



ACT|atsieb

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB)

Strategic Plan 2012–2017

Priorities and actions for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT

Acknowledgement of Traditional Aboriginal Custodians

ATSIEB acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal custodians of Canberra and recognises the displacement and disadvantage they have suffered as a result of European contact settlement. We acknowledge and celebrate their ongoing culture and contribution to the ACT and region.

ATSIEB acknowledges its statutory responsibility under *the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008* to consult with and consider the views of the United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC).

ATSIEB also acknowledges that many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from across Australia have now made Canberra their home and we also acknowledge and celebrate their cultures and diversity and their contribution to the ACT and region.

Table of Contents

Foreword from Rod Little Chairperson Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB)	4
Our Vision and Mission	6
Overview of ATSIEB	7
Members and Tenure	7
Functions and Role of ATSIEB	7
The Partnerships	9
2011 Census Snapshot	10
Our Priorities	11
Our Priorities	12
Our Priorities	13
Our Priorities	14



Foreword from Rod Little



Chairperson Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB)

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) Strategic Plan 2012–2013* (the Plan) provides clear direction for ACT Government directorates and agencies at all levels, the community and the private sector to

understand and value the significance of ATSIEB as an effective and legitimate advocate of the needs and priorities of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community here in the ACT.

ATSIEB is entering an exciting and challenging phase with the development of the Plan as it positions itself as a respected and long term partner as it seeks to influence more outcomes from the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement and as a partner in the 'Closing the Gap' agenda of the Council of Australian Governments and, more specifically, partnering with the local structural arrangements for service development and delivery.

The ACT is not only the seat of National Government; it is an 'emporium' for the people of southern New South Wales (NSW). People travel into that emporium to access a variety of public and private services, education, work opportunities, commerce and other facilities. These include hospital treatments, jobs in the Commonwealth public service, restaurants and the airport. Similarly, residents of the ACT travel over the border, though in different numbers, for a different mix of reasons and mostly to destinations further afield.

Many members of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the surrounding region are either employed in the delivery of those services, or are clients for those services.

The goals outlined in this Plan show how ATSIEB will engage with all parties over the next 5 years to ensure that the key priorities identified by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are firmly on the agenda.

ATSIEB cannot deliver these priorities on its own. We must rely on healthy and robust partnerships with like-minded stakeholders and providers such as you in order to secure positive change for our peoples. This Plan focuses on four key priority areas to set the foundations for this positive change to begin:

- communication and engagement
- representation and advocacy
- focused policy and services
- capability and leadership building

I commend this Plan to you on behalf of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



Rod Little



Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision

That all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT are fully engaged in shaping and creating their future wellbeing.

Our Mission

To provide a strong, respected and democratically elected voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in the ACT by:

- Understanding and representing community needs and priorities
- Supporting development of government policy and services that meet community needs and

Advocating for accountability, transparency and effectiveness in achieving social and economic outcomes for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

ATSIEB has been established by the ACT Government as an innovative and even unique model underpinning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community development and self-determination in Canberra. It has potential applicability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

What makes ATSIEB unique is that it is elected by the local community rather than appointed by the government.

Overview of ATSIEB

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) is responsible for representing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living within the ACT. It supports the ACT government to develop policy and provide services that are relevant to the needs of people within the community as well as advocating for accountability, transparency and effectiveness.

ATSIEB has obligations under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008* to investigate the development and delivery of ACT Government policies and programs in order to best recommend policy direction on all matters affecting the wellbeing of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the ACT.

Members and Tenure

ATSIEB consists of seven people who are elected every three years to represent the interests and requests of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Each member holds office on a part time basis.

Functions and Role of ATSIEB:

ATSIEB has the following functions:

- to receive, and pass on to the Minister, the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT on issues of concern to them;
- to represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT and to act as an advocate for their interests;
- to foster community discussion about:
 - issues of concern to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT; and
 - the functions of ATSIEB



- to conduct regular forums for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT and report the outcomes of those forums to the Minister;
- to conduct research and community consultation to assist ATSIEB in the exercise of its functions;
- to propose programs and design services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT for consideration by the government and its agencies;
- to monitor and report on the effectiveness of programs conducted by government agencies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT;
- to monitor and report on the accessibility by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT to programs and services conducted by government agencies for the general public;
- when asked by the Minister, to give the Minister information or advice about any matter stated by the Minister;
- when asked by a government agency or another person, and in consultation with UNEC, to recommend any reasonable action it considers necessary to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural material or information considered sacred or significant by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT;
- any other function given to ATSIEB by the Minister;
- any other function given to ATSIEB under this Act or another territory law.

