



Australian Government

# Working together to achieve change: governance arrangements

Appendix to the National Plan to End Violence against  
Women and Children 2022-2032



# Contents

Overview.....	4
A clear purpose.....	5
Core governance structure.....	6
Minister for Social Services.....	6
Women and Women’s Safety Ministerial Council (WWSMC).....	6
Women and Women’s Safety Senior Officials.....	7
Commonwealth National Plan Implementation Committee.....	7
Commonwealth Ending Gender-based Violence Inter-Departmental Committee.....	8
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission.....	9
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Advisory Council.....	9
Supporting governance.....	11
Stakeholder Expertise.....	11
Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting.....	13
Review of arrangements.....	13
Appendix 1: Broader Governance.....	14
National Cabinet.....	14
Appendix 2: Our governance principles.....	15
Appendix 3: How we work across government.....	16
Commonwealth Government.....	16
State and territory governments.....	17
Appendix 4: Engaging with the sector and community.....	18
Appendix 5: Our Ways of Working.....	20

Violence against women and children can be hard to discuss and reading this document may cause distress.

If you or someone you know is experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, domestic, family or sexual violence call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732, chat online via [1800RESPECT.org.au](https://1800RESPECT.org.au) or text 0458 737 732.

If you are concerned about your behaviour or use of violence, you can contact the Men's Referral Service on 1300 766 491 or visit [www.ntv.org.au](http://www.ntv.org.au).

Feeling worried or no good? No shame, no judgement, safe place to yarn. Speak to a 13YARN Crisis Supporter, call 13 92 76. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

# Overview

Ending violence against women and children is a central priority for the Commonwealth Government, as set out in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan).

All governments must work together to pursue greater national coordination, collaboration, and sharing of current and innovative approaches for interventions with people who use violence and for improving the safety of victims. Domestic and family violence doesn't stop at a border.

Since the launch of the National Plan in 2022, the Commonwealth Government has established the [Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence \(DFSV\) Commission](#), held two National Cabinet meetings on ending gender-based violence ([1 May](#) and [6 September](#) 2024) and undertaken a [Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches](#).

These initiatives have been crucial in setting the agenda to drive further necessary action across Australian governments to address gendered violence with urgency and accelerate collective efforts across the country. An essential part of delivering on the agenda set out through the National Plan is ensuring we have strong governance arrangements in place to drive implementation and coordination of activities and ensure accountability for the effective delivery of the National Plan.

The governance arrangements underpinning the National Plan must:

- Provide the strategic leadership needed to identify and respond to gaps and emerging issues, set priorities and guide action planning.
- Drive effective system-level implementation and coordination of initiatives across portfolios and all governments.
- Ensure accountability in delivery of actions and evaluation to further our understanding of what works and support reprioritisation or expansion of efforts where needed.
- Engage regularly with experts, practitioners and people with lived experience to ensure this critical expertise informs service system and delivery effectiveness, and ongoing improvements.

This document outlines changes to the governance arrangements originally published in the *First Action Plan 2023-2027* under the National Plan, released on 17 October 2022. The revised governance arrangements are informed by the strategic review of National Plan governance commissioned by the Commonwealth Government in 2024, and stakeholder consultations.

Dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance arrangements will be developed as part of Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (Our Ways) and interlink with these governance arrangements.

The National Plan is our commitment to a country free of gender-based violence – where all people live free from fear and violence and are safe at home, at work, at school, in the community and online. All Australian governments are committed to ending violence against women and children in Australia in one generation.

Ending violence against women and children is an ambitious vision, yet we can achieve it if we all work together to achieve change.

## A clear purpose

We have updated our governance structure to better drive the long-term implementation of the National Plan and improve accountability. The governance architecture is structured to fulfil the core functions outlined below:

- **Decision making** – clear lines of accountability are established and defined under the revised governance arrangements. Senior leaders are supported in effective and efficient decision making, informed by diverse expertise and lived experience.
- **Strategic leadership** – core governance bodies are empowered to confidently guide the direction of collective efforts, including contributing to setting priorities, identifying and resolving issues, and evolving efforts in response to evidence.
- **Implementation** – a strong focus on implementation ensures initiatives are delivered on time and achieve their intent.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – there is accountability for delivery of initiatives; we continue to deepen our understanding of what works; and evidence can be effectively translated into action and reprioritisation of efforts where needed.
- **Subject matter guidance** – clear channels are available to regularly engage experts, stakeholders and people with lived and living experience.
- **Coordination and alignment** – there is clear coordination of activities across agencies and all Australian governments to harness best-practice learnings and avoid duplication of efforts.

