

MEDIA RELEASE

13 January 2025

SNAICC Welcomes Step in Establishing National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

SNAICC, National Voice for our Children welcomes the commencement of the office of the National Commissioner Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People.

As of today, the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People commences, with the interim appointment of an Acting Commissioner, Ms Lil Gordon.

Adjunct Professor Muriel Bamblett AO, Chairperson of SNAICC, said the peak body welcomes Acting Commissioner Gordon in her interim role while the appointment of the ongoing National Commissioner is finalised.

“The commencement of the Commission is a pivotal step in realising a voice and facilitator for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, ensuring their safety and protection,” Ms Bamblett said.

“Our children’s rights to be connected to culture, community, family and Country are central to their identify, wellbeing and positive life outcomes. This Commissioner will play an essential role to make sure our children’s rights to culture are respected and protected.”

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children are significantly over-represented in out-of-home care and youth detention compared to non-Indigenous children, and trends are increasing.

“Our sector, communities and families are sick of seeing our children enter the out-of-home care and juvenile justice systems. The Commissioner is a vital tool to reverse increasing trends for our children by holding government to account,” Ms Bamblett said.

“To ensure this accountability role for our children’s rights is in place, it is critical the ongoing role of a National Commissioner is appointed by Government as soon as possible.

“We commend the government on their commitment to progress legislation that will give the National Commissioner the powers, independence and authority that the role requires. We encourage the government to progress this legislation as soon as possible.”

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