



ALGA

Australian Local
Government Association

ALGA 2025 Closing the Gap Report

Foreword from the President

Local governments across Australia continue to play a critical and often understated role in advancing the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. As the level of government closest to communities, councils are essential partners in delivering culturally informed, place-based initiatives, strengthening community-controlled organisations and supporting reform led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The progress reflected in this reporting year demonstrates the combined commitment of councils, state and territory associations and our national partners to build culturally capable, responsive and accountable local government institutions.

Across the country, meaningful work continues to mature under each of the Priority Reforms. Formal partnership arrangements are becoming more structured and collaborative, with clearer approaches to how councils and Aboriginal communities identify priorities and shape solutions together. In several jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory, local government participation in shared governance has been strengthened through renewed partnership agreements and enhanced representation within state-level Closing the Gap structures. Engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) has also expanded, supported by initiatives such as NSW's co-designed [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#), new procurement pathways and targeted workforce development programs that strengthen local capability and advance community-led approaches.

Councils and their representative bodies have continued to invest in cultural capability initiatives, truth-telling activities, naming and heritage projects and culturally informed governance and service delivery. This work is complemented by emerging approaches to data governance and Aboriginal data sovereignty, reflected in collaborative data-sharing arrangements within place-based partnerships and the development of practical tools and frameworks to support culturally appropriate information management. These developments highlight the leadership of ALGA's state and territory member organisations, which continue to support councils with guidance, training, policy expertise and sector-specific resources that strengthen their ability to implement the National Agreement.

Their efforts, combined with ALGA's national coordination and advocacy, are building a confident and capable local government sector committed to meaningful shared decision-making and community-led approaches. I thank our state and territory associations, First Nations councils, community partners and sector colleagues for their leadership and collaboration. Together, we are building the foundations for culturally strong, community-led outcomes that will support long-term progress toward Closing the Gap.



Mayor Matt Burnett

President

Australian Local Government Association

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Executive Summary

The 2024–25 reporting period reflects a strong and maturing contribution from local governments and their representative bodies to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Across Australia councils have strengthened partnership structures, expanded collaboration with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), and continued to embed culturally informed practices into governance, planning and service delivery. This collective effort has deepened alignment with the four Priority Reforms and enhanced the capability of local governments to work in culturally safe, community-led and place-based ways.

Significant progress was evident in multiple jurisdictions. Queensland's [Indigenous Council Leaders Accord stands](#) out as a nationally significant governance model, establishing structured ministerial engagement, community-led priority setting and regular partnership reviews. In New South Wales, renewed participation under the [NSW Partnership Agreement](#), LGNSW's appointment to the Transformation Sector Committee, and the co-designed [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) have strengthened local government involvement in shared decision-making and expanded council capacity to work effectively with ACCOs. Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory delivered substantial contributions across emergency management, truth-telling, cultural heritage, Treaty preparation and Aboriginal-led service partnerships. South Australia advanced important work through local cultural infrastructure projects, strengthened alignment with statewide Closing the Gap implementation, and growing collaboration with South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network ([SAACCON](#)).

Collectively, this activity demonstrates a national system that is maturing and evolving. Councils showed stronger performance under Priority Reforms 1 to 3, with more structured partnership mechanisms, improved cultural capability and expanded support for the community-controlled sector. Progress under Priority Reform 4 continued to develop, with emerging data-sharing models in NSW, Queensland and the NT providing foundations for future work on Aboriginal data sovereignty and locally governed evidence systems.

The report highlights the essential role of ALGA's state and territory associations in driving this progress. Their work in training, resource development, partnership facilitation and advocacy has positioned councils to contribute more effectively to Closing the Gap and to embed culturally safe, community-led approaches in local government practice. With continued national coordination, further alignment of reporting systems and sustained investment in local capability, the sector is well placed to deepen its contribution to Closing the Gap and support long-term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Introduction

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap establishes a clear role for ALGA in supporting the achievement of its shared commitments. Under clause 109 of the Agreement, ALGA is required to ensure local governments understand the Agreement and its commitments, assist state and territory governments to work effectively with local governments in implementing the Agreement and support strengthened shared decision-making at the local level so councils can participate meaningfully in partnerships with all levels of government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

ALGA's Implementation Plan sets out the national framework through which these obligations are delivered and guides our work across coordination, advocacy and engagement. Throughout the reporting period, ALGA continued to represent the local government sector in national governance and accountability processes, including the Productivity Commission Review, the Indigenous-Led Review, the Partnership Working Groups and the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. Through this work, ALGA has ensured that the perspectives and capabilities of local governments remain visible within national policy settings and implementation structures.

The progress achieved across the sector has been significantly strengthened by the work of ALGA's state and territory member organisations. These associations play a central role in supporting councils to understand and apply the National Agreement, build cultural capability, contribute to shared decision-making structures and form effective partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and ACCOs. Across our member associations, whether through the development of new planning tools, direct participation in state-level governance, or the expansion of place-based partnerships, they have driven alignment with the Priority Reforms and provided councils with the guidance, resources and practical support required to embed culturally informed and community-led approaches. This includes major initiatives such as [LGNSW's Closing the Gap Toolkit](#), WALGA's [Kolbang Yanginy](#) resources, the [Ngutungka Toolkit](#) supported by LGA South Australia and coordinated partnership frameworks in the NT, Queensland and Victoria.

ALGA's Priority Action Areas draw together this collective effort into a coherent national approach, providing the basis for monitoring progress and strengthening consistency across jurisdictions. These actions support local governments to contribute meaningfully to the Priority Reforms, including shared decision-making, growth of the community-controlled sector, culturally safe organisational transformation and the development of stronger approaches to data and evidence.

This report outlines the work undertaken by ALGA and its member organisations during the 2024–25 reporting period and highlights the combined contribution of the sector to the implementation of the National Agreement.

Reporting on ALGA and State and Territory Local Government Associations (2024–25)

Local governments continue to play a critical role as place-based partners, service providers and employers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in regional and remote areas. While contexts vary significantly between jurisdictions, the reporting period demonstrates consistent progress in strengthening formal partnerships, enabling community-controlled service delivery, transforming local government culture and building capability to support shared data and decision-making.

ALGA's membership consists of the below State and Territory Associations. We also acknowledge that council reporting may also be incorporated into relevant state and territory government reports.