Other functions are outlined in the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008*.

The Partnerships





2011 Census Snapshot

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population – ACT

	2011	2006	Change
Total Indigenous population	5,183	3,872	33.9%
Aboriginal only	4,858	3,602	34.9%
Torres Strait Islander only	188	165	13.9%
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (a)	137	105	30.5%
Median age	22	21	+1 year
Percentage of males 34 years and under	72.0%	72.6%	-.6%
Percentage of females 34 years and under	69.2%	69.9%	-.7%
Median income – personal (weekly)	642	510	25.9%
Median income – household (weekly)	1,666	1,221	36.4%
Dwellings owned outright	215	160	34.4%
Dwellings owned with a mortgage	807	597	35.2%
Dwellings rented	1,357	1,010	34.4%
Median weekly household rent	305	200	52.5%
Median monthly household mortgage repayments	2,167	1,500	44.5%
Average people per household	3.2	3.0	+-.1 person
Number of people per bedroom	1.2	1.1	+1 persons
Persons who have completed year 12 or equivalent	1,495	1,004	48.9%
Attending university or other tertiary institution	295	161	83.2%
Full time students	1,583	1,252	26.4%
Part time students	398	251	58.6%

There is a significant and growing ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. In 2011 there were approximately 5,183 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT. This is about 1 per cent of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia and is 1.5 per cent of the total population in the ACT.

Our Priorities

Priority 1

Communication and Engagement

- 1.1 Effective engagement with all members of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- 1.2 Effective engagement with all ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations
- 1.3 Effective engagement with representatives of the ACT Government and the ACT Legislative Assembly
- 1.4 Develop protocols for engagement with like-minded stakeholders
- 1.5 Communicate what ATSIEB is doing and achieving through forums, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander publications, the media and web site

Priorities for 2012–2013

- Conduct two community forums
- Conduct two roundtable meetings with all ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations
- Develop protocols for engagement with like-minded stakeholders
- Develop an ATSIEB Strategic Plan and Framework



Our Priorities

Priority 2

Representation and Advocacy

- 2.1 Capture and progress the priorities of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- 2.2 Advise Ministers and ACT Legislative Assembly members on progress and issues
- 2.3 Advise on representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT on consultative bodies established by government agencies

Priorities for 2012–2013

- Capture the priorities of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through the development of the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Priorities Plan 2012–2017*
- Progress those priorities to the ACT Government
- Seek a commitment from the ACT Government and stakeholders to deliver those priorities

Our Priorities

Priority 3

Focused Policy and Services

- 3.1** Focus policy and services under the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement and the Council of Australian Governments:
- Health
 - Schooling
 - Safe Communities
 - Governance and leadership
 - Economic participation
 - Healthy homes
 - Early childhood
- 3.2** Monitor and improve accessibility, accountability and effectiveness of programs and services through the annual estimates style hearing
- 3.3** Focus all ACT Government directorates and agencies and the community and the private sectors at all levels, on the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Priorities Plan 2012–2017*

Priority for 2012–2013

- Streamline portfolio responsibilities for ATSIEB members to align with ACT Government Directorates
- Conduct hearings with all ACT Government Directorates and agencies



Our Priorities

Priority 4

Capability and Leadership Building

- 4.1 Enhance the skills, knowledge and development of ATSIEB members in communication, advocacy and government processes
- 4.2 Develop and sustain a fully functional secretariat with the essential systems and capacity to support ATSIEB in advancing its work program and fostering key partnerships
- 4.3 Work with all ACT Government directorates and agencies and the community and the private sectors at all levels, to enhance service delivery capacities

Priority for 2012–2013

- Enhance the skills, knowledge and development of ATSIEB members in communication, advocacy and government processes
- Lobby the ACT Government for the annual ATSIEB Hearings to be held with ACT Government Ministers

For more information

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ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Priorities 2012–2017

Website: www.atsieb.com.au (refer to Publications)

ATSIEB Strategic Framework (2012–2017)

Website: www.atsieb.com.au (refer to Publications)

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement 2010–2013

Website: [http://www.justice.act.gov.au/resources/attachments/
Agreement_ATSIJusticeAgreement_LPB_2010.pdf](http://www.justice.act.gov.au/resources/attachments/Agreement_ATSIJusticeAgreement_LPB_2010.pdf)



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