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Pitjantjatjara
Yankunytjatjara
Women's Council

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Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the **Care and Protection of Children Legislation Amendment (Every Child Matters) Bill 2026**

Who are we?

NPYWC is a member-led, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO), governed and directed by Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) women from 26 remote desert communities across the cross-border regions of Western Australia (WA), South Australia (SA), and the Northern Territory (NT)— an area covering over 350,000 square kilometres and a population of approximately 6,000 Anangu and Yarnangu. Guided by women's law, authority, and culture, NPYWC delivers a wide range of health, social, and cultural services, and social enterprise opportunities, that promote safety, wellbeing, and empowerment for Anangu and Yarnangu women, children, and families in the NPY Lands. NPYWC's theory of change and service provision is deeply rooted in local strengths-based, trauma-informed and healing practices that champion Anangu and Yarnangu as being best placed to articulate and determine their own needs. NPYWC is one of the largest providers of human services in the NPY lands. **Annexed and labelled "A"** is a map of the region and **annexed and labelled "B"** is a painting by M.W (deceased) that tells the story of the time Anangu and Yarnangu women came together to form their own Women's Council.

Introduction

NPYWC is deeply concerned about the Care and Protection of Children Legislation Amendment (Every Child Matters) Bill 2026 (the Bill) and its effect on the lives of Anangu and Yarnangu children and families within the child protection system. We lament the short timeframe provided for responses to the Bill (less than one week), particularly for ACCOs who are typically under resourced to meet these deadlines, and the severe lack of consultation with ACCOs or Indigenous leaders in this process. Equally, we are saddened that the NT Children's Commissioner, Shahleena Musk, was not consulted ahead of the announcement to launch an Inquiry into the NT child protection system and was not appointed to participate in the Inquiry committee.

NPYWC strongly advocates for complete alignment of the NT's legislation and policies with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles (ATSICPP) of Prevention, Connection, Participation, Placement and Partnership as articulated by SNAICC in 2013. The changes proposed in the Bill move further away from these principles and culturally safe, community-led child protection. We firmly believe that through safeguarding of the ATSICPP in legislation and in practice, these principles and the principles of formal partnerships and shared-decision making, as articulated in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (CtG), we may begin to succeed in ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are no longer overrepresented in the child protection system.

Under Target 12 of the National Agreement, the NT Government has committed by 2031, to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 per cent and to achieve this through the Priority Reforms. Despite this, the rates of out-of-home care are consistently highest in remote and very remote categories across the NT, according to AIHW data. This data, although not a specific reflection of the NPY lands, reveals the impact of child protection intervention in our communities.¹ This Bill will categorically increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care and should be withheld as a matter of urgency.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection Australia 2022–23: Insights – Supporting Children (2025) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/child-protection/child-protection-australia-insights/contents/insights/supporting-children>

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We are also concerned the Bill significantly expands the NT Government's powers to intervene in family life without first ensuring families can access the housing, therapeutic support, rehabilitation, counselling and early intervention services needed to safely care for children. This Bill is likely to have immediate impacts on the children and families NPYWC supports. Families we work with are already experiencing housing insecurity, overcrowding and cost of living pressures and the Bill creates obligations families cannot realistically meet within the proposed timeframes. We are also concerned that increased coercive intervention may discourage families from seeking support early due to fears that engagement with services could escalate into child protection involvement.

From our work with children, families and communities across the NPY lands, we know that many of the issues driving child protection involvement are closely connected to poverty, remoteness, housing stress, service shortages, intergenerational disadvantage and the ongoing impacts of colonisation, rather than a lack of care or love for children. We implore the NT Government to urgently withdraw the Bill, address the underlying factors that contribute to families intersecting with child protection, and acknowledge the complex lives and experiences of Anangu and Yarnangu living in the very remote regions of the NPY lands.

Our Priorities

Prior to addressing our specific concerns about the Bill below, we highlight NPYWC's priorities that fundamentally underpin how Anangu and Yarnangu children, families and communities intersect with the child protection system.

Very remote desert regions

The very remote communities of the NPY lands experience additional barriers to seeking supports due to distances, travel time, transport availability, cost of fuel, poor weather and roads, among other things. The tyranny of distance for Anangu and Yarnangu is felt acutely in the context of child protection when parents are provided inadequate time frames and insufficient support to comply with child protection or court requirements. For example, some parents who have children removed are often mandated to attend programs that are not available in their home communities, such as drug and alcohol rehabilitation, domestic & family violence (DFV) and mental health support. Meeting these mandates within specific timeframes becomes almost impossible.