- [Local Government New South Wales](#) (LGNSW)
- [Local Government Association of Northern Territory](#) (LGANT)
- [Local Government Association of Queensland](#)
- [LGA South Australia](#)
- [Local Government Association of Tasmania](#) (LGAT)
- [Municipal Association of Victoria](#) (MAV)
- [Western Australian Local Government Association](#) (WALGA)

Priority Reform 1: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision-Making

Priority Reform 1: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision-Making		
Priority Reform Action	Summary of Collective Activity	Status
PR1.1 Overcoming legislative impediments	Councils strengthened their participation in jurisdictional Closing the Gap governance structures, with reforms in several states removing barriers to shared decision-making. Queensland's Indigenous Council Leaders Accord created direct access for First Nations councils to senior decision-makers, while the NT, Victoria and WA continued to embed local government roles within Treaty, heritage and native title reforms. South Australia reinforced alignment with state partnership frameworks, and the NSW Partnership Agreement further formalised local government involvement in shared governance arrangements.	Progressing
PR1.2 Participation in stocktakes / health checks	Councils participated in a range of jurisdictional stocktakes and partnership reviews, with NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory strengthening monitoring through refreshed governance forums and statewide assessments. Queensland's Accord introduced structured, twice-yearly partnership reviews, while South Australia supported regional engagement processes and	Progressing

	improved sector readiness through coordinated work with SAACCON .	
PR1.3 Identify partnership principles and case studies	Jurisdictions provided strong case studies demonstrating shared decision-making in practice. Queensland's Accord showcased national best practice, while the NT highlighted remote governance models and Victoria contributed examples across emergency management and early years. NSW place-based partnerships such as Mara Ngali and Ngaliya demonstrated structured co-governance, and Western Australia and South Australia supplied extensive examples across land management, truth-telling and integrated service partnerships.	Progressed
PR1.4 Participation in policy partnerships	Local government associations remained active in state and territory policy partnerships, with strengthened participation across jurisdictions. Queensland's Accord elevated First Nations council input into state policy, NSW formalised local government involvement through the Transformation Sector Committee, and Victoria, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia continued active engagement through Treaty, heritage and Closing the Gap committees, ensuring alignment between local and state policy settings. Victoria established a First Peoples Expert Advisory Panel to work alongside MAV to provide guidance, specialist advice and instructions on matters directly impacting First Peoples and local government in Victoria.	Progressed
PR1.5 Local government involvement in place-based partnerships	Councils remained active contributors to place-based partnerships across jurisdictions, from NT remote service structures to Victorian wellbeing and emergency management initiatives and Western Australia's cultural land management models. Queensland's Accord strengthened First Nations council leadership in local solutions, South Australian councils advanced targeted community partnerships and NSW councils engaged in Aboriginal-led, locally governed place-based agreements focused on community-defined priorities.	Progressing
PR1.6 Monitoring participation and showcasing best practice	Jurisdictions continued to monitor partnership performance, with Queensland introducing structured review processes through the Accord and strong examples emerging from Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia. Victoria identified the need for more streamlined statewide tools, while NSW place-based partnerships highlighted best practice in culturally safe governance and shared accountability, contributing to a growing national evidence base.	Progressing

Across the reporting period, local governments continued to strengthen their participation in formal partnerships that support shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Each jurisdiction demonstrated progress in embedding structured engagement through advisory groups, partnership forums, co-designed mechanisms and long-term governance arrangements. For example, the LGANT's continued role in the NT Closing the Gap Partnership and the NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs ensured local government remained a central contributor to statutory decision-making frameworks. MAV supported [Ngaweeyan Maar-oo](#), with their statewide review of Victorian councils' Closing the Gap work, established a First Peoples Expert Advisory Panel to provide guidance, specialist advice and instructions on matters directly impacting First Peoples and local government in Victoria and worked in partnership with the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria, The Treaty Authority, Victorian Aboriginal News and Reconciliation Victoria to support Victoria prepare for future Treaty-related obligations.

Western Australia made notable progress through WALGA's expanded Aboriginal Engagement Forum, which brought together more than 250 participants and strengthened coordinated sector engagement with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal leaders and key state agencies. A range of formal advisory structures continued to mature across WA councils, including the City of Kwinana's [Boola Maara Consultative Committee](#) and the City of Wanneroo's [Ni Kadadjiny Koort Advisory Group](#), which provide culturally grounded guidance to council decision-making.

A major advancement this year was led by LGAQ through the establishment of the Queensland [Indigenous Council Leaders Accord](#), an historic agreement between the 17 discrete First Nations councils, LGAQ and the Queensland Government. The [Accord](#) creates a formal and enduring mechanism that guarantees First Nations councils direct access to Cabinet ministers and senior decision-makers. The [Accord](#) institutionalises twice-yearly partnership meetings, an annual Cabinet process and a structured health-check model that elevates cultural authority and local knowledge within government policy development.

In South Australia, LGA South Australia continued to strengthen partnerships through both strategic leadership and direct council engagement. LGA South Australia promoted opportunities for councils to align their strategic plans with the Closing the Gap framework, maintained engagement with the State's Closing the Gap Partnership Committee and commenced collaboration with [SAACCON](#). NSW councils continued to expand their involvement in Aboriginal-led, locally governed place-based partnerships through the [Mara Ngali](#) Agreement, the [Ngaliya Partnership](#) in Western Sydney and the Orange Aboriginal Place-Based Plan.

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate that partnership governance is maturing across the sector, driven by structured engagement, increased Aboriginal leadership and the availability of sector-wide tools and forums that support collaboration.

Priority Reform 1: Examples

During 2024–25, jurisdictions strengthened their participation in formal partnership structures and invested in mechanisms that elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in decision-making at the local and regional levels.

PR1.1 Overcoming legislative and structural impediments

LGA associations continued to work with state and territory governments to ensure local government is positioned to participate in joint decision-making.

- The [NSW Partnership Agreement](#) provides a structured mechanism for councils to participate in shared decision-making alongside NSW Government agencies and NSW CAPO.
- **LGANT** contributed through its membership of the [NT Closing the Gap Partnership](#) and the NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs, which embed the role of local government within statutory CTG governance.
- **MAV** established a First Peoples Expert Advisory Panel to provide guidance, specialist advice and instructions on matters directly impacting First Peoples and local government in Victoria and worked in partnership with the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria and the Treaty Authority to prepare councils for future legislative obligations under the Treaty process.
- **WALGA** engaged extensively with State Government agencies during reforms to WA Aboriginal heritage and native title frameworks, ensuring councils can meet statutory requirements while participating in shared decision-making.
- **South Australian** councils strengthened alignment between municipal strategic plans and the Closing the Gap framework, improving the sector's readiness to participate in state-level partnership structures.
- **LGAQ** led the establishment of the Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders [Accord](#), creating a formal, government-recognised mechanism that removes long-standing structural barriers by giving First Nations councils direct access to Ministers and Cabinet-level decision-makers.
- **LGAT** Evidence from Tasmania shows that councils often build shared decision-making through informal partnerships with Elders and ACCOs, supported by project-based collaboration and advisory structures
- **LGANT** successfully secured amendments to the Reconnection, Employment and Learning Program (Phase 1) guidelines to remove the exclusion of local government, enabling councils to host the program as culturally appropriate settings for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people transitioning from the justice system into employment, education and training.

