

QUEENSLAND INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FORUM

Strength in Unity



**FORUM
REPORT 2024**

Funded by



The Forum

The Forum is hosted by the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research and is shaped by its cultural Advisory Group.

The purpose of the Forum

The purpose of the Forum is to provide an opportunity for services and organisations supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence to share knowledge and best practice, and support improved service delivery.

The Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum aims to:

- highlight and celebrate the good work that is being done by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to end domestic and family violence;
- support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share information and gain new knowledge about strategies and programs that could be used effectively by others;
- promote opportunities for networking between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the field of domestic and family violence prevention and to
- provide Forum delegates with tangible materials to support frontline work, that may be shared with colleagues back in their communities.

The intended outcomes of the Forum, as developed with valued Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisors, have remained consistent, aligning with those of the Queensland Government. These include:

- enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share information and gain new knowledge about strategies and programs that enhance practice;
- introducing innovative approaches, based on research and practice evidence, to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence and
- promoting opportunities for peer support between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the field of domestic and family violence prevention and responses.

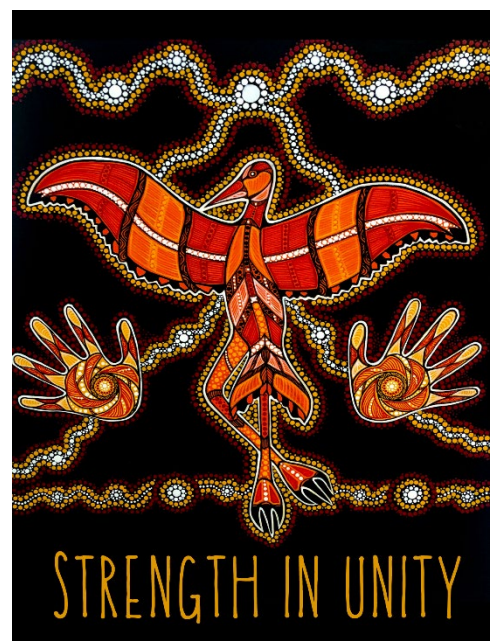
The Forum has adopted the Dancing Crane logo. This was designed by Mr Les Stewart, a longstanding participant of the Forum. He painted the beautiful dancing crane, with the following explanation about what the painting meant to him:

The yellow (the giver of life) surrounds the white, and the yellow is surrounded by the red dots (the blood shed through domestic and family violence in communities).

The little white dots represent the small, weakened spirits that have come through life (yellow). Tears and blood (red) are being shed from violence in our families.

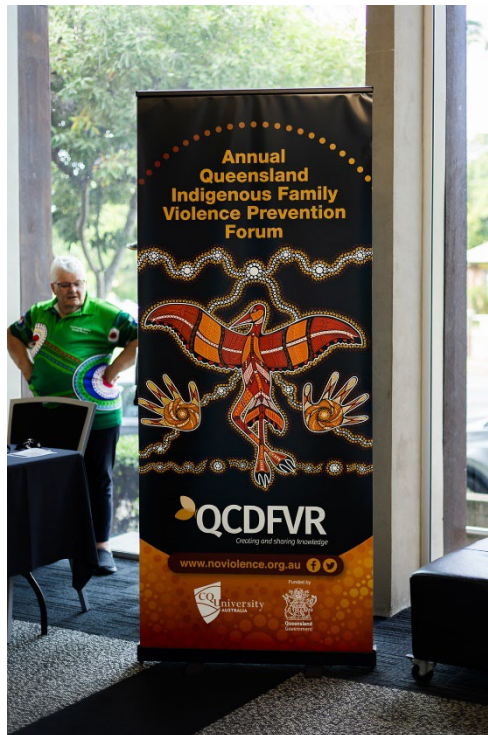
The Dancing Crane creates stronger blood that gives stronger life, and this creates stronger spirits. Like the bird and the design, everything becomes flowing and beautiful. It comes to a peak above with a strong flow – stronger dots over the beautiful bird showing strength. It connects all the strength and power with its widespread wings of hope that we all have for our women, families and community.

