



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 261

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Children and Families, Hon Robyn Cahill OAM
MLA:

Aboriginal Workforce, Advisory Structures and Carers

1. Who is the head of the Aboriginal Advisory Group?
2. The Department has established an Aboriginal Cultural Security Leadership Committee to embed Aboriginal voices in decision-making. Can the Minister provide the current membership of the committee?
3. What mechanisms ensure the committee has direct input into budget allocations?
 - a. Please list the dates of opportunities for that input.
4. The Department is pursuing workforce reforms to address staff shortages and attract Aboriginal personnel. What are the specific recruitment targets for the upcoming financial year?
 - a. What budget measures are in place to ensure those targets are met?
 - b. If recruitment targets for Aboriginal personnel are not set as a number, in which document is the workforce target expressed, and how is progress against it measured?
5. The answer to Written Question No. 139 of the 15th Assembly reported that, as at 31 March 2025, of 783 children in out-of-home care who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 177 (23 per cent) were placed with an Aboriginal carer household and 606 (77 per cent) with a non-Aboriginal carer household. What are the equivalent figures at the most recent reporting date?
 - a. What specific programs are funded in the 2026–27 Budget to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal carers? Please list each program and the funding directed to it.

- b. That answer also recorded that data provided for the Estimates Hearings reported 224 (29 per cent) of children placed with an Aboriginal carer as a key performance indicator, and attributed the variance to children having multiple placements. Which basis — unique children by active placement, or placements — is used for the published key performance indicator?
 - c. Please provide the current figure on both bases.
 - d. Has the key performance indicator been reported on the same basis in each year it has been published? If the basis has changed, in which year and why?
 - e. Budget Paper No. 3 reports 27 per cent for 2025–26. That is a third figure alongside the 23 per cent in the answer to Written Question No. 139 and the 29 per cent provided to the Estimates Hearings. Please reconcile all three, stating for each the basis of calculation and the reporting date.
- 6. Budget Paper No. 3 for 2026–27 reports the measure “Aboriginal children in out of home care placed with an Aboriginal carer” at 27 per cent for 2025–26 against a target of at least 35 per cent, and retains the target of at least 35 per cent for 2026–27. Note 5 to that measure states: “The variation in 2025-26 is due to not capturing carers’ demographic information for purchased home-based care placements.”
 - a. How many Aboriginal children were in purchased home-based care placements at 30 June 2026?
 - b. For how many children in out of home care is the carer's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status not recorded?
 - c. Is the figure of 27 per cent calculated across all placements, or only across those for which carer demographic information is captured? Please state the numerator and the denominator.
 - d. If placements for which carer status is not recorded were counted as placements with a non-Aboriginal carer, what would the figure be?
 - e. On what date did the Department become aware that carer demographic information was not being captured for purchased home-based care placements, and what has been done since?
 - f. Do funding agreements or contracts with purchased home-based care providers require carer demographic information to be reported to the Department? If not, why not, and will they be amended?

- g. How is the Territory's performance against the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle reported under Closing the Gap where this information is not captured?