PR1.2 Participation in partnership stocktakes and health checks

- **MAV** supported the [Ngaweeyan Maar-oo](#), who conducted a statewide stocktake review identifying partnership strengths, challenges and opportunities across all Victorian councils.
- **WALGA** used its Aboriginal Engagement Forum and advisory structures to review partnership activity and assess strengths in council-led governance.
- **LGANT** contributed through ongoing review processes within NT Government CTG governance forums.
- **LGA South Australia** encouraged councils to engage in regional engagement processes, enabling more consistent participation in statewide monitoring and review activities.
- The 2025 governance refresh formalised **LGNSW's** membership of the Transformation Sector Committee, improving visibility of local government participation in NSW CTG monitoring.
- Through **LGAQ's** leadership, the [Accord](#) embeds twice-yearly partnership meetings and an annual Cabinet review, creating a structured, ongoing health-check process for monitoring shared decision-making effectiveness.
- **LGAT** - Local audits highlight that internal stocktakes and community engagement processes help councils review their partnership arrangements and identify opportunities for deeper collaboration with Aboriginal communities

PR1.3 Identification of partnership principles and case studies

Members provided examples of effective partnership models:

- **LGANT** highlighted remote workforce partnerships, Local Buy procurement innovations, and the establishment of the [Groote Archipelago Regional Council](#) as a model for Aboriginal-led governance.
- **LGANT** partnered with the North West Mobile Force (NORFORCE) to deliver training, upskilling and job pathways for remote residents in the Barkly and Central Desert Local Government Areas of the Northern Territory. The initiative will leverage NORFORCE's bases in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek

and Borroloola to build local workforce capability and create part-time service opportunities linked to community leadership and resilience.

- **MAV** has supplied detailed case studies in cultural burning, emergency management, domestic and family violence prevention and early childhood wellbeing.
- **LGNSW** place-based agreements such as [Mara Ngali](#) and [Ngaliya](#) offer scalable examples of co-designed governance and shared accountability.
- **WALGA** showcased advisory committees, cultural heritage partnerships, mosaic burning, language revitalisation and naming reforms.
- Councils such as Port Adelaide Enfield and Port Augusta provided strong **South Australian** case studies demonstrating co-designed approaches to community wellbeing and integrated service delivery.
- **LGAQ's** role in co-designing the [Accord](#) provides a nationally significant case study that reflects best-practice partnership principles, including empowerment, cultural authority and community-led priority setting.

These examples will inform the development of nationally consistent partnership principles to be made publicly available.

PR1.4 Participation in policy partnerships

Across Australia associations engaged in jurisdictional policy partnerships consistent with the National Agreement:

- **MAV** strengthened partnerships with ACCOs, state agencies and Treaty institutions.
- **LGANT** maintained membership of the NT CTG Partnership.
- **LGNSW** contributes policy advice to NSW CTG forums, strengthening the alignment of council activity with statewide Aboriginal priorities.
- **WALGA** collaborated with agencies on heritage reform, ILUA implementation and land-care partnerships.
- **LGA South Australia** maintained representation on the South Australian Closing the Gap Partnership Committee, ensuring local government perspectives informed jurisdictional policy responses.
- The [Accord](#) strengthens **LGAQ's** coordination with the Queensland Government, ensuring First Nations councils directly influence state policy partnerships and Closing the Gap implementation.
- **ALGA** maintained engagement at the national level through the Joint Council.

PR1.5 Local government involvement in place-based partnerships

Councils across Australia participated in local partnership arrangements that respond directly to community priorities.

- **LGNSW** councils are active participants in Aboriginal-led place-based partnerships that embed shared decision-making and community-led planning.
- In the NT, **LGANT** supported employment pathways, justice reintegration and workforce partnerships in Barkly, Central Desert and other regions.
- In Victoria, **MAV** demonstrated place-based approaches across emergency management, maternal and child health, and Aboriginal family wellbeing.
- In WA, **WALGA** supported council-led partnerships centred on land management, cultural knowledge and truth-telling.
- In South Australian **LGA South Australia** councils contributed to place-based initiatives in early childhood, homelessness and health equity through partnerships with ACCOs and state agencies.
- **LGAQ** has enabled a comprehensive place-based governance model through the [Accord](#), positioning discrete First Nations councils to lead locally driven solutions grounded in cultural knowledge and community need.

- **LGAT** - Councils in Tasmania showed strong place-based engagement where partnerships were shaped by local ACCOs, demographic need and historical relationships, mirroring patterns seen nationally

PR1.6 Monitoring participation and identifying best practice

- **LGANT** reported very strong representation of Aboriginal elected members, with the NT continuing to lead nationally in Aboriginal local governance.
- **MAV** identified the need for more consistent and simplified reporting tools for councils.
- **WALGA** highlighted best practice through its annual Aboriginal Engagement Forum and extensive case study collection.
- **NSW** demonstrates maturing practice through formal data-sharing and joint priority-setting arrangements in its place-based partnership models.
- In **SA** emerging cultural infrastructure projects such as [Yitpi Yartapuultiku](#) and [Ngutungka West Lakes](#) provided new examples of best practice in culturally-informed planning and engagement.
- The [Accord](#) provides a clear framework for ongoing monitoring, and **LGAQ's** stewardship delivers a best-practice example of First Nations-led governance suitable for national recognition.

Priority Reform 2: Building the Community-Controlled Sector

Priority Reform 2 – Building the Community-Controlled Sector		
Priority Reform Action	Summary of Collective Activity	Status
PR2.1 Participation in Sector Strengthening Plans	Jurisdictions strengthened engagement with ACCOs through regional partnerships, sector training and targeted collaboration. The NT, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania each advanced ACCO-led initiatives, while NSW supported councils through a co-designed Closing the Gap Toolkit that provides practical guidance for culturally informed partnership development.	Progressed
PR2.2 Procurement policies supporting ACCO participation	Councils expanded procurement pathways for Aboriginal businesses through improved supplier visibility, targeted engagement and new panel arrangements. Queensland and the NT advanced identification tools, Western Australia broadened access across statewide panels, and South Australia and Tasmania supported culturally responsive procurement practices. NSW strengthened economic participation through its First Nations Procurement Scheme, enabling councils to engage prequalified Aboriginal suppliers for local projects.	Progressed
PR2.3 Employment and retention of Aboriginal staff	Councils continued to expand Aboriginal employment pathways, with strong workforces in the NT, integrated wellbeing and employment strategies in Victoria, and RAP-driven commitments in Western Australia. South Australian councils strengthened local recruitment through targeted initiatives, while NSW advanced sector-wide outreach through the Careers at Council program, supporting apprenticeships, traineeships and leadership pathways for Aboriginal staff.	Progressing

Local governments continued to strengthen their collaboration with ACCOs and contribute to the growth of locally led service systems. LGANT focused on supporting the unique role of Aboriginal-led regional councils in the NT, advocating for equitable service delivery opportunities and recognition of their workforce, which includes the largest proportion of Aboriginal elected members nationally. MAV increased engagement with the community-controlled sector through targeted presentations, strategic meetings and introductions that support collaboration between councils and ACCOs in areas such as early years services, population health, housing and family violence prevention. WALGA advanced practical measures to expand the visibility and capability of Aboriginal businesses and community-controlled organisations by progressing a dedicated tender round to prequalify Aboriginal suppliers for its Preferred Supplier Program.

WALGA's sector-wide procurement reforms and dedicated Aboriginal business tender process further strengthened the ability of ACCOs and First Nations businesses to engage with councils through system-wide improvement by enabling more Aboriginal businesses to compete for local government contracts across 12 procurement panels. In NSW, the Local Government Procurement First Nations Procurement

Scheme provides prequalified Aboriginal suppliers with access to local government contracts up to \$249,999, strengthening Aboriginal business participation and supporting local economic development outcomes.

LGNSW strengthened system leadership in NSW through the development of a [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) for Local Government, co-designed with NSW CAPO, Aboriginal Affairs NSW and Aboriginal councillors and staff from several councils. The toolkit provides practical guidance to improve cultural safety, governance and council engagement with the community-controlled sector and is supported by ongoing advocacy to secure implementation resources. Workforce visibility and sector reach were enhanced through LGNSW's Careers at Council program, which delivers targeted outreach to Aboriginal jobseekers and highlights long-term career pathways within local government. LGNSW also works closely with the Local Government Aboriginal Network to support Aboriginal workforce leadership and sector capability.

Procurement capability and pathways for Aboriginal enterprises expanded across throughout our member organisations. LGANT supported [Local Buy's rollout of Supplier Intelligence badges](#), improving councils' ability to identify Aboriginal-owned suppliers through real-time data. MAV facilitated direct engagement between councils and ACCOs, including [Aboriginal Housing Victoria](#) and [VACCHO](#), ensuring service partnerships align with local needs.

Western Australia provided strong examples of Local Government–ACCO partnerships in caring for Country, including cultural burning programs, shared cultural sea mapping initiatives and collaborations with Prescribed Bodies Corporate.

In South Australia, councils provided practical and in-kind support to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations, including shared use of facilities, transport, administrative support and partnership-based service delivery models. The City of Onkaparinga strengthened its commitment to community-led initiatives through its revised Grants Program, launched in July 2025, which includes a clear focus on supporting First Nations-led projects. LGA South Australia's emerging partnership with [SAACCON](#) also contributes to strengthening the Aboriginal community-controlled housing sector and improving collaboration between state and local government systems.

Nationally, councils are strengthening their engagement with the Aboriginal community-controlled sector. Findings from Tasmania confirm that councils often support ACCOs through facility access, shared programs and staff training partnerships, even where formal procurement frameworks are still developing. Action Plans remain a central tool councils use to structure commitments to Aboriginal employment, procurement and community-led initiatives. Collectively, these efforts demonstrate solid progress under Priority Reform 2 and highlight opportunities for ALGA to support more coordinated approaches to procurement reform, sector capability and place-based ACCO partnerships.

Priority Reform 2: examples

Local governments continued to expand partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and strengthen procurement pathways to support Aboriginal economic participation.

PR2.1 Sector Strengthening Plans

LGA associations supported sector development by facilitating connections between councils and ACCOs and increasing the visibility of community-controlled services.

- The **LGNSW** [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) provides councils with guidance to strengthen relationships with ACCOs and adopt culturally informed engagement practices.
- **LGANT** advanced regional ACCO partnerships and led advocacy for equitable service delivery roles for Aboriginal-led councils.
- **MAV** promoted ACCO-led presentations, strategic advice sessions and joint service planning.
- **WALGA** strengthened ACCO collaboration through cultural land management, heritage engagement and reconciliation initiatives.
- Engagement between **LGA South Australia** and [SAACCON](#) improved local government understanding of community-controlled housing priorities and strengthened pathways for joint sector development.
- **LGAT** - Tasmanian councils demonstrated strong collaboration with ACCOs through shared program delivery and cultural training partnerships, supporting broader national trends in community-controlled sector engagement

PR2.2 Procurement policies supporting ACCO participation

- **LGANT** reported the rollout of Local Buy's Supplier Intelligence tools which improve visibility of Aboriginal-owned suppliers.
- **WALGA** progressed a dedicated tender to expand Aboriginal business representation in its Preferred Supplier Program.
- **LGNSW** The First Nations Procurement Scheme enables councils to contract with prequalified Aboriginal businesses for projects up to \$249,999.
- **LGA South Australia** councils expanded opportunities for Aboriginal-owned businesses through targeted grants, facility access and culturally informed procurement approaches.
- **MAV** facilitated direct introductions between councils and ACCOs to increase procurement capability and partnership alignment.

PR2.3 Employment and retention of Aboriginal staff

- **LGANT** reported the strongest representation nationally, reflecting the demographics of the NT, with nearly 60 percent of elected members identifying as Aboriginal.
- **LGANT** The Groote Archipelago Regional Council became a stand-alone council in September 2024 and held its first election in March 2025, with LGANT supporting candidate information sessions and strengthening Aboriginal leadership in local decision-making.
- **LGANT** contributed to the 2025 Local Government Elections Working Group, supporting the development of Aboriginal language voter guides to improve electoral participation in the August 2025 NT local government elections.
- **MAV** highlighted structured employment pathways, including traineeships and cadetships in Banyule and culturally inclusive workforce programs across several councils.
- **LGA South Australia** Councils supported culturally safe workforce practices through the use of the [Ngutungka Toolkit](#), improving internal capability to recruit and retain Aboriginal staff.
- **LGNSW** Careers at Council delivers targeted outreach to Aboriginal jobseekers and highlights Aboriginal leadership pathways within local government.
- **WALGA** established the Aboriginal Elected Member Roundtable to support leadership, knowledge sharing and workforce inclusion.

Priority Reform 3: Transforming Government Organisations

Priority Reform 3 – Transforming Government Organisations		
Priority Reform Action	Summary of Collective Activity	Status
PR3.1 Access to toolkits and cultural capability training	Councils strengthened cultural capability through new toolkits, training programs and culturally grounded governance models. Western Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory expanded sector-wide capability initiatives, South Australia adopted the Ngutungka Toolkit , and Tasmania advanced cultural interpretation projects. NSW supported councils through its co-designed Closing the Gap Toolkit , providing structured resources that enhance cultural capability and organisational readiness.	Progressed
PR3.2 Encouraging councils to implement RAPs	Reconciliation frameworks continued to grow nationally, with strong RAP uptake in Western Australia, expanded integration into statutory planning in Victoria and culturally grounded governance models in the Northern Territory. South Australian councils progressed reconciliation-aligned practices through the Ngutungka Toolkit , while NSW councils strengthened their commitments through RAPs, partnership plans and governance approaches supported by LGNSW resources and the Local Government Aboriginal Network.	Progressing
PR3.3 Showcasing councils' culturally safe initiatives	Councils delivered a wide range of culturally safe initiatives, including truth-telling, language programs, cultural heritage management and tailored emergency responses. Western Australia advanced naming and heritage reforms, Victoria strengthened cultural safety across family violence and early years services and the Northern Territory maintained community-led delivery models. South Australian and Tasmanian councils expanded culturally informed program design and interpretation work, while NSW supported culturally safe practice through its Collaborate platform, which guides councils in planning, engagement and heritage management.	Progressed

This reporting period demonstrated continued progress in strengthening cultural capability, embedding reconciliation principles into council operations and shifting organisational practice to become more accessible and culturally safe. State Member organisations invested in resources, training and partnerships that enhance the cultural competence of local government workforces.

In Western Australia, WALGA launched [Kolbang Yanginy](#), a comprehensive suite of tools and guidance designed to support councils in cultural capability development, heritage engagement, truth-telling and reconciliation initiatives. These tools have been widely adopted across metropolitan and regional councils and are now a core resource for sector-wide transformation. WA councils continued to lead nationally in truth-telling, language revitalisation and culturally grounded governance. This included significant renaming and dual-naming initiatives such as Galup (Town of Cambridge), extensive *Noongar*

placenames decoding and interpretation projects in the Cities of Swan and Melville, and cultural mapping initiatives that strengthen community connections to Country. Additional cultural capability programs included mosaic burning partnerships, Caring for Country models, Elders-led cultural advice structures, and the expansion of Aboriginal advisory groups such as [Boola Maara](#) (Kwinana) and [Ni Kadadjiny Koort](#) (Wanneroo), which embed Aboriginal voices directly into council decision-making.

MAV delivered multiple cultural capability opportunities through its networks and forums, including workshops with ACCOs and Elders across emergency management, maternal and child health and community wellbeing services. LGANT continued to work with the NT Government and Aboriginal organisations to support culturally grounded practices across remote councils.

In New South Wales, LGNSW made substantial contributions to organisational transformation through the development of its [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) for Local Government. Co-designed with NSW CAPO, Aboriginal Affairs NSW and Aboriginal councillors and staff, the toolkit provides practical, scalable guidance that supports councils to strengthen cultural safety, improve governance capability and adopt more culturally informed engagement practices. LGNSW also continued to support the Local Government Aboriginal Network, an independent network of Aboriginal councillors and staff that plays a significant role in capability-building, leadership development and peer support. The Collaborate platform, jointly maintained by LGNSW and the Office of Local Government, further contributed to organisational transformation by offering councils tools to support culturally respectful planning, heritage management, engagement and service delivery.

South Australian councils continued to improve organisational capability through the adoption of the [Ngutungka Toolkit](#), developed by Flinders University and funded by LGA South Australia. Completed in December 2024, the toolkit provides a structured approach for local governments to embed Aboriginal perspectives into governance, service delivery, community engagement and workplace culture. Early uptake shows councils using the resource to support cultural capability development, improve community relationships and align organisational practices with the principles of the National Agreement.

Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) and equivalent strategies continued to expand across the sector, particularly in WA, where over 70 percent of Band 1 councils now have formal reconciliation frameworks in place, representing one of the strongest national adoption rates. Victorian councils are increasingly integrating reconciliation priorities into municipal health and wellbeing planning, supported by MAV's work to strengthen templates, guidance and reporting consistency. Remote NT councils, most of which are Aboriginal-led, demonstrated strong cultural foundations even where formal RAP structures may not be fit-for-purpose. NSW councils continued advancing reconciliation commitments through the adoption of RAPs, Aboriginal partnership frameworks and cultural safety strategies informed by the new LGNSW toolkit and coordinated engagement efforts across the state.

Across jurisdictions, councils provided strong examples of transforming their services and governance, ranging from truth-telling and language revitalisation initiatives to culturally safe emergency response models, Caring for Country collaborations, place-based cultural governance structures and co-designed early years programs. ALGA has engaged with the National Reconciliation body to propose more flexible and accessible RAP formats that better reflect the operating context of local governments.

These examples illustrate a clear shift towards local governments becoming culturally capable, accountable and trusted partners in Closing the Gap, supported by sector-wide tools, strengthened

advisory mechanisms and deeper engagement with Aboriginal knowledge, leadership and community priorities.

Priority Reform 3: Examples

Significant progress was made in building culturally capable organisations and embedding reconciliation across council operations.

PR3.1 Access to cultural capability tools and training

- **LGANT** continued to work with NT agencies on culturally grounded service delivery and support for remote councils.
- The **LGNSW Toolkit** provides structured cultural capability guidance for councils, developed with Aboriginal organisations and sector partners.
- **MAV** members expanded cultural safety offerings through workshops, emergency management practice, and early childhood service partnerships.
- **LGA South Australia** Councils adopted the *Ngutungka Toolkit* as a structured resource to strengthen cultural capability and embed Aboriginal perspectives across governance and service delivery.
- **WALGA** launched *Kolbang Yanginy*, a comprehensive reconciliation and partnership resource for WA councils.

PR3.2 Encouraging councils to develop Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs)

- **WALGA** reported over 70 percent of Band 1 councils implementing RAPs or equivalent strategies.
- **MAV** continued work to embed reconciliation within municipal planning and promote CTG priority reforms across councils.
- **LGANT's** members engage through culturally grounded governance arrangements, noting that formal RAP approaches vary in remote regions and may not be fit for purpose for these councils.
- **LGA South Australia** councils incorporated reconciliation and cultural safety commitments into municipal planning processes, supporting more consistent integration of Closing the Gap priorities.
- **LGAT** - The Tasmanian audit confirms that Action Plans—such as RAPs, Aboriginal Commitment Plans and similar frameworks—are key mechanisms councils use to embed cultural safety and align with the National Agreement.
- **NSW** councils are increasingly integrating reconciliation commitments through RAPs and culturally safe governance practices informed by sector resources.

PR3.3 Showcasing councils undertaking culturally safe service initiatives

The reporting period demonstrated a wide range of exemplary practices:

- **NT** councils delivering culturally grounded leadership and service models.
- **LGA South Australia** Truth-telling, naming and cultural heritage initiatives progressed through South Australian cultural centres and community partnerships demonstrated strong examples of culturally safe local practice.
- The **NSW** Collaborate platform provides councils with tools to apply culturally appropriate practices in planning, heritage and community engagement.
- **Victorian** councils expanding cultural safety in emergency management and early years programs, and co-designed family violence prevention initiatives.
- Truth-telling initiatives, cultural signage, artwork, and interpretation materials are widely adopted across **Tasmanian** councils, contributing to a national shift towards culturally grounded local government environments
- **WA** councils driving truth-telling, place naming, cultural heritage protection and community-led land management.

Priority Reform 4: Shared Access to Data and Information

Priority Reform 4 – Shared Access to Data & Information		
Priority Reform Action	Summary of Collective Activity	Status
PR4.1 Capturing learnings from Community Data Project sites	Although councils were not directly involved in national Community Data Project sites, jurisdictions progressed foundational work on data governance and evidence use. The NT advanced analysis to support equitable funding models, Victoria worked on statewide data tools, and Western Australia contributed insights through cultural mapping. South Australian and Tasmanian councils identified opportunities to strengthen cultural data access, while NSW place-based partnerships demonstrated practical data-sharing arrangements between councils, ACCOs and state agencies that align with Priority Reform 4.	Varied engagement across jurisdictions
PR4.2 Advice to councils on data sharing, sovereignty and governance	Jurisdictions strengthened council capability in culturally appropriate data governance, with the NT advancing Aboriginal-led data structures, Victoria preparing for Treaty-related data requirements and Western Australia supporting cultural knowledge protocols. South Australian and Tasmanian councils progressed cultural information management through toolkit adoption and identified sovereignty gaps, while NSW's Closing the Gap Toolkit provided practical guidance that reinforces Aboriginal data sovereignty and supports stronger local data governance.	Progressing

LGANT commenced a major project analysing road funding inequity in the NT, designed to highlight the structural disadvantage faced by remote communities and support stronger advocacy for need-based resourcing. This work will generate learnings relevant to Priority Reform 4 regarding data management, community impact assessment and the importance of local-level evidence. MAV identified the need for improved statewide data capture and is progressing tools to support councils with more consistent and coordinated reporting. WALGA's work in cultural mapping, naming reforms, heritage engagement and truth-telling incorporates significant data governance considerations, particularly around the handling of cultural knowledge. WALGA supported council capability in cultural information management through guidance on naming protocols, heritage data and Traditional Owner agreements. Partnerships such as Cultural Sea Mapping in Augusta Margaret River offer practical models for integrating cultural knowledge and local data governance.