It is also still painted on the background of darkness that can overtake if we do not keep adding to the painting to block out the sad and harmful dangers that hide in the shadows. To me this painting represents the first time I attended the Queensland Indigenous



Family Violence Prevention Forum and what it has become, since then. The bird represents the beauty of the Forum, its people and the attendees. The lines are the waves of change, getting stronger as we add to the discussions and services. Under the umbrella of services, we head in one direction together to bring strength and support to our communities that are now providing the safety our women, children and families deserve. This then supports our communities to become as one and beautiful like we want.

The Forum logo had such an impact that it was decided, with the permission of the artist, to keep this as the logo for the event now and into the future. We thank Les for his invaluable contribution to the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum over the years and look forward to continuing to work with Les.



Director's message

It doesn't feel like a year since I last wrote the preface for a Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum Report. Yet here we are again... a month after another successful event, reminiscing about how wonderful it was to convene in our hometown to learn and celebrate... and what a fitting way to acknowledge Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month!

The *Strength in Unity*-themed Forum was indeed aptly named. Throughout the event, it was clear that all were *united* in sharing a commitment to ending domestic and family violence and were empowered by this cohesion.

The event, as always, would not have been possible without the careful and consistent guidance from the Forum Advisory Group. The Group's efforts, along with attention to the feedback from past Forums, enabled us to shape a Forum that resonated with delegates, sharing content of national, state, regional and community relevance.

It is always heartening sight to have 114 participants from across the state, "in the room with us" and a further 31 "in the Zoom with us" (see an overview on page 23 and 24). A diverse program was delivered (see Appendix 1) with many program elements retained from past gatherings, based on the positive evaluations from recent Forums. Consequently, delegates heard from a range of speakers, in different formats, and covering many topics. Most often presentations were structured, but there were small group interactions, including during the session featuring the visual artist (see page 17). Special appreciation goes to the inspiring Jeremy Donovan, who delivered not one, but two sessions at the event. His Keynote Presentation was powerful and personal, and he returned later to share his passion for dot painting as a self-care strategy.

Refreshment breaks provided time for networking and sharing, and for some, quiet reflection. With reference to the informal learning that happens away from the main stage, 2023 saw the introduction of an evening networking event to close the first day of the Forum. Given its popularity, this year's program retained this opportunity to connect with others in a more relaxed setting - you can read more about this on page 22. We are gratified by post Forum emails commenting on how useful this function was to build and maintain valuable network contacts.

The success of the Forum may be considered by how beneficial and useful the participants found the event and on pages 25 and 26 we provide a summary of feedback from delegates. State Government funding contributes to accessibility and success of the Forum, and it is without doubt that, as in other years, the event achieved the goals of this stakeholder, and all who were involved in bringing the event to fruition.

"Thank you" doesn't seem like enough words to convey the gratitude we extend to all who helped in the planning of the event, and all who attended in spirit of collegiality and curiosity. For the team at QCDFVR, it is a profound privilege to share in this experience. In case you're wondering, preliminary planning has commenced for the 2025 event as we look forward to creating another unique time to learn and regenerate. Thank you all and see you next year.



Associate Professor Heather Lovatt, Director
Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

‘Strength in Unity’

The 2024 Forum -14th and 15th May 2024

The 2024 Forum theme, **Strength in Unity**, endorsed by the Forum Advisory Group, emerged from the 2022 theme of **Staying Strong**. Both themes are acknowledgements that each of us has had to be strong in the face of adversity; work together, albeit often remotely; and support ourselves and others as we continued to help those most in need. Through all of this, we keep staying strong – strong in our commitment to end domestic and family violence in our communities.

The 2024 program (see Appendix 1) included formal presentations, and structured and informal yarns, and delegates from across Queensland and beyond were able to grow their knowledge of contemporary opportunities and challenges. This year, once again, there was a focused approach to networking with organisers including more time in the program to catch up with friends old and new. We learned from each other, had the chance to showcase the work we are doing and built our practice networks.

