

14 June 2024



First Nations Steering Committee and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council direct focus of Rapid Prevention Review

Following an alarming increase in the number of women being murdered, a Rapid Review was announced on 28 May as an outcome of National Cabinet, to urgently consider additional or emerging approaches to preventing domestic, family and sexual violence.

This Review was established as a short-term boost, designed as an adjunct to support longer term processes already in place, including the First Nations National Plan Steering Committee (Steering Committee) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan Advisory Council (Advisory Council), amongst other foundational mechanisms.

In June 2024 a Round Table will be conducted as part of the Rapid Review, jointly led with Professor Muriel Bamblett, Co-chair of the Steering Committee and Professor Sandra Creamer, Chair of the Advisory Council.

The Rapid Review is co-convened by Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner Ms Micaela Cronin, the Executive Director of the Commonwealth Office for Women, Ms Padma Raman, and the Secretary of the Department of Social Services, Mr Ray Griggs AO CSS. It will provide practical advice to Government, with a particular focus on preventing more women from dying. Critically, the Panel is also considering opportunities to engage men, acknowledging that family, domestic and sexual violence is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men, against women.

The review is designed to build on and be guided by the considerable work underway under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (*National Plan*), the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Action Plan 2023-2025 (Action Plan)* and to develop the First Nations National Plan.

This short and sharp review is a targeted process that recognises the pre-eminent role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence, and the First Nations National Plan Steering Committee in achieving the objectives of the National Plan, and Target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

“Leaders across the country have recognised that we need to do better in addressing domestic, family, and sexual violence – and learn from our successes, and our failures. While governments have made significant investment and reforms and much progress has been made, we still have a long way to go,” Ms Cronin said.

“The rates of violence that women experience in this country are unacceptable and are significantly higher for First Nations women. The Rapid Review was established to engage and support a range of foundational mechanisms, including the First Nations Steering Committee and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council, recognising the primacy of these enduring mechanisms that have been established to design and lead solutions for First Nations communities.”

Co-chair of the First Nations National Plan Steering Committee, Professor Muriel Bamblett AO, acknowledged the Rapid Review process as a mechanism for bringing additional expertise to Government policy direction while being guided by longer term and representative bodies such as the Steering Committee.

“The First Nations National Plan Steering Committee was established to provide guidance and advice from the diverse perspectives, views and experience within First Nations communities and -

as part of this work - to lead the development of the First Nations National Plan,” Professor Bamblett said.

This Round Table will be the first in a series to inform the Rapid Review. It will be led with Professor Muriel Bamblett and Professor Sandra Creamer.

Professor Bamblett said, “The purpose of this Round Table is to bring together expertise from organisations working directly in communities to hear about what is working, and where the gaps are, to bring together advice about what more we can be doing to prevent any more murders of women and children.”

Professor Creamer welcomed the engagement with the Rapid Review, stating the need for genuine partnership to ensure the voices of First Nations Women are heard.

“As Chair of the Advisory Council I have travelled across regional and remote Australia, these communities are seeking genuine partnership and engagement. Through the implementation of the dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan we are ensuring their voices guide solutions,” Professor Creamer said.

“The Advisory Council, which has informed policies and measures to end violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, will engage with the Rapid Review to ensure that our voices are represented.”

The Rapid Review will continue to meet weekly, reporting in August 2024.

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual or family violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week or visit www.1800RESPECT.org.au

Feeling worried or no good? No shame, no judgement, safe place to yarn. Speak to a 13YARN Crisis Supporter, call 13 92 76. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are concerned about your behaviour or use of violence, you can contact the Men’s Referral Service on 1300 766 491 or visit www.ntv.org.au.