In New South Wales, LGNSW contributed to improved data capability through its role in supporting local government participation in Aboriginal-led, place-based partnerships. Several NSW initiatives, including the [Mara Ngali Partnership](#) in Tamworth, incorporated structured data-sharing arrangements between councils, ACCOs and state agencies. These models demonstrate practical approaches to jointly governed data that support shared decision-making and align closely with the intent of Priority Reform 4. LGNSW's [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) also includes guidance on culturally safe information management, emphasising principles of data sovereignty, consent and appropriate handling of cultural knowledge. The Collaborate

platform further supports councils with tools to apply culturally respectful data practices in planning, heritage and community engagement activities.

Across Australia, LGA associations contributed to improving councils' understanding of data sovereignty and the responsibilities associated with culturally sensitive information. LGANT, through NT CTG governance forums, continued to work within systems that recognise Aboriginal ownership and control of community data. MAV strengthened relationships with ACCOs and Treaty institutions that will shape future data-sharing and governance arrangements. WALGA supported councils navigating cultural authority, naming guidelines and knowledge-sharing agreements with Traditional Owners. LGNSW reinforced these developments by promoting consistent messaging on Aboriginal data sovereignty and providing resources that guide councils in applying culturally safe governance to local data processes.

Collectively, these actions position local governments to participate more effectively in future national work on data access, community-controlled decision-making and evidence-based service planning under Priority Reform 4.

Priority Reform 4: Examples

PR4.1 Capturing learnings from Community Data Project sites

While no jurisdiction reported direct participation in the six national Community Data Project sites, each contributed to data-focused initiatives aligned with the intent of PR4:

- **LGANT** commenced a major data project examining road funding equity and socio-economic disadvantage in remote communities.
- **LGNSW** Several NSW place-based partnerships incorporate structured, transparent data-sharing between councils, ACCOs and state agencies.
- **MAV** continued building foundations for coordinated council reporting and data capture.
- **WALGA** supported data-governance related work through place naming, cultural mapping and heritage processes.
- **LGA South Australia** Cultural projects such as names recovery and interpretive design in South Australian councils generated practical learnings for culturally appropriate handling of community knowledge.

PR4.2 Supporting councils with data governance and sovereignty

- The **LGNSW Toolkit** includes guidance on culturally safe information management, emphasising Aboriginal data sovereignty and responsible handling of cultural knowledge.
- **LGA South Australia** Engagement with [SAACCON](#) and cultural centre partners strengthened council understanding of emerging expectations for cultural data governance and Aboriginal data sovereignty.
- **LGANT** engaged through NT CTG governance structures that emphasise Aboriginal data sovereignty in remote communities.
- **MAV's** work with ACCOs and state agencies will guide councils to align with emerging Aboriginal data frameworks.
- **WALGA** engaged in cultural data management through heritage and naming reforms, supporting councils to navigate data sovereignty principles.

Overall

The 2024–25 reporting period demonstrates steady and meaningful progress across all Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Local governments and their state and territory associations continued to deepen their partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, strengthen cultural capability and expand the role of community-controlled organisations in local service systems. The sector's collective efforts show a maturing of shared decision-making structures, improvements in culturally informed service delivery and a growing evidence base to support the development of nationally consistent partnership principles.

Significant advancements occurred across multiple jurisdictions. The Queensland [Indigenous Council Leaders Accord](#) remains a standout national achievement, establishing a formalised governance structure that embeds community-led priority setting and direct engagement with State leadership. In New South Wales, LGNSW strengthened local government participation in shared governance through the NSW [Partnership Agreement](#) and the Transformation Sector Committee, while councils contributed strongly to Aboriginal-led place-based partnerships such as [Mara Ngali](#), [Ngaliya](#) and the Orange Aboriginal Place-Based Plan. NSW also made system-wide improvements through the co-designed [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#) for Local Government, the Local Government Aboriginal Network and the First Nations Procurement Scheme, which collectively enhance cultural capability, governance maturity and Aboriginal economic participation across the state.

Strong contributions were also evident in the Northern Territory through culturally grounded governance in remote councils, in Victoria through enhanced engagement with Treaty institutions and ACCOs, and in Western Australia through truth-telling, naming, heritage and land-care initiatives supported by comprehensive cultural capability tools. South Australia made important progress during the reporting period. LGA South Australia promoted alignment between council planning and the Closing the Gap framework, maintained representation on the State's Closing the Gap Partnership Committee and initiated new collaboration with the South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network. South Australian councils also advanced cultural infrastructure and place-based partnerships, contributing strong examples of culturally safe planning, service delivery and truth-telling.

Despite this progress, several national challenges remain. Reporting and monitoring practices vary considerably between jurisdictions, limiting the ability to assess national performance consistently. Engagement under Priority Reform 4 continues to lag, with gaps in data governance, data sovereignty frameworks and alignment with the Community Data Project sites. Reconciliation Action Plan implementation continues to expand but requires further funding and support to ensure practical and culturally grounded arrangements are available to councils in all locations, including those where formal RAP structures may not be fit for purpose. These challenges were also reflected in NSW, where strong local practice within place-based partnerships exists but broader system integration and data access remain developing areas.

Overall, the sector's performance indicates strong and growing commitment to the National Agreement. Continued investment in local capability, clearer national guidance and improved coordination will be essential to lift performance in areas where progress remains uneven. With strengthened systems, deeper partnerships and sustained collaboration across all levels of government, local governments are well positioned to contribute to long-term, community-led outcomes and support the intent of the Priority Reforms into future reporting cycles.

Summary and Next Steps

The next reporting period provides an opportunity to consolidate gains made across the sector and to focus collective effort.

A key priority will be supporting state and territory associations to promote principles for shared decision-making. Improving organisational capability across local government will remain essential, particularly in cultural safety, reconciliation practice, governance and engagement with ACCOs. The emergence of new tools and resources such as LGNSW's [Closing the Gap Toolkit](#), WALGA's [Kolbang Yanginy](#) resources and the [Ngutungka Toolkit](#) in South Australia provided strong foundations for any future work.

ALGA can play a leading role in coordinating this knowledge, highlighting high-impact practices and encouraging councils across Australia to draw from the growing national evidence base.

Going forward, ALGA will continue to support state and territory associations on implementation as they develop their strategic planning, organisational culture and community partnerships.

By building on the progress achieved this year and strengthening cross-jurisdictional alignment, the sector is well positioned to deepen its contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community outcomes and to uphold the intent of the National Agreement in the years ahead.

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Case studies

Over the reporting period, many individual local governments have taken practical steps to advance outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, strengthen reconciliation, and embed the broader principles of Closing the Gap in their operations and community engagement. These efforts reflect the ongoing commitment of councils to contribute meaningfully to local partnerships, cultural safety, service improvement and place-based responses.

Through our state and territory local government associations, ALGA has collected a series of case studies that illustrate this work. The following examples highlight the diversity of approaches being implemented across the sector and demonstrate how councils are supporting the Priority Reforms and the objectives of the National Agreement within their local contexts.