The 2024 Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum was held in Mackay on the 14th and 15th May 2024. Remote engagement was possible via a live Zoom link for the two-day event, and prior to the Forum, online delegates were sent their own collection of resources. As an event committed to authentic engagement, in person attendance was limited, with ultimately 114 participants from around Queensland gathering in Mackay, and 31 delegates joining the Forum virtually. The majority (72%) of attendees identified as Indigenous, and this event continued to see the participation of a healthy proportion of male delegates (21%). We are proud to see this trend continuing, another feature of the Forum of which we are very proud.

In the following pages we have sort to capture the two days of presentations, workshops and networking from the forum.



Day 1

The Forum commenced with a Smoking Ceremony by Uncle Philip Kemp of the Yuwi Aboriginal Corporation as a prelude to his warm Welcome to Country.

Then, Dr Heather Lovatt (Director, QCDFVR CQUniversity) officially opened the event, introducing the Keynote Speaker, Mr Jeremy Donovan, and acknowledging the contribution of the Department of Justice and Attorney General to this event.



Keynote Presentation

Mr Jeremy Donovan

Jeremy is one of Australia's most celebrated keynote speakers and performers, and his exceptional skill with the didgeridoo, and extensive knowledge of his cultural heritage, have earned him the recognition of his peers as a master storyteller and performer.

Jeremy's Keynote Presentation, *Pain, Strength, Health and Happiness*, canvassed a range of themes, wrapped around his life's journey from Mosman Gorge to climbing Mount Everest. He spoke to delegates of the "uncomfortable" truth of unnoticed deaths in our communities, and the "need to call it (family violence) out". Jeremy shared his personal experience of family suicides and noted the relationship between domestic violence and suicide. "Broken as a child, destroyed as a teenager", he found his identity by returning to the country of his ancestors, to rise above his experiences of incarceration and loss.



The power of networking

After refreshments, Heather introduced the Forum MC's, Yonnipin Foan and Robert Mann. Both were members of the 2024 Forum Advisory Group, and between them share years of experience in guiding delegates and presenters through the program.

A constant theme emerging in feedback from past Forums is the importance of creating and sustaining networks, and in 2023 a session was dedicated to introducing, as time efficiently as possible, the range of services represented at the Forum. Yonnipin reprised her role of making guests feel "at home" as she facilitated this "Who's who in the room?" group introduction, which has demonstrated its value in contributing to network building.



Queensland and National Updates

Mr Stephen Tillett and Mr Rayden Quakawoot

First Nations Justice Office and Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence

This presentation was dual-themed, with Stephen Tillett and Rayden Quakawoot speaking about Queensland's First Nations Justice Office and a related topic, *Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence*.

First Nations Justice Officer and leader of the First Nations Justice Office (FNJO) within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Stephen explained that the FNJO was established in early 2023 within the Department in response to recommendation one of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.



The FNJO aims to meet targets 10 and 11 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap:

- Target 10: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent.
- Target 11: By 2031, reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) held in detention by at least 30 per cent.

Key to achieving this are partnerships and relationships and the FNJO works

- With community
- With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector
- Across government

Stephen also spoke about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Strategy, which aspires to see all people treated fairly, with respect and free from all forms of discrimination, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will no longer be disproportionately overrepresented across the Justice system.

In essence these two presentations revolved around domestic and family violence, and justice more broadly: How do we do justice differently, and better, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? The FNJO looked at inquiries, reports and reviews that examined the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. More importantly the FNJO went out to communities and heard from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about their lived experiences with the justice system to learn what is working and what's not. Communities were asked for their thoughts and suggestions on changes so that by 2031, the Closing the Gap justice targets will have been met.



Rayden, the manager for Domestic and Family Violence Team in the FNJO, spoke about the *Framework for Action – Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence* which is overseen by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Prevention Group. The First Nations Justice Office (FNJO) provides Secretariat support to this 12-member group, and reports on the actions and initiatives of the *Framework*.