Cross-border implications

Any examination into the relationship between Anangu and Yarnangu families interacting with child protection must consider the unique context of remote and very remote regions such as the NPY Lands. The lens of inquiry must extend beyond Western-defined state and territory boundaries which negatively impact Anangu and Yarnangu living well on Country. Our clients and community members travel between jurisdictions and are highly mobile in the region, using space and specific relationships to increase their safety and wellbeing. Utilising cross-jurisdictional collaboration in addressing structural barriers to opportunities and risks in the child protections space is critical. Consideration of how programs delivering services in this region can be further supported, expanded and funded should be central to decision making processes that affect changes to the Bill. As mentioned above, in the provision of services in the NPY lands, infrastructure differences in communities (therapeutic services, rehabilitation clinics, ECECs etc) demonstrate the discrepancies in resource allocation as well as funding inequality for services across the tri-state region which lead to direct disadvantage discrimination for Anangu and Yarnangu.

NPYWC consistently support Anangu and Yarnangu children and families who have experienced ongoing systemic failures and convoluted processes as a result of the three child protection laws that are applied in the tri-state region in which they live (*Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (NT), *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (WA), *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* (SA)). Child protection officers' authorisation to exercise mandated child protection functions under each jurisdiction's legislation stops at the border. Borders can be barriers to acting protectively for the child's safety because of legislative and administrative barriers. Additionally, there are differences in legislation in the three jurisdictions of WA, SA and NT, and in particular, there are different thresholds for statutory intervention across the three jurisdictions. It is critical that any attempts at reform within this region take into account the significant impact of tri-state child protection legislation on Anangu and Yarnangu children and families.

NPYWC's consistent advocacy on these issues has led to the establishment of Ngura Kutju in 2026 to help transform the way child protection services are delivered in the NPY region. Ngura Kutju is an example of Anangu and Yarnangu led decision making and a model of systemic change that should be followed when undertaking reforms such as this one.

"You know we fought for Ngura Kutju for a very long time. We got it through the three tri state jurisdictions [...] after many talks, conferences, get togethers on zoom. It's been ongoing and we've got the place now." – **NPYWC Chairperson**

Basic Unmet Needs

NPYWC believe that many children at risk of entering the child protection system in our region are experiencing ongoing structural and systemic disadvantage which places them at greater risk of harm. NPYWC strongly advise that the legislative position should include increased opportunities for all children to have their rights met within their home communities particularly those living in poverty and who have limited access to clean water, nutritious food, safe housing, and equitable health care. Anangu and Yarnangu families' capacity to improve or respond to their circumstances in such a way that statutory bodies require (structurally, culturally and politically) is severely impeded by the experience of entrenched disadvantage. Efforts to prevent, intervene and heal across a wide range of social issues are restricted when basic needs remain unmet. **Annexed and labelled "C"** graphs the total personal weekly income on the NPY Lands and **annexed and labelled "D"** depicts comparative grocery process between the APY Lands and Alice Springs to highlight the specific remote and very remote discrepancy in the cost of living. The importance of recognising the many, unique factors impacting the risk of entering child protection system in our context will support transformation for children and families.

Funding Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCOs)

Unfortunately, despite multiple levels of government agreeing to implement measures to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, not enough funding is allocated to organisations such as NPYWC who meaningfully contribute to change and transformation in communities. When funding decisions are made, they are often made without consultation with communities and remain episodic in their delivery, further undermining the strength of ACCOs and their ability to enhance their expertise and positive outcomes on the ground. Identifying the role of ACCOs in supporting First Nations people in capacity building, healing and addressing the underlying drivers of disadvantage in our communities, will remedy a long tradition of governments partnering superficially with ACCOs.

Our Submission

The 2017 NT Royal Commission, the Implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Northern Territory 2025 Review, and the NT and National Children's Commissioners have all identified systemic underfunding of family support services, the absence of early intervention infrastructure, housing insecurity, and the ongoing criminalisation of victim-survivors as the drivers of over-representation in the child protection system. Despite this, the Bill does not address any of these drivers. Conversely, the Bill will contribute to harm, intergenerational trauma, whilst increasing pathways into the juvenile justice system by removing First Nations children from their families and kinship networks and embedding structural racism in policies and legislation.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP)

The Bill weakens important protections for Anangu and Yarnangu children by removing the existing ATSICPP and replacing it with a Universal Child Placement Principle. This removes the priority of placing Aboriginal children with Aboriginal people in community or otherwise. It also removes the requirement that a non-Aboriginal carer be sensitive to the child's needs and be able to support the child's connection to family, community, culture, traditions, language and Country. The ATSICPP is a critical safeguard grounded in the lessons of the Stolen Generations and decades of evidence. Any weakening of its application, particularly in the absence of genuine community consultation, risks repeating the very harms that child protection systems are intended to prevent.

