

Remote Engagement and Coordination Implementation Plan

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON
STRONGER FUTURES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

PART 1: PRELIMINARIES

1. This Implementation Plan is a schedule to the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (NP) and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement. The objective of the NP is to support Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory (NT), particularly in remote communities, to live strong, independent lives, where communities, families and children are safe and healthy.
2. The Remote Engagement and Coordination measure directly supports engagement with communities through the establishment of Remote Engagement Teams; supports the continued delivery of Aboriginal interpreter services; and drives the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the NP.
3. A key commitment of this Implementation Plan is to increase local Aboriginal employment, professionalisation and career development in the delivery of government funded services with appropriate targets and goals set for relevant measures.
4. This Implementation Plan commits both governments to working with Aboriginal stakeholders and community groups to ensure services are responsive, effectively meet community needs, and that agreed mechanisms are in place to provide for their ongoing feedback.

PART 2: TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and the Northern Territory, represented by the Minister for Indigenous Advancement.
6. As a schedule to the NP, the purpose of this Implementation Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the Aboriginal interpreter services and the Northern Territory Government coordination supplement elements are intended to be delivered and demonstrate the Northern Territory's capacity to achieve the outcomes of the NP.

7. This Implementation Plan will cease on completion or termination of the NP, including the acceptance of final performance reporting and processing of final payments against performance benchmarks or milestones.
8. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory Ministers responsible for it under the overarching NP.
9. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the plan and its full implementation.

PART 3: STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN TERRITORY IMPLEMENTATION

Project information

10. The project elements planned are shown in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 as follows:

Table 1.1: Project elements - Northern Territory

No	Title	Short description	Planned start date	Planned end date	Dependent on projects
1	Aboriginal interpreter services	Supply quality interpreter services in all NT Aboriginal languages	1 July 2012	30 June 2022	-
2	Northern Territory Government coordination supplement	Supplement the Northern Territory coordination effort of the Stronger Futures package, including participation in the coordination arrangements and the development of monitoring and evaluation arrangements	1 July 2012	30 June 2015	5

Table 1.2: Project elements - Commonwealth

No	Title	Short description	Planned start date	Planned end date	Dependent on projects
3	Enhancing Communities	Capacity building of local Aboriginal and non-government organisations	1 July 2012	30 June 2015	-

No	Title	Short description	Planned start date	Planned end date	Dependent on projects
4	Remote Engagement Teams	Establish regional teams to enhance engagement with communities, oversight effectiveness of the local service system and assist with regional and local planning over ten years	1 July 2012	30 June 2022	-
5	Governance and Evaluation	Governance and evaluation of the Stronger Futures NP	1 July 2012	30 June 2022	2
6	Classification Education	To enable special measures to be taken to protect children living in Aboriginal communities in the NT from being exposed to prohibited material	1 July 2012	30 June 2017	-

Estimated costs

11. The maximum financial contribution to be provided by the Commonwealth for the project to the Northern Territory is \$37.1 million over ten years payable in accordance with milestones and performance benchmarks set out in Part 5 of this Implementation Plan. All payments are exclusive of GST.
12. The estimated overall budget (exclusive of GST) is set out in Table 2. The budget is indicative only and the Northern Territory retains the flexibility to move funds between components and/or years, as long as outcomes are not affected. The Commonwealth contribution can only be moved between years with the agreement of the Commonwealth.

Table 2: Estimated financial contributions

(\$million)	2012- 13	2013- 14	2014- 15	2015- 16	2016- 17	2017- 18	2018- 19	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	Total
Element 1 - Aboriginal interpreter services	3.0	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	36.2
Element 2 - Northern Territory Government coordination supplement	0.3	0.3	0.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.9
Total estimated budget	3.3	4.2	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	37.1
<i>less estimated Commonwealth contribution</i>	<i>3.3</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>3.5</i>	<i>3.5</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>37.1</i>
<i>equals estimated balance of Northern Territory contributions</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
Commonwealth own-purpose expense*	39.0	35.2	37.5	35.9	43.5	45.4	46.7	36.2	35.9	35.0	390.3
Total Commonwealth contribution	42.3	39.4	41.7	39.6	47.0	48.9	50.3	39.8	39.7	38.7	427.4

* Note: Commonwealth Own-Purpose Expense (COPE) includes departmental expenses.