Released by the Queensland Government in 2019, the *Framework for Action* was developed in response to recommendation 20 of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board Annual Report 2016-17. That recommendation called for the development and implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strengths-based domestic and family violence strategy.

Some of the achievements and progress against the *Framework* include:

- Establishment of 8 cultural connectors and in key areas. Ipswich, Brisbane north, Cherbourg, Mount Isa, Cairns, Caboolture, Logan and Mackay.
- 5 specialists domestic and family violence workers in 5 different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family well-being services.
- Working in partnership to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to have flexible and innovative approaches that provide wrap around support where needed. This includes partnering with WorkUp Queensland to deliver a culturally appropriate training to build capacity and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

community-controlled organisations to respond to people in their communities experiencing domestic and family violence.

- Other community-led initiatives to build community capacity around domestic and family violence, including a co-design project with the Doomadgee Strong Women’s Group and Mount Isa Women’s Services

Since the release of the Framework the Queensland Government has committed to a significant Women’s Safety reform agenda, which includes implementing the recommendations of the Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce reports and the Queensland Police Service Commission of Inquiry. Existing actions of the *Framework* have been absorbed through the implementation of these recommendations.

The Prevention Group will meet in the coming months to explore opportunities for potential new initiatives under the *Framework* and work with the Women’s Safety and Violence Prevention Unit to develop the refreshed *Framework*.

Prof Sandra Creamer, Ms Kate Hamilton, Ms Muriel Bamblett and Ms Belle Arnold *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-25 and the First Nations National Plan*

Professor Sandra Creamer spoke in her role as Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council; Kate Hamilton as a representative from the Department of Social Services (DSS); Muriel Bamblett as Co-Chair of the First Nations National Plan Steering Committee, and Belle Arnold who is attended on behalf of SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

Sandra and Kate provided an overview of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025 (the Action Plan) and Muriel and Belle discussed the First Nations National Plan and the Steering Committee.

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025* was launched in August 2023 to work alongside the *First Action Plan 2023-2027*. It was created as a three- year interim policy framework while the *First Nations National Plan* is being developed.



The *Action Plan* was developed in genuine partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council and was created in recognition of the disproportionately high rates of family, domestic and sexual violence that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience. It is fundamental to addressing Target 13 of National Agreement on Closing of the Gap - to reduce all forms of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children by at least 50% by 2031, as progress towards zero.

Sandra spoke of the Five Reform Areas under the Action Plan.

- Voice, self-determination and agency
- Strength, resilience and therapeutic healing
- Reform institutions and systems
- Evidence and data eco-systems
- Inclusion and intersectionality



Responsibility for the implementation and reporting of each of the actions under these reform areas sits with either Commonwealth government, state and territory governments, or both.

Kate then shared information on the DSS actions funded under these Five Reform Areas, noting that the DSS has funding for 7 of the actions under the Action Plan. Included in these are Four Priority Grants to support immediate work to help end violence against First Nations women and children. Kate also noted that in November 2023 the government announced a \$15 million targeted investment into the funding of an improved and

importantly, First Nations-led data collection process to strengthen the evidence base and work towards creating a safer future for First Nations women and children.

Further the DSS is working to identify emerging priorities in the First Nations domestic, family and sexual violence sector. To assist with this priority mapping and for the planning of future actions under the Action Plan, the department continues to leverage the expertise from state and territory governments, key advisory bodies and agencies to inform its approach.

During the subsequent part of this presentation Muriel spoke about *Our Ways – Strong Ways -Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan* Engagement. She outlined how a Steering Committee guides this work to create a *National Plan* that centres Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences, knowledge and response, and shared an overview of the themes of this work (e.g. self-determination, culturally safe services and judicial and police system reform).



Muriel stressed that Holistic Service means continued and improved integration of:

- Prevention
- Early Intervention
- Response
- Recovery and Healing

understanding that these 'action areas' are interconnected, not a continuum.