The new placement principle gives priority to stable living arrangements and legal arrangements that provide a sense of permanence and long-term stability. While family placement and connection remain relevant, the Bill privileges stability and permanence which means supporting families to address risks and returning children to family becomes less of a priority for the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

NPYWC maintains proper application of the placement hierarchy requires child protection decision-makers to exhaust all possible options at one level of the hierarchy before considering a lower-order placement.² This needs

² SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, *Understanding and Applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: A Resource for Legislation, Policy and Program Development* (2017) https://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/928_SNAICC-ATSICPP-resource-June2019.pdf.

to be enshrined in legislation. Further, no placement should be made unless the child's family and community representatives have participated in decision-making. Joint decision making with families therefore needs to be enshrined in legislation.

NPYWC have also observed, due to lack of resources or miscommunication, parallel placement planning is not often pursued. During the assessment and investigation period, DCF has been unable to undertake kinship carer assessments resulting in children being placed off the lands in foster care or in kinship arrangements that are not approved by families. A recommendation would be that DCF use the culturally grounded and culturally led Ngura Kutja program to ensure the ATSICPP is properly applied to overcome and remedy delays and barriers. This would also support enabling a cross-border child protection framework that would be formally integrated across the three jurisdictions.

Removal

The Bill makes it easier for DCF to remove children from their family. The changes require removal if there is a "significant and likely risk of harm". In practice, this means children will likely be removed in more situations, even where support could reduce the risk and avoid the well-documented trauma and long-term harm of removal. It is crucial that parents are supported throughout this process, including understanding their rights and obligations, particularly about any new court processes or orders proposed in the Bill. Parents in the NPY region already face significant barriers to being able to fully engage in child protection processes including; language barriers, high mobility across borders, high staff turnover within DCF among others. These implications need to be carefully considered, with adequate time for consultation, when making any changes to legislation.

"Trauma from child removal affects parents in long term ways [...] it is important to listen with compassion, understand the depth of grief and recognise the need for culturally safe and supportive spaces for healing" – Senior Anangu woman

NPYWC also remain concerned that there is no legislative provision preventing a child being removed from their parent's care due to a parent or care givers disability and subsequently exacerbated relationship with poverty. Article 23 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates 'in no case shall a child be separated from parents on the basis of a disability of either the child or one or both of the parents'. The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT also heard that the child protection system often confuses poverty with neglect which is consistent with NPYWC's observations across both the NT and SA.³

Conversely, NPYWC continues to observe limited understanding and recognition of the strength of community and culture Aboriginal families and communities bring to raising children, including differences in child-rearing practices, particularly in relation to community care which is an inherent part of Aboriginal culture.

We would like to highlight the importance of intrinsic safety. In our communities, Anangu and Yarnangu provide specific forms of safety (physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural) that cannot be replaced by a Pirinpa (whitefella) or mitigated through statutory regulation. This type of safety is intersectional with connection to culture, Country and kinship networks, and underpins community relationships, spaces and wellbeing inherent to Anangu and Yarnangu ways of life. This is partiality associated with Western definitions of 'safety' linked to physical safety. As important as this may be, we urge the committee to consider any inherent bias when thinking about who can provide safety for an Anangu and Yarnangu child and the risks to child wellbeing when other forms of critical safety, such as intrinsic safety in community, are compromised or obstructed from demonstrating strength. A reminder that the ability for a child to communicate with an adult in their first language is perhaps one of the most significant barriers to accessing multiple forms of safety. (**Annexed and labelled "E"** shows the percentage of language speakers in the NPY lands, thus demonstrating its critical importance within the child protection context in the NPY lands).

Best Interest Principle

The child's best interests remain the paramount concern however the Bill tells the court which factors it must weigh in order of priority. Although the court still decides what is in a child's best interests, the Bill tells the court which factors to prioritise. It reduces the focus on long-term harm that can come from out-of-home care, makes reunification less likely, and makes it easier for family and cultural connection to be pushed aside for Anangu

³ Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory, *Report of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory* (2017) vol 3A <https://childdetentionnt.royalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

and Yarnangu children.

The current principle says that, if a child is removed, contact with family should be encouraged and supported where it is in the child's best interests. The Bill keeps that part but removes the principle that a child should be returned to family where that is in the child's best interests. This reduces the focus of returning children to their families.

Family Responsibility Agreements and Family Responsibility Orders

The Bill introduces family responsibility agreements (**FRAs**) and family responsibility orders (**FROs**). AN FRA may require a parent to:

- undertake counselling;
- take part in a support group, course or program; and
- exercise "proper" care and supervision of the child, including making sure the child attends school, avoids certain people or places, joins sport or other activities, or lives at a particular place.

