



South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation

3 November 2024

Submission to SNAICC: South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC)

Introduction

The South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC) is dedicated to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Tasmania. We welcome the initiative by SNAICC to develop a standalone National Family Safety Plan and offer the following recommendations to address family, domestic, and sexual violence (FDSV) within our communities.

Recommendations

1. Community-Led Initiatives

- **Empower Local Communities:** Ensure that communities have a leading role in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of safety initiatives. Local knowledge and cultural practices should guide the development of programs tailored to community needs.
- **Support for Community Empowerment Programs:** Allocate funding for programs that enhance leadership skills and provide training for community members to address family violence sustainably.

2. Culturally Safe and Accessible Services

- **Cultural Competency Training:** Mandate comprehensive cultural awareness training for all service providers, including police forces, healthcare professionals, and social services, to ensure respectful and effective interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Improved Accessibility:** Increase funding for services that are geographically accessible and culturally safe, particularly for remote and isolated communities. This includes ensuring that services are available in locations that are convenient for community members and that they are delivered in a manner that respects cultural practices and needs.

3. Localised Healing Services

- **Integration of Traditional Healing:** Establish and support localised healing services that incorporate traditional healing practices alongside contemporary therapeutic approaches. This would address trauma resulting from historical injustices and ongoing intergenerational trauma experienced by our communities over the past two centuries.
- **Community Healing Programs:** Develop programs specifically designed to facilitate healing and reconciliation within communities, allowing individuals to engage in culturally significant practices that aid in trauma recovery.



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4. Comprehensive Support Services and appropriate funding for Resources

- **Integrated Support Systems:** Foster collaboration among health, education, legal, and social services to create a holistic support system for individuals experiencing family violence.
- **Temporary Accommodation Solutions:** Develop and fund culturally appropriate temporary accommodation options specifically designed for those fleeing family violence. Additionally, consider creating spaces where perpetrators can be temporarily housed to ensure the safety of victims.
- **Safe Houses:** Establish safe houses in rural areas to provide immediate refuge for victims and their children. These safe houses should be staffed with trained professionals who can respond to incidents without putting themselves in harm's way, ensuring the safety of both staff and those they are caring for.
- **Programs for Perpetrators:** Develop and implement programs aimed at rehabilitating perpetrators of family violence. Addressing the root causes of their behavior is essential for long-term solutions and family healing. Mandate training for perpetrators to improve communication skills and relationships without resulting in a criminal record, which could exacerbate their anger and resistance to change.
- **Proximity to Police Stations:** Locate safe houses close to police stations to deter perpetrators from finding and harming their partners. This proximity can provide an added layer of security and quick access to law enforcement if needed.
- **Emergency Response Plans:** Develop and implement emergency response plans for victims leaving abusive situations. This includes providing them with safety kits, emergency contact numbers, and clear instructions on what to do in case of an immediate threat.
- **Close Case Management:** Provide close case management for victims to ensure they receive continuous support and do not return to unsafe environments unless they are assured of their safety. Building victims' self-esteem through ongoing support can empower them to make better decisions for their future.

5. Enhanced Reporting and Accountability

- **Strengthened Police Protocols:** Establish clear guidelines for police to address family violence cases with urgency and sensitivity, ensuring that reports are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- **Specialised Police Training:** Train specific police officers in FDSV who are familiar with the families and can provide supportive rather than punitive responses. This approach ensures that officers are equipped to handle cases with the necessary sensitivity and understanding.
- **Community Oversight:** Implement mechanisms that allow community members to provide feedback and accountability on the effectiveness of law enforcement and service responses to family violence.



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6. Education and Awareness

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Launch campaigns aimed at reducing stigma related to family violence and increasing awareness of available support services among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- **School-based Programs:** Incorporate education about respectful relationships, consent, and family violence prevention into school curriculums to engage youth early on.

7. Research and Data Collection

- **Tailored Data Gathering:** Invest in research focused on the specific experiences and challenges of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people regarding family violence, ensuring that data collection is culturally appropriate and led by community members.
- **Use of Data to Inform Policy:** Utilise gathered data to inform future policy decisions and ensure that they are aligned with identified community needs.

8. Long-term Funding Commitments

- **Sustainable Funding for Programs:** Establish ongoing funding mechanisms to support community-led initiatives, programs targeting family violence, and services addressing the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Investment in Prevention:** Allocate specific resources for preventative measures, including programs that address the root causes of family violence, such as intergenerational trauma and other intersecting drivers of family violence.

By implementing these recommendations, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan can effectively address family violence, promote healing, and enhance the safety and wellbeing of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Tasmania. SETAC is committed to working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure these recommendations are integrated and acted upon in the spirit of empowerment, respect, and cultural safety.

We emphasise the urgent need for enhanced funding and support for Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organizations (ACCOS) and advocate for a flexible government approach that responds to the intersectional needs of Aboriginal individuals and families. By prioritising funding for culturally appropriate services and ensuring that policies are co-designed with communities, we can better address the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples. We reiterate our commitment to collaboration and the importance of meaningful, community-driven solutions, ensuring that the voices of Aboriginal communities are at the forefront of policy development and implementation.



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Contact Information

For further information or to discuss these recommendations in more detail, please contact:

Tracey Dillon A/g CEO South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC) 0414 305 555.

Thank you for considering our submission. We look forward to working together to create a safer and healthier environment for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in Tasmania.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Tracey Dillon", is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Tracey Dillon

Acting Chief Executive Officer