

# **Communique – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy Partnership Meeting**

**4, 5 March 2025**

The ninth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy Partnership (LPP) meeting was held in Canberra on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of March.

The meeting was opened with a warm Welcome to Country by Dr Caroline Hughes AM. The group received a presentation from staff from the National Library of Australia (NLA) on their work to understand, enhance, and make the collections accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The LPP Co-Chairs provided administrative updates, including reports from the LPP Language Funding Priorities Working Group, and First Languages Australia's Languages Sector Strengthening Plan (LSSP) Working Group. Members then considered and approved the draft LPP 2023 Annual Work Plan. The Work Plan is an internal guiding document to ensure the LPP continues to be strategic and targeted in its work. The LPP endorsed the LPP meeting eight minutes.

The group then focused on data development - a key theme for the LPP in 2025. Members participated in a workshop to continue to develop a data policy position on Target 16, including considering indicators and definitions of what 'strong, supported, and flourishing' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages might mean. Forming a position to determine and measure commitment and progress against Target 16 is crucial to ensuring that the right approach is taken across the country to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their language work.

The LPP then met with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Leonard Hill, and Executive Director of Research and Education, John Gibbs. The exchange focused on collaboration and alignment for the upcoming Fourth National Indigenous Languages Survey (NILS), set to be undertaken in late 2025.

In the afternoon the group received a brief update on upcoming plans for the LPP Evaluation.

On day two, the jurisdiction representatives provided progress and planning reports to the group with reference to the LPP priorities, recommendations to the Joint Council, and other relevant work within their scope. Representatives discussed the challenges and the developing opportunities for jurisdiction representatives to provide whole-of-government representation as participating members of the partnership, and to ensure that the priority reforms are being harnessed and exercised to their full potential. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives then provided updates on language work happening within their remit, networks, and respective communities.

After lunch the group considered the LPP Communications and Engagement Strategy, reinforcing its purpose. The group will seek to achieve endorsement for the Strategy out-of-session. In the afternoon the group engaged in a strategic discussion on the current environment and the influencing role of the LPP to ensure progress and the success of Target 16.

The group then wrapped up LPP meeting nine. The tenth LPP meeting is scheduled for 21 and 22 May 2025, Darwin.

## Meeting attendee list

**Apologies:** Karina Lester, Mobile Language Unit, Karen Paterson, First Nations Media Australia (day two), Bronwyn Milera, SA Department for Education

<b>Coalition of Peaks representatives</b>	
Vicki Couzens	Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
Karen Paterson (day one)	First Nations Media
Daisy Allen on behalf of Heather Sculthorpe	Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre
Beau Williams	First Languages Australia (Co-Chair)
<b>Independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives</b>	
Patsy Ngalu Bedford	Independent
Daryn McKenny	Independent
Leitha Assan	Independent
Samantha Armstrong	Independent
Gulwanyang Moran	Independent
<b>Government representatives</b>	
Shelagh Magadza, on behalf of Erin Gauntlett	Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries, Western Australian Government
Clare McHugh	Aboriginal Languages Trust, New South Wales Government
Denise Andrews, on behalf of Kathrin Jensen	Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism Queensland Government
Angela Singh (day one) Tom Cazaly (proxy for day two)	Department of Education, Victorian Government
Caroline Spotswood, on behalf of Jodee Wilson	Department for Education, Children and Young People, Tasmanian Government
Beverley White, on behalf of Bronwyn Milera	Department for Education, South Australian Government
Brendan Moyle	Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, ACT Government
Stephen Arnott	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication, and the Arts, Commonwealth Government (Co-Chair)
Camille Lew Fatt, on behalf of Dorelle Anderson	Central Australia and Territory Regional Growth Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet