2016; and
- the number of additional Indigenous ranger positions under the Working on Country program will increase from 12 to 50 over the next four years. A total of 240 Indigenous people are currently employed as rangers in the Working on Country program in the Northern Territory.
The six-monthly report will continue to monitor Indigenous employment against agreed targets and goals.

11.1 Stronger Futures Jobs Package

The Stronger Futures Jobs Package is included in Schedule J to the Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement. The jobs package includes:

- New ‘Local Jobs for Local People’ employment-based traineeships which will help up to 100 Aboriginal people fill service delivery jobs in their communities;
- 50 new Working on Country ranger positions;
- Expansion of the Indigenous Communities in Business development in Wadeye and Wurrumiyanga; and
- Jobs for Year 12 school leavers.

Local jobs for local people

An Indigenous employment program contract was signed with the Northern Territory Government in August 2012 for the Local Jobs for Local People initiative.

The Northern Territory Government has contracted Group Training Northern Territory to implement the initiative, which has been progressed through a project team and a coordinator working with communities and employers. The towns proposed for the initiative include Borroloola, Ntaria, Galiwin’ku, Gapuwiyak, Milingimbi and Ramingining.

Four trainees have commenced a Certificate III in Community Services. Another 20 new traineeship positions have also been created by the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Association under this initiative. It is planned that these positions will be filled over the next 12 months.

Working on Country ranger positions

The additional 50 Working on Country positions are being implemented over four years in a staged roll out, delivered through three open and competitive funding rounds. The plan is for 12 positions to be delivered in 2012-13, increasing to a total of 37 positions in 2013-14 and reaching the target of 50 positions by 2014-15.

Round one funding was delivered in 2012-13. On 10 December 2012 the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities announced that the Crocodile Island Rangers (Milingimbi), Tjuwanpa Women Rangers (Ntaria), Manwurk Rangers - Warddeken Land Management Limited (Arnhem Land) and the Gumurr Marthakal Rangers (Galiwin’ku) had been successful in securing new Indigenous ranger positions to support the work of these groups.

The 2012-13 target of delivering 12 new Indigenous ranger positions was met.

Indigenous Communities in Business - Wadeye and Wurrumiyanga

In late 2011, Indigenous Business Australia commenced a process for two Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to participate in Indigenous Communities in Business.
Wadeye and Wurrumiyanga were selected by Indigenous Business Australia through this process, in consultation with the Australian Government’s Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Northern Territory Government.

Consultants were selected to deliver the projects in Wadeye and Wurrumiyanga and work on the projects had commenced by August 2012. Potential small business development opportunities identified in Wadeye included car washing, used furniture sales, bush furniture making and sales, honey making, art, bush plum harvesting, bus transportation, cattle farming and house painting.

At Wurrumiyanga, the consultant engaged several community members exploring business development opportunities including a community Saturday market. At this stage there are not enough local business operators to make this proposal viable.

**Jobs for Year 12 school leavers**

The Australian Government will support the Northern Territory Government’s commitment to assist Aboriginal students completing Year 12 with job opportunities in the public sector.

**11.2 Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy**

The draft Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy is currently being developed by the Australian and Northern Territory governments. The strategy will draw together the targets and other workforce development elements of the Stronger Futures National Partnership Agreement and include an action plan for delivering on commitments. The aim of the strategy is to improve the economic participation and employment of Aboriginal people in their community, and to increase the professionalism and development of Aboriginal staff across all service sectors in the Northern Territory.

**11.3 Employment targets**

Aboriginal employment targets for Stronger Futures implementation plans will ensure that the substantial Australian Government investment in programs and services results in more Aboriginal people in employment. Table 13 provides Aboriginal employment targets and goals in implementation plans.

**Table 13 Stronger Futures Aboriginal employment targets and goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule A: Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care Service Delivery</td>
<td>Annually increase the number of Aboriginal people employed in primary health care services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>This measure provides resources to the Northern Territory or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations to deliver primary health care services.</em></td>
<td>Tailored training programs are being developed to provide a pathway for Aboriginal people into administrative, management and Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Measures
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health worker roles in the primary health care sector.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Food Security

**There are two components to this measure:**

- **Operation of a licensing scheme for community stores:** and grant funding to support community stores improve their infrastructure, financial management and corporate governance.

