

COMMUNIQUÉ

2 August 2023

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum (the Forum) held its 19th meeting in Darwin. The forum was chaired by **Mr Rob McPhee**, who welcomed members and observers from the Northern Territory and Australian Governments, Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS), North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT). Mr McPhee, who replaces **Ms Donna Ah Chee as Forum chair**, thanked Ms Ah Chee for her contribution and hard work during her tenure and her continued support as a Forum member.

Larrakia woman **Ms Jeanneen McLennan** delivered the **Welcome to Country**, and thanked members for uniting to drive better outcomes for Territory children and families.

As the outgoing chair of the **Generational Strategy Steering Group**, Mr McPhee presented an updated version of the first action plan (AP1) for implementation of the 10 Year Generational Strategy for Children and Families in the Northern Territory. The Forum endorsed changes to action leads and parties to better reflect the role of relevant agencies and organisations and noted the development of working groups to drive implementation of the 15 actions and AP1. The Forum endorsed the Communications Plan, endorsed the development of a partnership agreement to guide implementation of the Generational Strategy action plans, and endorsed Ms Ah Chee to replace Mr McPhee as Generational Strategy Steering Group (GSSG) Chair.

The **Central Australia Regional Controller Ms Dorrelle Anderson** shared powerful insights gained from communities through consultation visits in Central Australia. She highlighted the need for partnerships, recognising and hearing the voices of the bush and the need to engage with communities who are keen to do things differently to achieve better outcomes and move towards a better economic future. She highlighted the urgent need for local solutions to address challenges faced by communities. The Forum thanked Ms Anderson for her presentation and insight.

Australian Government Minister the **Hon Dr Anne Aly MP** and Northern Territory Government Minister the **Hon Lauren Moss MLA** joined the Forum via videoconference. The Ministers thanked the Forum on the work to date around the Generational Strategy and First Action Plan, noting the importance of continuing the collaborative efforts across governments and the non-government and Aboriginal Community Controlled sectors to successfully drive implementation. The Ministers outlined priorities for their governments in the areas of youth, domestic and family violence, early childhood and workforce development and growth.

The Forum's afternoon session involved closer examination of **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)** and **School Attendance**. The "deep dives" involved contributions from both Australian and NT Government agencies and provided members with an overview of ECEC delivery in the NT and associated key reforms occurring at the national and Territory levels and NT school enrolment trends by region and demographics. Members discussed the challenges around ensuring Territory kids access ECEC and schooling, opportunities to better collaborate policy across both levels of government and linked actions under the **Generational Strategy** to drive change.

During the quarterly review of key outcome indicators for children and young people, the Forum discussed the need for improved transparency, data sharing agreements and gaining a better understanding of broader annual data sets and determined it was time to revisit the data sets requested.

Members agreed it was time to conduct a one-day strategic directions workshop to guide the priority focus areas for the Forum.