DCF may apply for an FRO. The court may also make an FRO when dealing with a protection order application if DCF has not met the proactive efforts requirement.

DCF may apply if it believes on reasonable grounds that:

- a parent has refused to enter into an FRA;
- a parent has not complied with an FRA;
- the child's welfare is being adversely affected, and the family circumstances may have caused or contributed to that harm; or
- the child has been found not to have capacity for criminal offending due to their age and development.

For Anangu and Yarnangu families these expectations are often unfair and unrealistic and do not take into account the reality of living in a remote community in the NPY region. Across the region the availability and accessibility of services varies dramatically. NPYWC has supported families in the past who have been required to engage in services or supports that are not available or accessible in their community to progress reunification processes. The ability to meet these requirements can be impacted by; long waits for appointments, limited phone and internet access, literacy and language barriers, access to interpreters and the high mobility of families between communities (often across borders). The unintended consequence of not consulting widely on the introduction of these agreements and order may be that more parents are found to be unfairly non-compliant. **Annexed and labelled "F"** is a case study demonstrating the complexities, and disadvantages, for Anangu and Yarnangu navigating the child protection systems in the NPY lands.

Under these new changes, DCF may step into family life much earlier and much more broadly. Families could be drawn into a court process simply because they are struggling with poverty, housing stress or other hardship and not receiving the supports they need, not because their children are in immediate danger. It can also trigger a range of coercive government interventions, including income management, alcohol responses, housing action, a child protection investigation or an application for a protection order.

The Bill also gives DCF express power to inquire into compliance with, and the effectiveness of, FRAs and FROs. In practice, this expands government surveillance of family life by giving DCF more power to monitor parents, scrutinise what is happening inside the home, and escalate concerns into child protection action or removal if it is believes FRAs and FROs are not being followed, even if families have not been given the services and support they need to comply.

Long-term orders and long-term impacts

NPYWC are concerned that the long-term impacts of this Bill may extend far beyond immediate child protection intervention and that the Bill's increased focus on permanency and strict reunification timeframes will result in more Anangu and Yarnangu children entering long-term care earlier and remaining separated from family. We are particularly concerned about the impact on Anangu and Yarnangu children and families if kinship and cultural placement options are not adequately supported and prioritised. From our work, we know that children experiencing disconnection from family, Country, language and culture often experience long-term trauma and poorer wellbeing outcomes. Stability and permanency for Anangu and Yarnangu children must be grounded in their connection with family, kin, culture, language and country. We endorse SNAICC's definition that 'permanence

for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is identified by a broader communal sense of belonging; a stable sense of identity, where they are from, and their place in relation to family, mob, community, land and culture'.⁴

NPYWC reject narrow understandings of permanency and attachment centering on a singular emotional connection which is inconsistent with Anangu and Yarnangu parenting practices. Due to the limited service delivery and the transience of Anangu and Yarnangu families across the region, it is once again essential that adequate notice is given to allow families time to seek legal advice and support navigating the system.

The Bill reduces a short-term parental responsibility direction from two years to one year. If the court has already made one short-term direction, it may make another one only if it is satisfied that:

- There is a "high probability" of reunifying the child with the child's parents; and
- The child's long-term stability and security is not likely to be adversely affected by the further short-term parental responsibility direction.

The Court must consider whether DCF took appropriate "proactive efforts" to support the child and family, yet does not clearly outline what the court can do if those efforts were not good enough, especially because it also limits when a child can stay on a short-term order.

The combined effect of shorter reunification timeframes and limited support will therefore increase the likelihood of long-term separation of Anangu and Yarnangu children from family, community and culture. Reducing timeframes means less time to address structural issues and service gaps, increasing the likelihood that a parent or family are unable to meet expected requirements within allocated timeframes. This part of the Bill also increases the likelihood of permanent removal. Permanency timelines should not override the obligations to provide genuine adequately resourced reunification efforts.

Domestic and family violence concerns

Domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) is one of the key underlying drivers impacting child removal for Anangu and Yarnangu women. Women who are fleeing DFV are often faced with the threat of child protection intervention making their option, pathways and choices extremely limited. In addition to this, women are often misidentified as perpetrators of violence, meaning mother blame dominates narratives within child protection, where labels of incompetence are unjust and undermine the experience of victim-survivors.