Program logic

13. The way in which these project elements will be managed by the Northern Territory to achieve the outcomes and objectives set out in the NP is detailed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Program logic - Northern Territory elements

Project elements	Outputs	Outcomes	Reform Objectives
1. Aboriginal interpreter services	<p>Provision of Aboriginal interpreter services</p> <p>Regional and remote engagement</p> <p>Increased local Aboriginal employment across all levels of the interpreter workforce by the expiration of the NP</p>	<p>Improved government engagement, service accessibility and coordination in remote communities</p> <p>Improved economic participation, including employment and enterprise development</p>	<p>An increased supply of qualified Aboriginal interpreters in the NT</p> <p>Local community members have increased access to services and greater capacity to participate in decisions that affect their lives through use of Aboriginal interpreters when required</p> <p>Contributes to implementing the Council of Australian Governments National Indigenous Reform Agreement's Indigenous Access and Engagement Principles for service delivery</p> <p>Maximising Aboriginal employment through the provision of Interpreter employment and career pathways for Aboriginal people in the NT</p> <p>Aboriginal Employment Target: over 95% of staff in Aboriginal interpreter services</p>
2. Northern Territory Government coordination supplement	<p>Coordination of government effort</p>	<p>Improved government engagement, service accessibility and coordination in remote communities</p>	<p>Additional support to improve coordination of government effort in addressing Aboriginal disadvantage</p>

14. The way in which these project elements will be managed by the Commonwealth to achieve the outcomes and objectives set out in the NP is detailed in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Program logic - Commonwealth elements

Project elements	Outputs	Outcomes	Reform Objectives
3. Enhancing Communities - Capacity building of local Aboriginal and non-government organisations	Building Aboriginal community controlled organisations and non-government sector capacity and sustainability More sustainable Aboriginal enterprises	Improved government engagement, service accessibility and coordination with remote communities Improved economic participation, including employment and enterprise development	Improved local leadership Local jobs for local people A skilled and stable workforce that lives and works in remote communities
4. Remote Engagement Teams	Regional and remote engagement Coordination of government effort Increased local employment across all levels of the workforce by the expiration of the NP	Improved government engagement, service accessibility and coordination in remote communities Improved economic participation, including employment and enterprise development	Improve engagement with communities by establishing an on-the-ground presence of remote engagement officers (including Indigenous Engagement Officers (IEOs) and Government Engagement Coordinators (GECs)) to provide overview of the effectiveness of the local service system and coordination of regional and local planning A skilled and stable workforce that lives and works in remote communities Aboriginal Employment Target: 100% of IEOs; 20% GECs after 5 years & 50% at 10 years

Project elements	Outputs	Outcomes	Reform Objectives
5. Governance and evaluation of the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Package	Coordination of government effort	Improved government engagement and coordination in remote communities	<p>The Commonwealth and Northern Territory effectively working together to coordinate engage, implement and measure Stronger Futures activities against outcomes and outputs in clauses 14 and 15 of the NP</p> <p>Local people included in evaluation performance monitoring</p> <p>Evaluation practice and performance monitoring across governments to support decision making</p> <p>Building on evidence based outcomes</p>
6. Classification Education	Regional and remote engagement	Improved government engagement, service accessibility and coordination in remote communities	To enable special measures to be taken to protect children living in Aboriginal communities in the NT from being exposed to prohibited material

Risk management

15. Risk management plans are in place. Risks have been actively identified, entered into a risk log and categorised in terms of impact and likelihood.

Relevant Northern Territory Context

16. In developing this Implementation Plan consideration has been given to the Northern Territory context. Key factors that have influenced the proposed direction are outlined below and in Table 4:
- that, while significant gains have been made to improve outcomes, Aboriginal people in the NT still experience unacceptable levels of disadvantage in living standards, life expectancy, education, health and employment;
 - recognition that engagement and effective coordination between governments and with local communities in the NT are necessary to sustainably address Indigenous disadvantage;

- (c) more than 100 Aboriginal languages and dialects spoken in the NT, and many Aboriginal people in the NT speak English as their third or fourth language. The 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey identified 53 per cent of Aboriginal people in the NT speak an Aboriginal language as their main language at home, with the rate increasing to 64 per cent for Aboriginal people living in regional and remote areas of the NT;
- (d) the Northern Territory and Commonwealth have cooperated for more than a decade, with both making funding contributions, to build the capacity of Aboriginal interpreting in the NT, to ensure that Aboriginal people in the NT have access to qualified interpreters to be able to understand and be understood;
- (e) the employment and increasing professionalisation of interpreters (Community Based Interpreters) and interpreter mentors (Interpreter Support and Development Officers) since the 2008 National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory have improved the way that interpreting services are delivered; and
- (f) the need for further workforce development to supply a qualified workforce capable of meeting the need for interpreting.

Table 4: Links with existing reforms or projects

Proposed project elements	Existing reforms or projects	Complementary nature of activities
1. Aboriginal interpreter services	<p>National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) Service Delivery Principles (Access and Engagement principles)</p> <p>All elements of the Stronger Futures package where language is a barrier to accessing services</p> <p>Developing a standard policy protocol on the appropriate use of Aboriginal interpreters</p> <p>Arrangements or agreements with government departments for fee for service or for the purchase of interpreter services</p> <p>National Framework for Indigenous Interpreters being developed by the Council of Australian Government's Working Group on Indigenous Reform</p>	<p>Project elements and the National Framework for Indigenous Interpreters support a whole-of-government approach to implementing the NIRA Service Delivery principles over 10 years of the NP on Stronger Futures</p>