A visual representation of the new governance arrangements can be found on the [Structure of governance arrangements](#) resource page. In the visual, arrows depict established lines of accountability for governance bodies.



# Core governance structure

## Minister for Social Services

**Functions:** Decision making, strategic leadership, implementation, coordination and alignment of Commonwealth initiatives, and stakeholder engagement.

**Responsibilities:** The Minister for Social Services is responsible for the delivery of the National Plan at the Commonwealth level, including whole-of-government policy coordination. The Minister is the decision-maker for actions and initiatives to end gender-based violence within the Social Services portfolio. The Minister co-chairs the Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council with the Minister for Women.

**Interactions:** Receives advice from the Minister's DFSV Advisory Council, the Commonwealth National Plan and Implementation Committee and the DFSV Commission. The Minister also convenes biannual engagement roundtables with key sector representatives, Lived Experience and Youth Advisory Councils, relevant Commissioners and sector peak bodies.

-----

## Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (WWSMC)

**Chair:** Co-chaired by the Minister for Women and Minister for Social Services.

**Functions:** Decision making, strategic leadership, coordination and implementation.

**Responsibilities:** The Council brings together the Commonwealth and state and territory Ministers for Women and Women's Safety Ministers with portfolio responsibility for women, families and/or the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence.

The Council provides a forum for member governments to work collaboratively to drive national progress on gender equality and women's safety across all areas in ending violence against women and children. This includes driving implementation progress for the National Plan and reporting into National Cabinet on their priority to end gender-based violence.

**Membership:** Commonwealth, state and territory ministers who have portfolio responsibility for women, including gender equality, women's safety and women's economic security. The DFSV Commissioner attends as an ex-officio member of the Council.

**Interactions:** Reports to National Cabinet; receives advice from Women and Women's Safety Senior Officials and the DFSV Commission.

**For more information:** [Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council](#)

Note: Family, domestic and sexual violence is a cross-cutting issue that does not fit neatly into one sector or agency. While WWSMC provides oversight and leadership of the National Plan, various other ministerial councils (including but not limited to) the Standing Council of Attorney's-General, Community Services Ministers, Health Ministers Meeting, Police Ministers Meeting, and the Joint Council on Closing the Gap hold responsibility for driving policy initiatives to address gendered violence within their portfolios. National Cabinet has also identified prevention of gendered violence as a priority and agreed initiatives that will be progressed by relevant ministerial councils. The Office for Women coordinates tracking of gendered violence initiatives committed to by National Cabinet and under the National Plan.

-----

## **Women and Women's Safety Senior Officials**

**Chair:** Co-chaired by the Executive Director, Office for Women, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities, Department of Social Services.

**Functions:** Decision-making, strategic leadership, implementation, coordination and alignment of Commonwealth initiatives.

**Responsibilities:** Providing strategic and operational policy advice to the WWSMC and relevant decision-making on joint activities, including policy and program implementation.

**Membership:** Senior representatives from departments and agencies with responsibility for women, families, and/or prevention of family and domestic violence in each jurisdiction. The DFSV Commissioner attends as an ex-officio member.

**Interactions:** Reports to the WWSMC and the Commonwealth National Plan Implementation Committee.

-----

## **Commonwealth National Plan Implementation Committee**

**Chair:** Chaired by a Deputy Secretary from the Department of Social Services, with Senior Executives from the Office for Women as Deputy Chair.

**Functions:** Implementation, monitoring and evaluation, systems and whole-of-government coordination and delivery.

**Responsibilities:** The Implementation Committee will ensure senior executive leadership and accountability across key Commonwealth agencies responsible for the effective delivery and implementation of the National Plan. This includes whole-of-government coordination and information sharing on implementation,

accountability for policy and service delivery, addressing implementation effectiveness and monitoring impact against measurable outcomes.