**Aboriginal Employment in Stores**

License compliance reports to record the store’s level of Aboriginal employment; and governance and managerial training and mentoring to include modules on recruitment and selection of staff and on leading and managing people.

**Delivery of Food Security Services**

Companies contracted to provide Stronger Futures food security services will be expected to employ local Aboriginal people wherever possible to assist in the delivery of projects in communities and will also be encouraged to improve their recruitment and development of Aboriginal staff as follows:

- All companies contracted to provide Stronger Futures services will be required to have a Reconciliation Action Plan in place by 2014-15, including measures for increasing the level of Aboriginal employment in the company;
- Larger companies to show how they encourage and maximise the number of Aboriginal people employed through such programs.
- Discussions will be held with tertiary education providers in the Northern Territory on the scope for Aboriginal undergraduates in relevant areas to undertake work experience programs with store managers.

### Schedule B: Schooling

| Building a Quality School Workforce; School; and Enrolment and Attendance measures | Performance benchmarks are being set for these measures which aim to increase the percentage of Aboriginal employees across all levels of the education workforce in remote areas. |
### Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</strong></td>
<td>communities and to increase the number of Aboriginal school based workers who successfully complete a qualification. Benchmarks for 2015-16 will be set by mid-2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Housing</strong></td>
<td>Teacher housing delivered in a way that provides for local Aboriginal employment opportunities. Specific Aboriginal employment targets will be set once implementation details have been finalised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Nutrition Program</strong></td>
<td>Continue to employ, train and support Aboriginal people to work in the School Nutrition Program, maintaining a minimum of 75% Aboriginal employment in the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule C: Community Safety and Justice</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remote Policing Services</strong></td>
<td>Increase the number of Aboriginal police officers included as part of the 60 additional police provided to support a permanent police presence in targeted communities across the Northern Territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal employment targets within the additional 60 police officers have been set at 3% of these officers by 2016, increasing to 7% by 2019 and 10% by 2022.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction of police facilities in remote communities</strong></td>
<td>Construction of police facilities in remote communities should be delivered in a way that provides for local Aboriginal employment opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An Aboriginal employment target of 10% across the capital works program has been set for all new construction elements, with the target to be reviewed in 2015-16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplementary Legal Assistance</strong></td>
<td>Community support and statutory-based legal service organisations to further develop and implement their existing Aboriginal employment and career development strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Night Patrols</td>
<td>Continue to employ, train and support Aboriginal people to work in Community Night Patrols, with an Aboriginal employment target to be maintained at a minimum of 90% and increased over time. Goal also set for 100% of night patrol workers to have the opportunity to undertake a Certificate III in Community Night Patrol training to support increased employment pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule D: Tackling Alcohol Abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Alcohol Management</td>
<td>The number of Aboriginal community alcohol management planning staff engaged by the Northern Territory will increase to 20 per cent over the life of the implementation plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule E: Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stronger Communities for Children</td>
<td>Increase the number of Aboriginal people employed delivering Stronger Communities for Children programs. Aboriginal employment targets have been set at 50% of Stronger Communities for Children workers by 2014-15, 60% by 2017-18 and 75% by 2020-21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Family Support Services</td>
<td>Employ, develop and train suitable staff to deliver Intensive Family Support Services with an emphasis on building up a sustainable locally-based Aboriginal workforce. Aboriginal employment targets include 50% of staff by 2014-15, 60% by 2017-18 and 65% by 2020-21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Services</td>
<td>Increase the number of Aboriginal people employed in delivering the program. Currently, 45% of staff are Aboriginal youth trainees. Aboriginal employment targets have been set at 50% of staff by 2014-15, 55% by 2017-18, and 60% by 2020-21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgroups</td>
<td>Continue to employ, train and support Aboriginal people to work in Community Night Patrols, with an Aboriginal employment target to be maintained at a minimum of 90% and increased over time. Goal also set for 100% of night patrol workers to have the opportunity to undertake a Certificate III in Community Night Patrol training to support increased employment pathways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</td>
<td>people to work in supported playgroups, maintaining levels of Aboriginal employment at a minimum of 80%, with an increase over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crèches</td>
<td>Maintain Aboriginal employment at a minimum of 75%, with an increase over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers</td>
<td>Maintain Aboriginal employment at a minimum of 90% of Remote Aboriginal Family and Community workers, with an increase over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Safe Houses</td>
<td>Maintain Aboriginal employment at a minimum of 80% of safe house workers, with an increase over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a local Aboriginal human services workforce strategy</td>
<td>The workforce development strategy will operate in the Stronger Communities for Children sites and aim to increase the number of local Aboriginal people who are employed and/or undertaking training to work in the human services sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government Organisation Capacity Building</td>
<td>Help Aboriginal enterprises to help these organisations play an increased role in delivering Stronger Communities for Children services and help to provide more stable employment opportunities for Aboriginal staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Schedule F: Housing

