

CLOSING THE GAP

Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs

23 February 2026, Communique

The Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs (NTECAA) met in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) on 23 February 2026, co-chaired by the Hon. Steve Edgington, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Ms Theresa Roe, Chairperson of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT).

NTECAA commenced with a showcase by local organisation King's Narrative. Founder and Managing Director Tyson Mpetyane Carmody and Jessica Carmody spoke to members about the organisations vision, mission, business structure and program delivery successes. Members reflected on the importance of the work King's Narrative is undertaking.

Following the handling of administrative items, the NTECAA considered the NT Governments approach to Aboriginal Affairs in the NT; including the NT Aboriginal Affairs Framework (AAF), the draft Empowering the Bush Strategy and the Remote Rent Framework. Minister Edgington provided an overview of the six priorities of the AAF to: create safer communities, empower bush communities, create jobs and business on country, boost health wellbeing and culture, build community foundations and develop skills for the future. The NT Government affirmed that this Framework is a guiding document for NT Government agencies and links the NT Government's policy platform and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Tom Leeming, Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development (DHLGCD) provided an overview of the draft Empowering the Bush Strategy (EtB) as a key election commitment of this government. The EtB Strategy seeks to consider the NT Government's investment into community development, particularly in decision making and strengthening local governments. Tom also addressed remote rent noting that DHLGCD are considering a new approach to remote rent and addressing repairs and maintenance. Members stressed the importance that tenants are supported to achieve appropriate housing in both urban and remote settings.

The Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet provided a brief update on the development of the NT Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2026-2028, highlighting the previously agreed principles and the two-part structure of the IP. Members requested that the NT Partnership Working Group revisit the Project Plan and Timeline, noting that this is a collective process and will require a longer time frame to ensure it is a comprehensive IP.

Due to timing constraints, items 6, 7, 8 and 9 are to be considered out-of-session. Members agreed that an additional hour be added to the agenda, particularly if there are engagement sessions by local organisations.

The NTECAA will next meet in May 2026 on the Tiwi Islands.



Australian Government



Aboriginal Peak
Organisations
NORTHERN TERRITORY



CLOSING THE GAP

NTECAA Attendance

Members:

Name	Representing	Attendance
The Hon Steve Edgington MLA (Co-Chair)	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, NT Government	Y
Ms Theresa Roe (Co-Chair)	APO NT (Chairperson, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency)	Y
Ms Leeanne Caton	APO NT (Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory)	Y
Dr Josie Douglas	APO NT (Central Land Council)	
Mr Yuseph Deen	APO NT (Northern Land Council)	Y
Ms Naomi Anstess	APO NT (NT Indigenous Business Network)	Y
Mr Brenton Toy	APO NT (Tiwi Land Council)	Y
Ms Mary Watson	Local Government Association of the Northern Territory	Y
Mr Tom Leeming	NT Government (Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development)	Y
Ms Shaneen Tilmouth	NT Government (Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet)	Y
Cr Peter Pangqueue	President, Local Government Association of the Northern Territory	Y

Proxies:

Member	Representing	Attendance
Mr Tom Dyer	National Indigenous Australians Agency	Y

Observers:

Member	Representing	Attendance
Mr Justin De Domenico	Chief of Staff, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, NT Government	Y
Ms Alice Langton	APO NT	Y
Mr Anthony Beven	APO NT	Y
Ms Donna Ah Chee	APO NT (AMSANT)	Y
Ms. Roslyn Cook	APO NT (North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency)	Y
Mr David Astalosh	APO NT (Northern Land Council)	Y
Ms. Deb Anstess Vallejo	APO NT (NT Indigenous Business Network)	Y
Rheannon Veava	APO NT Secretariat	Y
Mr Mitch Taylor Briscoe	National Indigenous Australians Agency	Y
Ms Bec Bates (Secretariat)	NT Government, (Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet)	Y
Ms Natasha O'Connell (Secretariat)	NT Government, (Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet)	Y



Australian Government



**Aboriginal Peak
Organisations**
NORTHERN TERRITORY



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**
GOVERNMENT



LGANT
Local Government Association
Northern Territory