**Membership:** SES Band 3 and Band 2 from relevant departments, including but not limited to the Department of Social Services, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Attorney-General's Department, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and National Indigenous Australians Agency.

**Interactions:** Reports to the Minister for Social Services and other relevant Ministers.

The Chair of the Implementation Committee will also attend regular stakeholder engagement roundtables with the Minister for Social Services to ensure stakeholder feedback on implementation can inform the work of the committee.

Note: The Implementation Group will also receive updates on implementation tracking from the Office for Women, which is responsible for whole-of-government tracking of women's safety implementation, and convenes the Commonwealth Ending Gender-based Violence Interdepartmental Committee, which works to link policy and investment across the Commonwealth Government.

-----

## **Commonwealth Ending Gender-based Violence Inter-Departmental Committee**

**Chair:** Office for Women.

**Type of body:** Implementation, coordination and alignment.

**Responsibilities:** Engage in strategic discussions across the Commonwealth on policy development and implementation of FDSV initiatives including identifying opportunities for cross-portfolio collaboration and considering implementation risks and sensitivities at a systemic level.

**Membership:** Executives from relevant Commonwealth agencies that have a role in ending gender-based violence.

**Interactions:** Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council, the Commonwealth National Plan Implementation Committee and ensuring linkages to the Commonwealth Gender Equality Plan, *Working for Women*.

-----



## **Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (The Commission)**

**Functions:** Promoting and enhancing coordination, consistent monitoring and evaluation, amplifying the voices of people with lived experience, stakeholder and government engagement and strategic policy advice to government.

**Responsibilities:** The Commission is a national agency responsible for providing strategic policy advice to governments, developing consistent frameworks to measure progress and impact of the National Plan, and providing a yearly report to the Australian Parliament. The DFSV Commission has a key role in fostering enhanced collaboration and coordination across all Australian governments and community in relation to women's safety, as well as promoting the objectives of the National Plan to ensure this information is shared to all parts of Australian society.

As part of its core functions, the Commission amplifies the voices of people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence. The Lived Experience Advisory Council has been established by the Commission and undertakes engagement with people with lived and living experience of domestic, family and sexual violence to influence policy, service design and development.

**Interactions:** Ex-officio membership of the WWSMC provides the Commissioner an avenue to strengthen accountability and information sharing from all Australian governments, monitor and update the WWSMC on progress and impact of the Plan, and provide updates on evidence and best practice. The Commissioner is also part of the Minister's Advisory Council as an ex-officio member to synthesise advice on evidence, gaps, priorities and lived experience.

Note: The Commonwealth Government is strengthening information sharing protocols with the DFSV Commission, with the Office for Women to provide coordinated updates on implementation of Commonwealth Government National Plan initiatives to the DFSV Commission to support their monitoring of progress and impact of the National Plan.

-----

## **Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Advisory Council**

**Chair:** Minister for Social Services.

**Functions:** Provides independent advice to the Minister for Social Services on the effective implementation of the National Plan to achieve measurable outcomes towards ending violence against women and children.

**Responsibilities:** The Council has a key role advising the Minister on effectively driving change across complex and intersecting systems and settings to achieve measurable outcomes under the National Plan in the short, medium and long term.

The Council will provide strategic advice on progress of the National Plan, impact analysis, identifying gaps and emerging evidence, systemic reform and opportunities to improve delivery and implementation effectiveness.

**Membership:** Minister for Social Services and up to 10 independent members. The Council membership will consist of a diverse and complementary range of skills and experience across family, domestic and sexual violence; intersecting and universal systems; coordinated delivery and implementation; research and evidence; equitable systems and person-centred design; intersectional approaches and application for systems, services and outcomes; data monitoring and impact.

The Advisory Council will also be supported by ex-officio members including Senior Executives from the Department of Social Services and the Office for Women, the DFSV Commissioner, the eSafety Commissioner, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), and a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Body to address Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

**Interactions:** Reports to the Minister for Social Services, supported by a Secretariat from the Department of Social Services. The Advisory Council will have the capacity to consult and convene working groups as needed.

# Supporting governance

A core governance structure is essential for accountability and clear decision-making responsibility. To support effective governance, a range of critical expert advice and evidence must inform effective delivery of the National Plan.

