

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

30 January 2025

### **REAL ACTION NEEDED ON CHILD SAFETY**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak body SNAICC – National Voice for our Children is appalled that Opposition Leader Peter Dutton has made the demonisation of Aboriginal people a centrepiece of his election campaign.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said Mr Dutton’s doubling down on a Royal Commission that was only focused on the sexual abuse of Aboriginal children in remote communities was a political ploy that would not make one child safer.

“Mr Dutton first made these claims in 2023, and hundreds of organisations and individuals rejected his stance, instead calling for action on solutions backed by evidence. It is beyond disappointing we have not been heard.

“If Mr Dutton is truly concerned about the safety of children, he should be calling a Royal Commission into the abuse of all Australian children.

“In 2023, the Australian Child Maltreatment Study revealed the majority of Australians (62 per cent) have experienced at least one type of child abuse or neglect, with domestic violence, physical, emotional or sexual abuse the most common.

“Child abuse is far too prevalent in Australia full stop. Singling out Aboriginal families and communities is harmful and puts ideology before evidence.”

Ms Liddle said there had been more than 33 reports into child protection since the Bringing Them Home report in 1997. Hundreds of recommendations from these have not been implemented.

“If Mr Dutton is truly as concerned about the safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as we are, then he would be supporting the strengthening of community-controlled organisations.

“He would be supporting our organisations that are working to support children and families in the child protection system to stay connected.

“He would be supporting Aboriginal community-controlled early education and care that set our children up for a strong start and success in life and supports families before they are in crisis.

“He would be committing to bipartisan support for the National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

“These measures are what keep our children safe, and far less likely to become involved in child protection and youth justice systems.

“Spending millions of dollars on a Royal Commission is the definition of 'reckless government spending' and will not improve the life of one child.”

\*\*\*END\*\*\*

For all media queries, please contact Charlie Bowcock on 0417 042 308 or [media@snaicc.org.au](mailto:media@snaicc.org.au).