In NPYWC's experience, stories of women at high risk of intimate partner homicide often involve cross-border complexities and a significant need for cross-border collaboration. Women frequently travel to other communities and use physical space and specific relationships in other communities to increase safety for themselves and their children. Additionally, users of violence will frequently and deliberately use borders as a mechanism to evade police and as a strategy to avoid the justice system and service involvement. Women are often managing their own acute safety risks whilst having to decide between the risk of their children being removed, their partners being incarcerated or the safety of their family at the hands of poor systems responses. A lack of centralised coordination results in women and children falling through jurisdictional gaps.

"We have been talking about three states, three governments, three funding's and three rules. These are all tough laws for us to follow. NPYWC have been trying to make these laws easier, they should just be dealing with one law." - **NPYWC Chairperson**

The Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVLPS) sector, which NPY Women's Council are a member organisation of, has long advocated for a minimum standard: no First Nations woman should have to travel more than 1hr or 100kms to access culturally safe specialist family violence support. For Anangu women, this standard is not available to them. The Bill treats DFV primarily as one of several "family risk factors" and while it requires DFV risks to be considered, the Bill does not:

- create a standalone trauma-informed DFV response framework;
- clearly distinguish between perpetrators and victim-survivors;
- contain strong safeguards around coercive control or misidentification (omitting the risk of criminalising mothers who are misidentified as primary aggressors);
- consider centralised coordination within the tri-state context and transience of Anangu and Yarnangu

⁴ SNAICC, Achieving stability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, Policy Position Statement (2016), 7.

women and children residing in the NT.

We urge the NT Government to provide sustained investment in trauma informed, culturally grounded access to specialist DFSV care to reduce the risk of harm to women and children, thereby decreasing the likelihood of intersecting with child protection.

Involvement of Carers in Court Proceedings

Currently, a non-parent must show a direct and significant interest in the child's wellbeing to take part in court proceedings. The Bill makes a carer an automatic party to the case if the child has been living with that carer for more than eight months. This gives carers, who are overwhelmingly non-Indigenous and non-family members, the same rights in court processes as parents or the child which elevates their say and dilutes the views and wishes of the Anangu and Yarnangu family and community.

Carers can be heard, make submissions, call evidence and block an agreed resolution. They can also access sensitive records and information put before the court about the parents. This is likely to increase the number of cases that are contested in court because carers' interests will often differ from those of parents.

Legal Representation for Children

Legal representation for children is generally positive and supports their best interests. However, the lawyer must be independent, specialist, trauma-informed and culturally safe. The Bill does not address the fact that children are often represented by the same panel of private lawyers who also act for DCF.

Missed Opportunity to Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention

This Bill represents a missed opportunity to invest in prevention, healing and early intervention. The Bill itself recognises that families need access to housing, counselling, alcohol and drug services, parenting support and DFV services. However, many of these services remain significantly underfunded or inaccessible across the NPY lands. In our experience, children are safest when families can access stable housing, therapeutic support, culturally safe services and community-led early intervention before crises escalate. We are concerned the Bill prioritises compliance and intervention without corresponding investment in the supports families need to succeed.

"It's like it's treading on us you know, standing on top of us to make the rules.

To change our rules, what Anangu women are saying. Anangu want their kids back in their own communities, with their own kinship and proper families. Their real families. They're losing language living with carers - language, culture, everything. And their Tjukurpa. If they want to go round changing new laws, they should consult with us." – NPYWC Chairperson

Conclusion

NPYWC supports the importance of child safety and recognises the need for effective child protection systems. However, we do not believe this Bill addresses the underlying causes driving child protection involvement in the NT.

Instead, we are concerned the Bill:

- lowers the threshold for intervention into families;
- expands coercive powers;
- increases pathways into long-term care;
- fails to adequately address poverty, housing instability and service shortages;
- risks causing further harm to vulnerable children, families and communities.

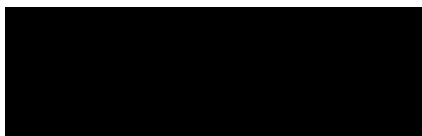
We are recommending that the Bill;

- 1. Is withdrawn pending genuine consultation with Aboriginal organisations, communities and others;**
- 2. Ensures that the reforms align with the ATSI CPP and Closing the Gap Priority Reforms;**
- 3. Requires active and supported participation of families in all significant decisions;**
- 4. Recognises poverty, remoteness, disability and housing insecurity as structural issues, rather than parental failure; and**
- 5. Strengthens accountability for proactive efforts and reunification.**

Importantly, we urge the NT Government to meaningfully consider the unique, tri-state context NPYWC operates in in their examination of the impact of this Bill on child protection, children and families. Our remote and very remote region means that Anangu and Yarnangu experience disproportionate disadvantages that increase their experience of structural discrimination, disconnection to culture and country, and intergenerational trauma. Privileging the expertise of ACCOs and project such as Ngura Kutju, will demonstrate how community led understanding and approaches to community engagement will lead to greater outcomes in early intervention and prevention. Finally, incorporating broader ideas around Indigenous safety, kinship care, and child rearing practices will pave the way for culturally safe, trauma informed solutions.