The forums below are not intended to be an exhaustive list of the broad range of stakeholder engagement that will be undertaken in the delivery and implementation of the National Plan. This outlines the key national infrastructure that will, at a minimum, formally support the governance and implementation of the National Plan. This includes evidence, monitoring and reporting.

## Stakeholder Expertise

### National Women's Alliances

The National Women's Alliances play a key role in ensuring women's voices are central in the policy development process by providing evidence based, intersectional, gender equality advice and civil society expertise to the Commonwealth Government. Five National Women's Alliances collaborate with the Commonwealth Government to inform policy and decision making on the following priority areas:

- gender-based violence
- women's economic equality and leadership
- migrant and refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse women
- First Nations women
- women living in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia
- women with disability.

**Interactions:** Provides advice to the Minister for Women and to Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

**For more information:** [National Women's Alliances](#)

-----

### National Organisations

National Organisations are delivering national outcomes to support the National Plan and have specific roles as listed below.

**ANROWS:** Established in 2014, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) delivers research and associated reports, research synthesis papers, tools and resources across all priority areas of the National Plan. The principal work of ANROWS is to influence how we prevent and respond to violence against women and children, by providing an evidence base for policy and practice design.

To achieve these objectives, ANROWS:

- delivers high-quality, innovative and relevant research
- ensures the effective dissemination and application of research findings
- builds, maintains and promotes collaborative relationships with and between stakeholders
- is an efficient, effective and accountable organisation.

**Interactions:** Reports to the Department of Social Services on national prevention priorities, strategic initiatives and emerging risks.

**For more information:** Page 91 of the [National Plan](#).

**Our Watch:** Our Watch is an independent not-for-profit organisation established in 2013 by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments. Since then, all state and territory governments have become members.

Our Watch is a national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia, and has created policy frameworks such as *Change the story*, *Changing the picture* and *Changing the landscape* that underpin Commonwealth Government commitments to prevent violence against women.

Our Watch compiles evidence, develops advice, tools and resources, and works in partnership with all Australian governments, corporate organisations, civil society and communities, to drive shared efforts to address the drivers of violence against women.

**1800RESPECT:** 1800RESPECT is the national family, domestic and sexual violence counselling service, and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It provides counselling, online referral, resources, information services and supports for people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, violence, as well as their friends, family and professionals.

1800RESPECT is supported by not-for-profit family, domestic and sexual violence partner organisations that provide trauma-informed specialist counselling.

-----

## **National Peak Bodies**

Organisations representing members and communities to inform policy and delivery, advocating for their members and ensuring they are represented in the policy development process. This includes raising awareness about the impact and effects of DSFV and working with Australian governments to improve outcomes for communities.

This includes the new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Body to address Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

**Interactions:** Provides advice to the Minister for Social Services and the Department of Social Services.

## Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting

### National Evidence Technical Working Group

**Chair:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

**Responsibilities:** A subject-specific and time-limited technical working group to guide Commonwealth-led data activities, until at least the end of the *First Action Plan 2023–2027*. To date, the National Evidence Technical Working Group has focused on the prototype specialist crisis FDV data collection.

**Membership:** Commonwealth, state and territory representatives.

## Review of arrangements

Regular reviews will ensure governance arrangements continue to be effective and fit-for-purpose. A review will also occur upon the finalisation and release of the standalone First Nations National Plan now known as *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence*.

Individual bodies may also be reviewed in recognition of the need for ongoing improvement.

A formal collective review of governance arrangements will occur after three years in operation.

# Appendix 1: Broader Governance

## National Cabinet

**Chair:** The Prime Minister of Australia

**Type of body:** Decision-making

**Role:** National Cabinet is a forum for the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers to meet and work collaboratively on national priorities including joint initiatives. Ending gender-based violence is one of National Cabinet's identified priorities.

**Membership:** The Prime Minister, all Premiers and Chief Ministers are the core members, with subject matter experts invited to attend individual meetings as required.