1. Emergency Management Yarra Ranges Councils - VIC

Yarra Ranges Council has partnered with their local First Nations community to deliver a cultural burning program [Planned Burns Program Yarra Ranges Council](#) and [Cultural burn back to Spadonis Reserve to revitalise species | Ranges Trader Star Mail](#).

2. Emergency Management Darebin City Council - VIC

Darebin City Council have been working safe in collaboration with North West Metro Emergency Management Collaboration Group and the Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group to increase awareness about cultural safety at Emergency Relief Centres with the aim to ensure their emergency relief centres are culturally safe for First Peoples.

3. Melton City Council and Djirra Partnership - VIC

Melton City Council has deepened its partnership with *Djirra*, a statewide Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation that celebrates culture and provides practical support to Aboriginal women, particularly those who are currently experiencing or have previously experienced family violence.

Following a site visit to *Djirra*'s Melton office, Council staff engaged in discussions around the needs and barriers to effective primary prevention work in Melbourne's west. This collaboration led to the development and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), through which Melton City Council committed funding and support to enhance *Djirra*'s delivery of culturally safe and trauma-informed primary prevention programs in the region.

Programs supported under this agreement include *Koori Women's Place*, *Sister's Day Out*, and *Young Luv*, initiatives that promote healing, connection, and education around healthy relationships and family violence prevention. The MOU ensures that *Djirra* retains autonomy over how and when the funds are used, reinforcing a strengths-based, community-led approach.

As part of the strengthened relationship, Melton City Council staff were also invited to participate in *Djirra*'s *Yarnin About Cultural Safety* workshop. This session, facilitated by *Djirra* staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders who are women from across Victoria, provided a powerful opportunity for learning, reflection, and cultural exchange.

4. City of Greater Geelong MCH - VIC

The City of Greater Geelong has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Service Agreement in place with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative, reflecting a strong and collaborative partnership. The

MOU facilitates mutual information sharing and support—Council contributes by sharing procedures and responding to operational queries, while Wathaurong provides invaluable cultural knowledge and guidance.

As part of this partnership, Council also offers leave relief for Wathaurong's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) nurses when requested. Additionally, both organisations actively participate in Best Start meetings, working together to improve outcomes for children and families in the region.

5. Brimbank City Council Maternal and Child Health First Nations Families Portfolio - VIC

Brimbank City Council Maternal and Child Health (MCH) unit has made significant progress in strengthening engagement with First Nations children and families. A key part of this work has been the creation of a dedicated First Nations Families Portfolio within the MCH Outreach team, alongside new processes to identify and monitor attendance at Key Age and Stage (KAS) visits for Brimbank's 137 First Nations families.

This focused and culturally responsive approach has enabled the team to provide more flexible support, ensure timely follow-ups, and help families reengage with the service when appointments are missed. The result has been instrumental in driving a strong increase in participation and early intervention outcomes.

Attendance at KAS appointments by First Nations children have risen from 50–60% in 2024 to a high of 82% in 2025. Additionally, these strategies have supported an increase in relevant Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) measures, with 77% participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children captured in 2023-24, increasing to 95% in 2024-25.

6. Brimbank and Maribyrnong City Councils Welcome Baby to Wurundjeri Country - VIC

The Welcome Baby to Wurundjeri Country project has been delivered in partnership with Brimbank and Maribyrnong Councils, Aboriginal organisations and Elders and provides a meaningful and culturally significant initiative that celebrates and acknowledges the birth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The ceremony welcomed 43 First Nations babies and their families to Wurundjeri Country, providing an opportunity to strengthen their connection to culture, community, and Country. Beyond the celebration itself, the program has created stronger relationships between families, Elders, and Council services, improving engagement with Early Years programs and helping ensure children have the best start in life.

This project represents the first collaboration between two metropolitan councils and First Nations organisations to deliver a Welcome Baby to Country ceremony and demonstrates a shift from conventional practice to a culturally responsive, co-designed model that prioritises community voices and long-term trust-building. It has already delivered measurable health, wellbeing, and cultural benefits for families and will continue through ongoing Possum Skin sessions.

7. Banyule City Council - VIC

Banyule City Council has implemented Aboriginal employment initiatives, including cadetship-style opportunities across various Council departments. These roles aim to provide meaningful employment, training, and cultural development pathways for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, aligning with the Council's broader commitment to reconciliation, self-determination and inclusive workforce practices. In partnership with AFL SportsReady, a nationally recognised program that supports organisations to offer traineeships and education to First Nations young people ensuring culturally sensitive and appropriate programs, Banyule Council offers three trainees employment opportunities each year.

In addition, Banyule City Council's established [Inclusive Employment Program](#) is designed to support residents facing barriers to employment. The program offers six-month paid roles tailored to individuals' interests, strengths, and goals, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples identified as one of the key priority groups.

8. City of Kwinana's *Boola Maara* Consultative Committee - WA

One of the first Aboriginal consultative committees of its kind in WA is the *Boola Maara* (Many Hands) Aboriginal Consultative Committee (BMACC) in the Perth suburb of Kwinana, with a dedicated approach to making sure Aboriginal voices are truly heard and valued within the local government structure.

The BMACC comprises a minimum of six and a maximum of 11 people, made up of five Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Elders, four Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander leaders and two City of Kwinana elected members.

The BMACC meetings, held in the City of Kwinana's Council Chambers, continue to empower the Committee by offering a robust platform for sharing their perspectives. These meetings feature updates on local initiatives and provide reports for the BMACC's input before they are presented to Council.

9. City of Wanneroo's *Ni Kadadjiny Koort* Advisory Group (Listening, thinking and learning from the heart) -WA

As one of Western Australia's largest and fastest-growing local governments, the City of Wanneroo is proud to walk together with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the journey of reconciliation. At the heart of this commitment is *Ni Kadadjiny Koort*, the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, meaning *Listening, Thinking and Learning from the Heart*.

The group brings together up to 13 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, Council Members, City staff and partner organisations to guide culturally meaningful initiatives. Their work has contributed to a range of initiatives including the Noongar naming of *Dordaak Kepup*, the City's new library and youth innovation hub – a collaboration recognised with an Honourable Mention at the 2025 National Awards for Local Government.

10. Shire of York, Traditional Aboriginal Mosaic Burning Program - WA

The Shire of York used a grant awarded by the National Disaster Risk Reduction 2022–23 Competitive Grant Program, administered by the State Emergency Management Committee, to deliver a Traditional Aboriginal Mosaic Burning Program on Ballardong Country within the Shire. By incorporating mosaic burning into the Shire's vegetation management and bushfire mitigation strategies, Aboriginal cultural heritage is respected and revived, setting a new standard in sustainable land management.

11. Shire of Augusta Margaret River- WA

In the past 18 months, the Shire of Augusta Margaret River has initiated a new partnership with Nala Boodja Eco Clan Aboriginal Corporation, establishing monthly meetings to support ongoing dialogue and collaboration.

Alongside this, the Shire has continued to strengthen its long-standing relationship with Undalup Association through a number of shared initiatives. These include the co-development of cultural naming for the Shire's holiday parks, [Yiradjinda • Under the Stars](#) and a partnership with Undalup Association, the University of Western Australia, and Parks Australia to develop Cultural Sea Mapping signage, which will soon be installed to inform the public about the cultural and environmental significance of Saltwater Country.