Ms Cathy Taylor

Office of the Independent Implementation Supervisor

Cathy spoke about the role of the Independent Implementation Supervisor (IIS) overseeing the implementation of the Queensland Government Response to recommendations from the two Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce [Hear her voice reports](#) and recommendations from the independent Commission of Inquiry [A Call for Change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence](#). There are 355 recommendations associated with the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reforms being implemented over varying timeframes, noting that not all recommendations in the reform program have commenced, as some are scheduled to be implemented in future years.



To date, 121 of the 355 Government Responses to reform program recommendations have been due for completion and assessed by the IIS.

Across the reform program, many recommendations relate specifically to improving responses for First Nations families. For example, Recommendation 49 from the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police responses to domestic and family violence -

Within 12 months, the Queensland Police Service improve its training in relation to domestic and family violence by strengthening programs to address the need for police to take into account the unique experiences of First Nations peoples and communities when responding to domestic and family violence, including considerations relevant to misidentification of victims and how to communicate with First Nations peoples and communities to ensure that the conditions of Protection Orders are both appropriate to the circumstances and clearly understood by the parties.

The IIS:

- reports biannually on the implementation progress of the Government Response
- produces publicly available reports
- relies on a range of qualitative and quantitative information
- applies a monitoring framework that assesses and reports results in various ways

In each reporting period, the IIS assesses the progress of recommendations due to be completed in full, as well as interim milestones that are considered 'significant', meaning they are foundational to the implementation of the reform program or to creating tangible changes on the ground.

The IIS also monitors progress achieved across the system. This involves examining implementation through different lenses to understand, at a high level, where progress or delays have been observed across the system and identify areas of collective impact. In conclusion, Cathy shared that her team would continue to travel across regional, rural and remote Queensland to ensure consultation captures the voices of all Queenslanders to inform system resilience.

Community Presentations

Ms Rachel Bruce and Ms Aletia Twist

Responding to Domestic and Family Violence in the Torres Strait

Mura Kosker Sorority supports and strengthens the wellbeing of women, men, children, youth and families in the Torres Strait, through the provision of culturally appropriate programs and services. Established in 1988 and incorporated in 1989, Mura Kosker emerged from the advocacy of “strong women who were well ahead of their times, (who) met to discuss matters pertaining to women, children and families”. The organisation has been funded to run programs since early 2000’s and has a local board of 10 members from across the Torres Strait.



Currently there 32 employees located on Thursday Island and across the outer islands. Aletia spoke of the range of current programs provided by Mura Kosker, including:

- Mura Buai Wellbeing Program
- Family Participation Program
- Delegated Authority
- Family and Domestic Violence Counselling, Education and Support
- Generalist counselling
- Buai Mudh - Thursday Island Neighbourhood & Community Centre
- Older People’s Action Program
- Child and Family Support Program
- Emergency Relief Funding
- Brokerage
- PowerSavvy Community
- Advocacy and Community Development

Rachel then discussed an overview of domestic and family violence in the Torres Strait before moving on to inform delegates about community responses in the region. Despite challenges, communities in the Torres Strait are increasingly addressing domestic and family violence through community-led initiatives, advocacy, and support.

Mura Kosker’s work revolves around

1. Culturally Competent Staff
2. Community Engagement and Collaboration
3. Accessible and Holistic Services
4. Trauma-Informed Care
5. Prevention and Education
6. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

However, there are service challenges and barriers. These include the reality that phone contact is usually not ideal, and although face to face contact is preferable for clients, this brings logistical concerns. For example, permission for Entry to Community may not be granted due to other events in Community, there may be limited or no accommodation available; travel may be restricted due to inclement weather and travel costs may be prohibitive.

Mr Namarca Corowa

Healthy Relationships from Cultural Perspectives

Namarca provided background information about Reconcile Life, a local family-owned company in Mackay dedicated to behavioural change from cultural perspectives. Reconcile Life offers culturally appropriate solutions to the broader community and collaborates with community to address social issues, prioritising the needs of vulnerable individuals.