**For more information:** [National Cabinet](#)

**In alignment with –**

- [Standing Council of Attorneys-General](#) – responsible for identifying areas where legal reforms are needed and develop proposals for model laws to address those areas including criminal law, personal property securities and victims of crime.
- [Police Ministers Council](#) – responsible for improved policy outcomes and ensuring the safety and security of Australian and New Zealand citizens.
- **Community Services Ministers** - oversees the development and implement of policies and programs that support the well-being of individuals, families, and communities including, social security, family and children's services and community development.
- [Health Ministers Meeting](#) – Consider legal and regulatory health matters covered under national law and provide governance on issues agreed to in national agreements and deliver national health improvement strategies outlined in annual work plans.
- [Joint Council on Closing the Gap](#) - Monitoring implementation of the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) including progress by the Parties against their Implementation Plans (clause 111 of the National Agreement).
- Other Ministerial Meetings as required.



## Appendix 2: Our governance principles

The formal governance and supporting structure is guided by 6 design principles. We must strike the right balance between all principles to deliver effective and efficient governance arrangements.

	<b>Centring First Nations:</b> Prioritising and elevating Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, and leadership in decision-making processes, policies, and practices, recognising their unique cultural practices, and ensuring their meaningful participation in matters that affect them.
	<b>Stewardship:</b> Provide leadership and alignment across the Commonwealth Government at both the strategic level and at a practical, operational and community level.
	<b>Transparency:</b> Clear processes, practices and exchange of information to provide visibility to the Commonwealth Government, sector and community. This includes having well-defined roles and responsibilities and clear procedures for making decisions, exercising power and communicating decisions.
	<b>Accountability:</b> Hold the entire system to account.
	<b>Adaptability:</b> While the arrangements operate within a stable structure, there will always be adaptability to enable flexible responses to the changing impacts of reforms and emerging challenges so we can continue to deliver safe and meaningful outcomes for our communities.
	<b>Performance:</b> Support the delivery of policies, programs and services to ensure the best use of resources and investment to further the goal of ending gender-based violence.

## Appendix 3: How we work across government

### Commonwealth Government

Ending gender-based violence requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach across the Commonwealth Government and Commonwealth agencies. A systems perspective is required to understand the impact of efforts made across multiple, intersecting activities and progress towards the National Plan outcomes. The new governance arrangements bring together representatives from all levels of government to work together to integrate, leverage and share learnings and best practice. These arrangements operate as part of broader governance across the Commonwealth Government, such as the Secretaries Working Group on Gender-based Violence, which is overseeing an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.

Responsibility for addressing gender-based violence sits across at least 18 Commonwealth Government agencies:

- Attorney-General's Department
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- Department of Defence
- Department of Education
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Department of Finance
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (including the Office for Women)
- Department of Social Services
- Department of the Treasury
- Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission
- eSafety Commission
- Services Australia
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency

## State and territory governments

An integrated response to domestic, family violence and sexual violence requires new and innovative ways of working and thinking across government. The DFSV Commission brings the Australian, state and territory governments together through the **Women's Safety Jurisdictional Community of Practice**. This forum, with Australian, state and territory government representatives with responsibility for women, women's safety, families and/or prevention of family and domestic violence, provides the opportunity to learn from each other.

The role of effective research, data and evaluation is critical to the implementation of the National Plan. This is complex as no single data source can provide all the information needed to report on and understand FDSV in Australia.

There are opportunities to improve the FDSV information eco-system to better inform policy and measure impact. The **National Evidence Technical Working Group** is a subject-specific and time-limited technical working group with commonwealth and state/territory representation. By guiding Commonwealth-led data and evidence activities, until at least the end of the *First Action Plan 2023– 2027*, this mechanism provides the technical expertise that supports evidence-based decision-making.

Data is most useful to policy makers when it has been analysed and practically translated into meaningful information. Output from this group will be fed back into governance forums and the broader sector to improve understanding on key policy questions.

Continuing to build a strong evidence base is central to the success of the National Plan. Our ability to provide quality responses to victim-survivors, hold perpetrators accountable and keep women and children safe is predicated on addressing data gaps and building strong data-sharing mechanisms. Recognising that data is complex and there are differences between jurisdictions, a key focus of the National Plan is to improve data collection, coordination and consistency.