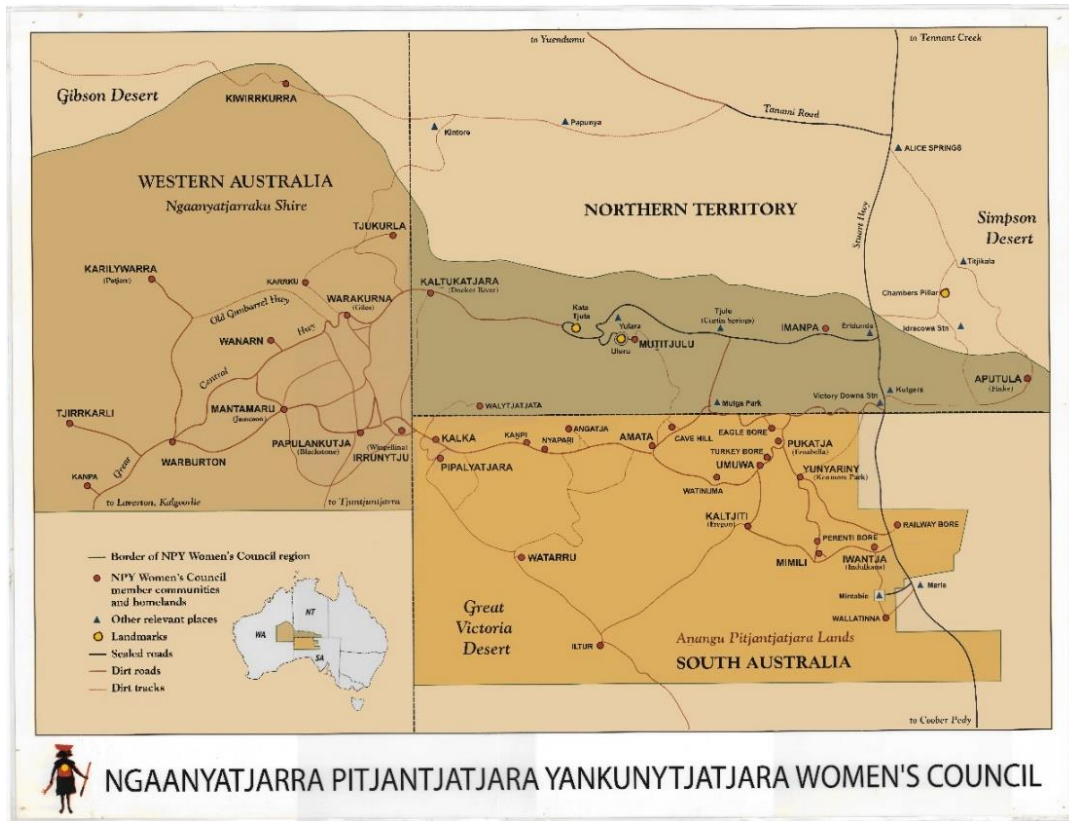
This concludes NPYWC's submission in response to the Inquiry. Thank you for considering our concerns. Please contact [REDACTED] for more information.