The organisation has a number of objectives:

- to reduce over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men using violence in their family relationships by providing relevant cultural insight
- to ensure that content delivered is both meaningful and achievable so that participants are able to apply understanding and share components of behaviour change in a practical way
- to have content available to a diverse range of people, with respect to their age, nationality, gender and culture.

Reconcile Life's values are:

- Community collaboration: valuing partnerships
- Cultural sensitivity: respecting diverse cultural views
- Family-centred approaches: prioritising the views of women and children at risk
- Openness to learning from the community and acknowledging limitations.

Namarca shared feedback from the partner of a client of Reconcile Life's service which underscored the positive difference the program made for their family. As well, Namarca shared feedback from a local business who reported the "extraordinary" impact of Reconcile Life, and data from men who participated in the program.

The next steps for Reconcile Life are to

- deliver facilitator training which is the framework for Behavioural Change from Cultural Perspectives
- develop a network of accredited facilitators knowledgeable about and empathetic towards men's behaviour change, incorporating cultural perspectives to foster support, understanding and shared experiences
- implement culturally appropriate continuous improvement strategies to foster productive and relevant growth in this challenging sector, ensuring sustainability.



Workshop

Informed by the Forum Advisory Group, based on feedback from previous Forums about the critical nature of worker self-care, and building on last year's innovative afternoon session, Jeremy Donovan returned to the stage.

Besides being extremely focused on the development of his music, sharing his intimate knowledge of Traditional Healing and Sacred Ceremony, Jeremy is immersed in the creation of art: he often describes his artwork as a medicine for his spirit, and he sees his artwork as a gateway to connecting with his ancestors.

Through his stories and encouragement of group work and individual reflection, Jeremy's dot painting session with delegates brought the formal proceedings of Day One to a memorable end. This workshop, "Coloured Pain" fostered expression through art and provided an ideal segue into the evening's networking event.



Day 2

Queensland Updates

Ms Babette Doherty and Ms Kelly Teitzel

Victim Assist Queensland: financial assistance for victims of violent crime

Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) is a government agency that assists victims of violent crime in Queensland. Their goal is to help victims recover. It provides:

- financial assistance to eligible victims of violent crime to help them recover
- information and guidance on how to apply for financial assistance
- information and referral to existing support services to aid recovery such as counselling
- funding to victim support services in Queensland

Babette and Kelly explained that there are 4 elements that must be satisfied in order to be eligible for financial assistance. These are:

- an act of violence
- which has occurred in Queensland
- resulting in injury
- and was reported.

The presenters went on to define “An act of violence” (a crime committed by a person, against a person, which resulted in an injury) as well as “injury”, providing examples related to physical injury, psychological injury, aggravation of pre-existing conditions and adverse impacts. They also explained about Special Primary Victims. To be eligible, the violence must be reported to someone.

A Special Primary Victim (SPV) can report to:

- A domestic and family violence Specialist (including social workers at a hospital)
- Doctors
- Counsellor
- Psychiatrist / Psychologist
- Police

The type of financial assistance available depends on the type of victim, their personal circumstances and what they need to recover. In particular, Babette and Kelly outlined Cultural Recovery Expenses, which could include:

- Smoking ceremonies
- Traditional dancers (sorry business/sad news)
- Travel and accommodation to go back to Country
- Cultural artefacts involved in healing
- Traditional medicine



- Cleansing ceremony (individual)
- Purchase of traditional clothing for sorry business
- Tombstone opening expenses
- Culturally relevant therapeutic healing workshops, sessions, groups or programs
- Cultural self-directed healers/traditional healers
- Other distinct recovery expenses specific to the applicant's people group, Country or Island

Mr Adam Chapman

Domestic and Family Violence and the Coroner's Court of Queensland

In his role of Manager, Cultural Capability, Coroner's Court of Queensland (CCQ), Adam seeks



- to influence and enhance cultural capability of CCQ staff
- to lead the design and delivery of practical and targeted training to CCQ staff on cultural awareness
- provide high level advice to senior management and coroners
- have strategic oversight of CCQ's services to ensure the provision of support to bereaved First Nation peoples is culturally safe
- implement and manage programs, projects and initiatives for best practice approaches to cultural awareness
- develop and maintain stakeholder engagement with First Nation community partners across Queensland