| Upgrades                                                      | At least 20% of the people employed to undertake capital works must be Aboriginal (including local Aboriginal employees). The Northern Territory Government will adopt strategies to ensure maximum Aboriginal employment across the Housing and NPARIH implementation plans, including by working with contractors and service providers to ensure they have a robust employment and workforce development strategy in place.                                                                 |

#### Schedule G: Municipal and Essential Services

| Municipal and essential services in homelands and town camps  | The Northern Territory Government will work to achieve the following targets for Aboriginal employment:                                                                                                                                                                                                 |


## Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory:
### Six-Monthly Progress Report – 1 July 2012 to 30 December 2012

### Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Aboriginal employment targets and goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013: establish baseline (estimated to be 65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: baseline plus 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015 and 2016: prior year plus 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017, 2018 and 2019: prior year plus 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020, 2021 and 2022: prior year plus 1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Schedule H: Alice Springs Transformation

**Alice Springs Transformation**

Continue to prioritise the employment and training of Aboriginal staff.

An Aboriginal employment target of 30% has been set across all of the program elements under the implementation plan.

### Schedule I: Remote Engagement and Coordination

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<th>Interpreter Services</th>
<th>Target of over 95% of staff in Aboriginal interpreter services. Training and accreditation goals have also been set for increasing the proportion of interpreting hours provided by accredited/qualified interpreters from 35% in 2012-13 to 62% in 2021-22.</th>
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<td>Remote Engagement Teams</td>
<td>Targets of 100% Aboriginal employment for Indigenous Engagement Officers and 20% for Government Engagement Coordinators after five years and 50% after ten years.</td>
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<td>Classification Education</td>
<td>An Aboriginal employment goal has been set at 100% of staff involved in directly delivering the project.</td>
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<td>Assist Aboriginal community controlled and other non-government organisations with Aboriginal staff engagement, development and retention strategies.</td>
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<td>The Evaluation Strategy is to be developed with the Northern Territory Government and will prioritise achieving high levels of Aboriginal engagement in the evaluation process, including the employment of Aboriginal people in</td>
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Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory:
Six-Monthly Progress Report – 1 July 2012 to 30 December 2012

Schedule H: Alice Springs Transformation

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Schedule I: Remote Engagement and Coordination

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Schedule J: Jobs Schedule

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Total Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory

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Note: COPE includes departmental expenses.

# Subject to review of the Northern Territory’s fiscal capacity as per clause 18(j) of the National Partnership Agreement.

## An in-advance payment of $26.9 million was made in 2011-12 for services to be delivered in 2012-13.
## Abbreviations

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DoHA  Department of Health and Ageing
DOU  Dog Operation Unit
EHSDI  Expanding Health Service Delivery Initiative
FaFT  Families as First Teachers
FaHCSIA  Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FAST  Families and Schools Together
FTE  Full Time Equivalent
GEC  Government Engagement Coordinators
HSDA  Health Service Delivery Areas
ICP  Indigenous Children’s Program
ICT  Information, Communications and Technology
IEO  Indigenous Engagement Officer
IFSS  Intensive Family Support Services
IP  Implementation Plan
ISTEP  Intensive Sustainable Tenancy Enabling Program
KPI  Key Performance Indicator
LIO  Location Implementation Officer
MoU  Memorandum of Understanding
MOS Plus  Mobile Outreach Services Plus
MCPT  Mobile Child Protection Team
NAAJA  North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
NIITF  National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force
NPY  Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara
NT AHKPI  Northern Territory Aboriginal Health Key Performance Indicators
NT DECS  NT Department of Education and Children’s Services
NT DoH  Northern Territory Department of Health
OCF  Office of Children and Families
RAFCW  Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Worker
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