Kind Regards,

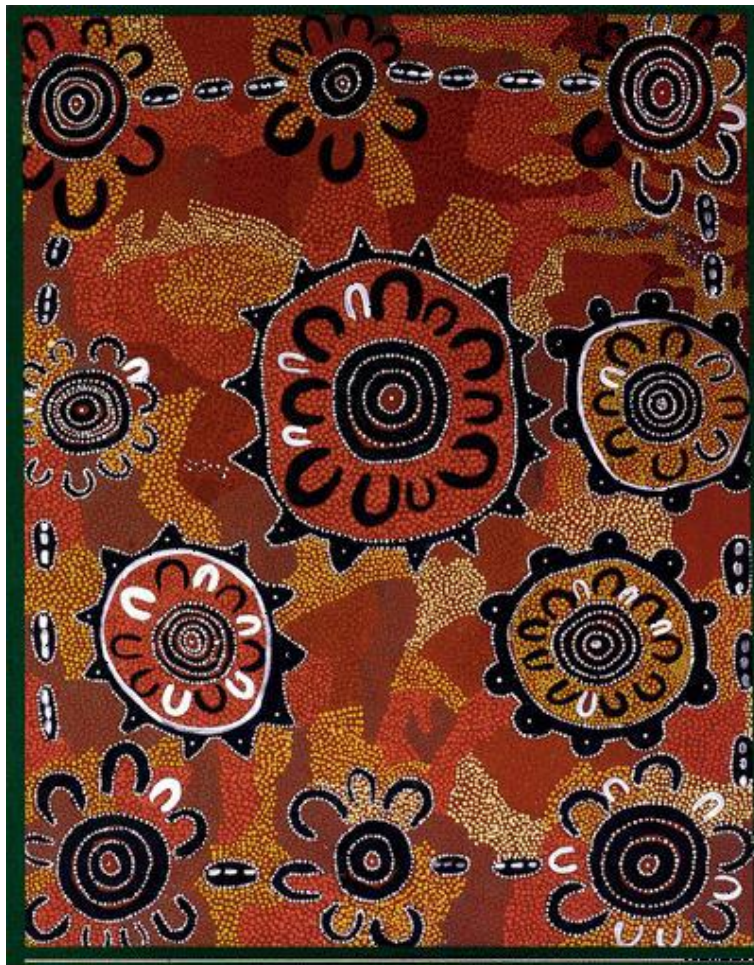


Lavenia Saville
Acting Interim Chief Executive Officer
22 May 2026
[NPYWC Annual Report 2024-25](#)
[NPYWC Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#)

Annexure A:



Annexure B:



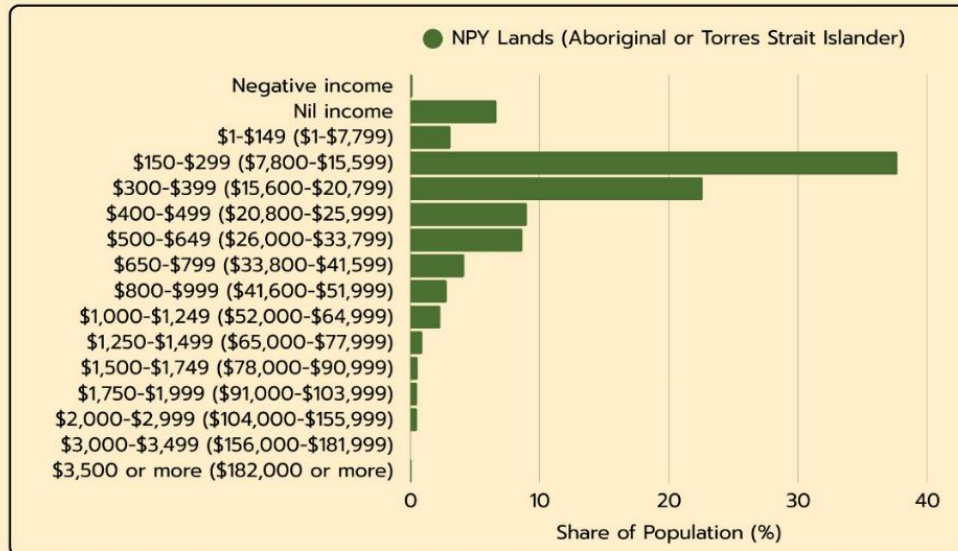
"This painting tells the story of how the NPY Women's Council was started in 1980. I made a cassette tape and sent it around to all the communities for women to listen to. The black line going around the painting with the white marks is the cassette travelling around to all the women in communities.

All the women listened to that cassette about the idea of starting up a Women's Council. They sat down and talked together. Then we all came together at Kanpi to have our first meeting together. That is the big circle in the middle with all us women sitting around. This was the first time we came together, all us Pitjantjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra, Yankunytjatjara women." - Mantatjara Wilson (deceased)

Annexure C:

Total Personal Weekly Income NPY Lands

In 2021, 70 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on **NPY Lands** earned less than \$400 per week. Around 60 per cent earned between \$150 and \$399 per week, an amount consistent with the basic rate of JobSeeker in 2021 (\$310 per week for a single). Only 5 per cent earned more than \$1,000 per week.