12. City of Stirling, Innovate RAP - WA

The City of Stirling is currently developing their fourth Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan for 2026-2028. The City has made big strides since it commenced its first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2014. One significant initiative has been the establishment of *the Ngalang Maya Wangkiny* (Talking Our Place) group; an engagement approach to *wangkiny* (talking) about the local stories of the *koora* (past), *yeyi* (present) and *boordawan* (future). This group, consisting of Nyoongar knowledge holders, was formed to preserve local cultural knowledge, provide cultural input on City projects, and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader community.

Other highlights include the expansion of the City's art, library and history collections, delivery of an annual NAIDOC event (one of the largest in WA) and installation of yarning circle at the City's Civic Administration Building as a physical acknowledgment of country for all visitors to the building. The latest Reconciliation Action Plan has been informed by *Dandjoo Wangkiny* (Together Talking), an extensive community engagement process undertaken in 2024 that identified key themes and priorities to guide the direction of the new RAP.

13. Galup, Town of Cambridge - WA

The restoration of a *Whadjuk Noongar* name *Galup* to a prominent inner-city lake and reserve within the Town of Cambridge, is an excellent example. The official naming process followed extensive community engagement and has provided a foundation for ongoing truth-telling and reconciliation initiatives of Statewide significance.

14. Place Names Maali, City of Swan - WA

Place Names Maali is a Noongar language, knowledge and placenames project delivered in partnership with Landgate, the City of Swan, Moodjar, Noongar Elders and Traditional Owners. This project was designed to decode and verify Noongar place names within the City of Swan to be displayed on an interactive digital map.

Through a series of four decoding workshops, the decoding group, *Maali miy* (the Voice of Swan) were able to uncover and decode 18 Noongar place names in the local area. *Maali miy* consisted of Noongar Elders, local Traditional Owners and members of the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation Cultural Advice Committee. The decoding process included robust conversation on the selected Noongar place names to capture the stories, translations and pronunciations of these places.

15. City of Melville, Place Names Melville - WA

City of Melville's *Place Names Melville* has uncovered and unpacked the original meanings of Noongar place names in the City of Melville, and harnessed contemporary art forms to celebrate Noongar language, heritage, and culture.

The project involved a project team of more than 16 people, engaging with more than 40 Aboriginal participants and 30 students from Brentwood Primary School. With a process that honours and celebrates the knowledge of Elders and a commitment to sharing the use and meaning of Noongar place names with the broader community, Place Names Melville has contributed to a national movement of truth telling, healing and reconciliation.

16. Yitpi Yartapuultiku – Port Adelaide Enfield - SA

Opened in May 2025, this \$35 million Aboriginal cultural centre was co-designed with Kurna Elders. It serves as a hub for cultural education, exhibitions, language programs, guided trails and Aboriginal-led tourism and retail. It represents one of the most significant cultural infrastructure investments by a South Australian council.

17. Ngutungka West Lakes Cultural Centre – City of Charles Sturt - SA

Opened in 2023 and developed in partnership with Kaurna Elders, the centre operates as a learning and cultural hub supporting Aboriginal education programs, community services and cultural events. The facility has established itself as a focal point for community engagement and cultural visibility in Adelaide's west.

18. Southern Adelaide Early Years Initiative - SA

This place-based partnership brings together councils, ACCOs and health services to improve early childhood outcomes through culturally safe maternal health, early learning and family support. The initiative reflects a coordinated and strengths-based model that aligns closely with Priority Reform 3 and supports early years Closing the Gap targets.

19. Tarrkarri – Centre for First Nations Cultures (planned) - SA

Planned for Lot Fourteen in Adelaide, *Tarrkarri* is expected to become a major centre for First Nations cultural tourism, storytelling and knowledge-sharing. The project remains under review, but its vision reflects South Australia's long-term commitment to cultural leadership and reconciliation.

20. Mara Ngali Partnership (Tamworth Regional Council) - NSW

A [pioneering Aboriginal-led partnership](#) embedding shared decision-making, cultural safety and transparent data-sharing between council, ACCOs and state agencies.

21. Ngaliya Partnership (Greater Western Sydney) - NSW

A [formalised partnership](#) involving 11 Aboriginal organisations and multiple councils to address health, housing, education and employment priorities.

22. Orange Aboriginal Place-Based Plan 2024–2034 - NSW

A long-term, Aboriginal-designed strategy governed by local ACCOs, with active council participation in planning and implementation.

23. Yarpa Hub / Campbelltown City Council Procurement Initiative - NSW

A collaborative partnership strengthening procurement pathways and contracting opportunities for Aboriginal businesses.

24. Embedding Local Government in Statutory Closing the Gap Governance

LGANT is embedding local government directly within statutory Closing the Gap decision-making through its membership of both the NT Closing the Gap Partnership and the NT Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs, ensuring councils are active contributors to policy development, monitoring and reform rather than participants in ad hoc consultation. Through this role, LGANT ensures that remote and regional council perspectives inform whole-of-government decisions affecting Aboriginal communities, consistent with the shared decision-making intent of the National Agreement.

25. Aboriginal-Led Democratic Representation in NT Local Government

LGANT is supporting a local government system in which nearly 60 percent of elected members identify as Aboriginal, the highest proportion nationally, reflecting the demographic and governance context of the Northern Territory. LGANT works with councils operating under culturally grounded governance

arrangements that prioritise community authority and local legitimacy, demonstrating that Aboriginal leadership is central to democratic local government in remote and regional Australia.

26. Place-Based Workforce Development and Justice Reintegration in Barkly and Central Desert

LGANT is supporting councils in regions such as Barkly and Central Desert to deliver place-based partnerships focused on employment pathways, workforce development and justice reintegration, aligning local government service delivery with community-defined priorities. Through this work, LGANT is reinforcing the role of councils as critical integrators in remote settings, addressing workforce shortages and social outcomes in environments where private markets are thin and state service presence is limited.

27. Improving Aboriginal Economic Participation Through Local Buy's Supplier Intelligence

LGANT has supported the rollout of Local Buy's Supplier Intelligence tools across Northern Territory councils, improving the visibility and identification of Aboriginal-owned suppliers through real-time data and supplier badges. This system-level procurement reform is reducing structural barriers to Aboriginal business participation, strengthening councils' procurement capability and supporting Aboriginal enterprises, particularly in remote and regional communities.

28. Groote Archipelago Regional Council - Aboriginal-Led Regional Councils as a Governance Model

LGANT is promoting the Groote Archipelago Regional Council as a leading example of Aboriginal-led local government, demonstrating how regional councils can operate as culturally legitimate, community-controlled institutions while delivering statutory local government functions. By elevating this model, LGANT is contributing practical evidence of Aboriginal self-determination embedded within local governance and informing national discussions on partnership principles and governance reform.

29. Data-Led Advocacy for Equitable Infrastructure Funding

LGANT has commenced a major data project examining road funding inequity in the Northern Territory to evidence the structural disadvantage faced by remote and Aboriginal-led councils. This work is strengthening place-based advocacy, supporting equitable funding reform and contributing to Priority Reform 4 by demonstrating how robust, locally grounded data can underpin shared decision-making and improved outcomes for Aboriginal communities.