*National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*

## Appendix 4: Engaging with the sector and community

There are many community organisations, not-for-profit organisations, frontline service providers, advocacy groups, businesses, researchers and research organisations working to address family, domestic and sexual violence, which have critical insights that will inform the Commonwealth Government's efforts to address DFSV, drive down rates of violence and support implementation of the National Plan.

The Minister for Social Services, the Assistant Minister, the DFSV Commission and the Department of Social Services will regularly meet with relevant sector peak bodies and organisations delivering services to hear these critical insights. This will also provide the opportunity to identify and discuss emerging issues and key challenges the sector is facing.

These meetings will be supported by the Department of Social Services' ongoing engagement with sector representative bodies and other key stakeholders.

The evidence is clear that listening and promoting the inclusion of lived experience voices results in better policies, services and systems. The **Lived Experience Advisory Council**, within the DFSV Commission, provides a national mechanism for victim-survivors to share their experiences, in a trauma-informed way, and provide recommendations to improve policy, systems and services.

While the Lived Experience Advisory Council plays a critical role in the DFSV Commission's work, the DFSV Commission also works closely with researchers, state and territory and non-government bodies, not-for-profit sectors and community organisations to ensure that the breadth of experiences of people with lived and living experience of family, domestic and sexual violence are heard.

The **DFSV Commission** plays a leading role engaging with the sector, community leaders and media to strengthen knowledge of family, domestic and sexual violence, the drivers of violence, and the role we can all play in its prevention.

The DFSV Commission hosts **roundtables** which bring together experts – academics, sector representatives, and lived experience advocates – from across the country to build upon and advance a priority area under the National Plan. Following each roundtable, the DFSV Commission shares a summary of the key outcomes and any insights with relevant government agencies, as well as the Women and Women's Safety Senior Officials and the Commonwealth Family Safety Group for discussion.

DFSV Commission officials also attend **national and international conferences** to promote the objectives of the National Plan and share information on current initiatives.

*The Commission will continue to create platforms for nationally important conversations by bringing together key government and non-government stakeholders and lived experience advocates to discuss priority issues.*

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Corporate Plan 2024-28

Advisory bodies working on subject specific issues will be invited by individual government agencies to inform emerging or complex issues. Ministers will also continue to engage with the sector, business and academia to support engagement as well.

## Appendix 5: Our Ways of Working

To support our purpose and principles and best achieve our goals, all governance groups will adopt the following ways of working:



**A safe environment:** The safety and wellbeing of participants is paramount. All groups must take a trauma-informed approach which acknowledges and promotes a culture of safety, empowerment and healing.



**Consider a range of perspectives:** All conversations and decisions incorporate the views and needs of First Nations and Intersectionality to ensure that approaches are inclusive. This includes understanding the impact of decisions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women and children with disabilities, older people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and other gender and sexual identities communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and children and young people.



**Acknowledge and respect different perspectives:** All participants can expect a free and frank discussion. All groups promote open communication and acknowledge that all ideas have merit. Participants can respectfully agree to disagree. Whilst consensus decision-making is the aim, it should not prevent matters being progressed and healthy decisions and contestability is encouraged.



**Support equal participation:** As much as possible, all engagement will occur within the Australian Disability Strategy's [Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability](#) including ensuring accessible engagement mechanisms across all levels of governance. Ensuring consultation processes are accessible and specifically designed to reach especially those in institutional and segregated settings is also strongly encouraged.



**A clear focus:** Regular meetings should have a strategic focus on two or three decision-making priorities. People's time is respected and where possible, updates can be provided through other channels.



**Value collective governance:** Just like the National Plan, our governance arrangements are a shared responsibility. Co-chairing and joint ownership of work programs are encouraged to support cross-responsibility for issues.



**Encourage sharing information:** Bodies should agree to sharing information, outcomes and outputs while protecting people's privacy, particularly as it relates to victim-survivors where necessary. Sharing shouldn't just be limited to other governance bodies – public reporting and sharing of information is always encouraged.



**Good governance practices:** Each governance body should have clear Terms of Reference that details the:

- Purpose and role of the governing body or committee
- Membership composition
- Overview of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice and perspectives are represented within the membership
- Responsibilities of the members and their accountabilities
- Reporting arrangements, including timeframes for reporting
- Disclosure and effective management of conflicts of interest





**Australian Government**