2. Northern Territory Government coordination supplement	All elements of the NP on Stronger Futures Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement	Strengthening coordination, engagement and the evaluation arrangements
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PART 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

17. The Parties are committed to working together in an innovative and cooperative way to help deliver the best outcomes for Aboriginal people in remote communities.
18. To realise the outcomes and outputs of this Implementation Plan, each Party has specific roles and responsibilities as set out in the NP.
19. In addition to these roles and responsibilities, the Northern Territory also agrees to convene a consultative group in relation to the interpreter services element of this Implementation Plan with key stakeholders, including the Commonwealth, to address key issues, including:
- (a) the delivery of the standard policy protocol on the appropriate use of Aboriginal interpreters; and
 - (b) an interpreter workforce strategy to optimise the use of the multilingual Aboriginal government workforce as interpreters.

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Milestones

20. To qualify for the associated payment, the Northern Territory must meet the milestones in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below:

Table 5.1: Milestone 1 – provision of Aboriginal interpreter services

Milestone	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL \$million
Provision of services and programs for interpreter services in each six month period.											
Due: 1 March \$million	.750	.488	.480	.463	.438	.440	.450	.451	.468	.471	4.899
Due: 1 September \$million	-	.488	.481	.463	.438	.440	.450	.451	.468	.471	4.150

Table 5.2: Milestone 2 – Northern Territory coordination arrangements

Activity	Due date	Payment \$million
Agreement of Northern Territory and Commonwealth executive coordination arrangements	1 March 2013	\$0.305 in 2012-13
Northern Territory's participation in activities, as set out in the agreed executive coordination, monitoring and evaluation arrangements.	1 March 2014	\$0.314 in 2013-14
Northern Territory's participation in activities, as set out in the agreed executive coordination, monitoring and evaluation arrangements.	1 March 2015	\$0.324 in 2014-15

Performance Benchmarks

21. Funding will reward the Northern Territory upon meeting performance targets as set out in Table 6 below.
22. If the Northern Territory does not achieve one or more of the performance benchmarks as outlined in Table 6 in full, due to circumstances beyond its control or circumstances not anticipated at the time of signing the Implementation Plan, the Commonwealth may provide a partial payment to the Northern Territory. Where applicable, partial payments will be calculated based on the proportion of each benchmark achieved above the agreed thresholds outlined in Table 6.
23. The Commonwealth will only consider making a partial payment if:
 - (a) the Northern Territory is able to demonstrate that it implemented adequate and appropriate arrangements that would have achieved the relevant performance benchmark, but for the circumstances noted in clause 22;
 - (b) at least 80% of the performance benchmark has been met; and
 - (c) the Northern Territory has submitted a satisfactory milestone report.

Table 6: Performance Benchmark – Supply qualified interpreters for service delivery and engagement

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total \$m
Performance benchmark Percentage of interpreting hours provided by accredited/qualified interpreters*	35%	38%	41%	44%	47%	50%	53%	56%	59%	62%	
Maximum payment (\$ million) 1 July – 31 December Report due 1 March	2.250	1.462	1.442	1.387	1.312	1.320	1.350	1.354	1.403	1.412	14.692
Maximum payment (\$ million) 1 January – 30 June Report due 1 September	-	1.462	1.442	1.387	1.312	1.320	1.350	1.354	1.403	1.412	12.442

*Accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) or completed the Diploma of Interpreting

Reporting

24. The Northern Territory will report every six months during the operation of the NP to monitor and assess performance in the delivery of services, reforms and projects under this Implementation Plan. Reports are expected by 1 March (covering 1 July to 31 December) and 1 September (covering 1 January to 30 June) each year.
25. The following information will be included in the Northern Territory's six monthly reports, and will be used by the Commonwealth to monitor progress in meeting the milestones in Table 5.1:
 - (a) the total hours of training undertaken by interpreters;
 - (b) the number of interpreters with a Diploma of Interpreting employed by the Aboriginal interpreter services;
 - (c) the number of interpreters with NAATI accreditation employed by the Aboriginal interpreter services;
 - (d) demographic information on the age/gender and Aboriginality of the interpreter workforce;
 - (e) the number of languages interpreting can be provided in, including the number of interpreters per language and number of qualified interpreters per language;
 - (f) the total hours and number of interpreting jobs by region, sector, client type; and

(g) the total hours of interpreting by language and narrative report that incorporates information about known job pathways or career progression experience by interpreters.

26. Circumstances may give rise to additional reporting being sought from the Northern Territory. Such requests should be kept to the minimum necessary for the effective assessment of the project or reform. Requests should not place an undue reporting burden on the Northern Territory and portfolio agencies.


Review and Evaluation

27. This Implementation Plan will be reviewed in line with the review of the NP with regard to the progress made by the Parties in respect of achieving the agreed outcomes.

Sign off

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signature  Date 28.02.2013
Northern Territory Minister for Indigenous Advancement

Signature  Date 04.3.13
Commonwealth Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs