



Northern Territory Aboriginal Advisory Board on Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

COMMUNIQUÉ

The Northern Territory Aboriginal Advisory Board (the Board) on Domestic Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) held its inaugural meeting in Darwin on the 3rd of May 2023. The Welcome to Country was provided by Dr Christine Fejo-King, Elder in Residence, Territory Families, Housing and Communities.

The nine-member Board brings together representatives from across the Territory to provide advice and information to the Minister for the Prevention of DFSV, the Hon. Kate Worden, MLA in relation to improving the prevention of and response to DFSV as it impacts upon Aboriginal people, communities and services. Board members travelled from Central Australia, Katherine, Galiwinku and Ngukurr to attend the meeting and bring together their experience and knowledge.

Minister Worden was part of the welcome and introductions with the Board and acknowledged DFSV as the most significant issue in the NT. DFSV is connected to many of the social issues witnessed in the NT right now. Minister Worden encouraged the Board to provide frank advice, emphasising the importance of their voice, which is valuable to prevent and respond to DFSV for Aboriginal people.

The Board members committed to representing Aboriginal men, women, young people and remote communities as part of their work. The Board discussed inviting additional youth representatives to be part of future discussions so as to build on the representation of young Aboriginal people in DFSV reforms and mentor future leaders and Board members.

The Board discussed the need for Aboriginal representation in all areas of the DFSV system including: policy, funding, planning, services, workforce and grass roots community solutions. DFSV is a big issue and the Board aims to identify priority areas, in particular prevention. Healing and trauma work with victim survivors and people who commit DFSV was also identified as a priority.

The Board identified truth telling, peace keeping and kinship ways of working with families as important Aboriginal ways of responding to DFSV that have value and a place in preventing and responding to DFSV. The knowledge and evidence base about Aboriginal ways of responding to DFSV must be developed and given equal value to measures in mainstream services.

The Board viewed the Ngukurr Family Violence Prevention Video and strongly support its promotion in broader NT community as a valuable resource in understanding the many types of violence experienced in remote Aboriginal communities.

The Board acknowledge DFSV is a serious and big issue for Aboriginal people in the NT and that efforts to bring about change will take time; the Board will support the journey.