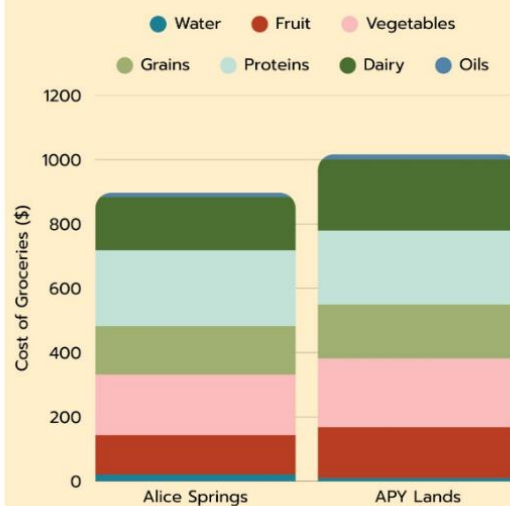


Annexure D:

Grocery Prices APY Lands and Alice Springs

Groceries	Alice Springs	APY Lands
Water	\$21.71	\$10.30
Fruit	\$122.07	\$157.52
Vegetables	\$188.13	\$214.09
Grains	\$150.45	\$168.02
Proteins	\$235.86	\$230.15
Dairy	\$165.88	\$221.04
Oils	\$13.02	\$15.33
Total	\$897.12	\$1,016.45

A family of four needs to spend \$1,016 a fortnight on **APY Lands** to buy groceries consistent with a recommended diet. This is 13 per cent more than it costs in **Alice Springs** (\$897).



Source: Lewis M, Herron L, Bryce S, Wells L, Balmer L, Rainow S, Lee AJ (2022). School of Public Health, The University of Queensland.

Annexure E:

Western Desert Languages NPY Lands

2,172 (or 5 out of 10 people) speak **Pitjantjatjara**



990 (or 2 out of 10 people) speak **Ngaanyatjarra**



383 (or 1 out of 10 people) speak **Yankunytjatjara**

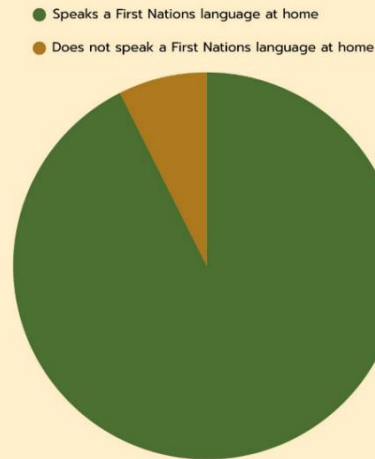


Additionally:

- 149 (or 3.4 per cent) speak **Pintupi**
- 45 (or 1.0 per cent) speak **Luritja**
- 12 (or 0.3 per cent) speak **Wangkatha**.

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing (2021)

93 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on **NPY Lands** speak an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language at home. Other than North East Arnhem Land, this is the greatest proportion of all Empowered Communities.



Annexure F:

(Names have been Changed)

Jane is a 32-year-old mother of two who lives between Alice Springs and several remote communities in both SA and NT. Jane's family also move between these communities. Jane's partner, Ricky, from whom she is currently separated, is also from a remote community in SA and has connections to WA. Both of Jane's children (Penny and Peter) are currently in care in SA under SA orders. The main concerns of SA Child Protection were around Jane's mental health and some incidents in which it is accused that she threatened to harm herself and Penny.

Penny was taken into care a year ago, just after Jane became pregnant with Peter. Penny was placed in kinship care with Jane's father who also uses alcohol. Jane was not served with the order for six months afterwards as she "could not be located" and an order was granted by the court in absentia. A full non-contact intervention order was put into place preventing Jane from coming within 200 meters of Penny, except during a scheduled visit with child protection present. Peter was born in Alice Springs and NT child protection opened an investigation, but closed the case three weeks later after visiting Jane and Ricky in an NT community and reporting nil concerns despite the presence of Ricky in violation of his intervention order.

Back in Alice springs, Jane was arrested while breastfeeding her baby at a town camp and charged with violating her SA intervention order due to being in the same house as Penny at the time. This arrest was triggered by a tip off received by SA child protection. Jane argued that it was mid-summer, extremely hot and she had no car to leave the town camp with Peter when Penny arrived unexpectedly. She also added that Penny cries for her when she has to leave. She attended court and received a good behavior bond.

About a month later, Jane's father brought Penny up to the NT and Jane then resumed care of her due to her father leaving without Penny to go drinking in town. Jane then attempted to travel back down to Adelaide with both children and Ricky, however she was arrested in a community on the way there for being in violation of the intervention order with Penny. It was at this point that both children were removed from her care and a second order was sought for Peter, along with a full non-contact order.

As part of the reunification plan, Jane is required to have a range of psychological assessments and pathological tests which require her to travel either to Darwin or to Adelaide, as well as Port Augusta. Jane is distressed at having to travel so far from her home and community. Another challenge in arranging these tests is that services are often

reluctant to release clinical records to interstate child protection authorities. A translator was not present to explain the specific nature of the tests, their purpose or what would happen if Jane did not agree participate. Because of the location in which Jane is based, her case worker is only available for a day or two every two weeks.