He also provides advice and support to CCQ staff on sensitive and complex information forwarded by the bereaved family members. The ability of CCQ staff to engage with First Nation families and gather important information helps the coroner to make the coronial process more respectful for bereaved family members attending coroner's court. Adam guides CCQ staff in creating culturally safe conversations when engaging with First Nation families on the coronial process and can identify if there are any cultural protocols the coroners should be aware. Adam also provided an overview of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Unit, which was established in 2011. At first, the unit provided support to coroners investigating DFV-related death but the scope of the team broadened in 2016 with the introduction of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board.

Adam went on to speak of grief and loss: the magnitude of grief and loss experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the loss of land, language, cultural practices, significantly higher mortality rates, suicide, incarceration and health-related problems has significantly impacted on the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations people.

"It is never just one loss – it is a multitude of losses all compounded... The grief has invasive properties, spreading throughout the body ... many of Australia's Aboriginal people eventually die of this grief". Adam went on to speak about Sorry business, healing and funeral assistance. Under the Burials Assistance Act 1965, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General through the CCQ, is authorised to make funeral arrangements for eligible persons who: have died in Queensland and have no known next of kin who are willing or able to meet the cost of a funeral service.

Agencies can apply under the Scheme where the deceased has no family or friends to make funeral arrangements.

Workshop

Ms Tanya Quakawoot and Ms Davina Hickling

Coercive control and the law in Queensland Presentation and facilitated discussion

The scene was set for this session by Tanya Quakawoot, a Dharumbal and Australian South Sea Islander person based in Meeanjin on Turrbal and Yuggera Country. Drawing from *Coercive Control Communication Framework 2024–2027 Version 1 2024* Tanya presented an overview of the most recent developments relating to Coercive control and the law in Queensland.

Following this, Davina a descendent of the Waggaman People of Country around Chillagoe and Mungana in Far North Queensland, guided delegates through a set of questions, the responses to which were captured by Graphic Recorder, Rachel Apelt.

Groups discussed:

1. What does the community understand about the changes to the law to recognise coercive control as a standalone offence? What have you heard or seen?
2. What will be the benefits of these changes to the law? What have you heard or seen?
3. There could be unintended consequences from these changes to the law. What could help avoid these? How could you help your community to be prepared?
4. Knowing of these changes to the law, what gives you hope for your community?



The scene: National, State, Regional

Ms Rona Scherer and Ms Christine Payne

The Workforce Capability Framework – What does good look like?

Rona and Chris explained that the Workforce Capability Framework is a way to articulate the capabilities that people need to do any job across the Domestic and Family Violence, Sexual Assault and Women's Health and Wellbeing sector. It applies to different jobs, at different levels, across different organisations, but of most relevance to delegates was that it supports good practice in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This presentation provided a snapshot of how the Framework, which is available on the WorkUP website, could be used, noting that it is a flexible, evolving document.



The Framework has five chief domains:

1. Understanding the nature, drivers, and context of domestic, family and sexual violence and trauma
2. Upholding dignity and value through healing-centred engagement
3. Managing risk, prioritising safety, and recovery
4. Working as part of an integrated system
5. Demonstrating a reflective and self-aware approach

Practical ideas for using the framework were suggested. These included:

- Staff appraisals – identify skills and learning opportunities.
- Staff induction – introduce people to what the work is about.
- Career development – identify what you need to do to move into a senior or leadership role.

Delegates were given the opportunity to reflect on practice with the *Capability Framework*. Each table had a set of cards for discussion and delegates were invited to choose a card on their table and have a conversation about capability areas, guided by these questions:

- Head - What do you think about this?
- Heart - How does it make you feel?
- Hand – How do/might you do this?

Ms Lyn Gertz and Ms Lynette Bullio

RAATSIC's trial of Escaping Violence Payment

The Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care (RAATSICC) Advisory Association began as a "Program" when in 1991 a small group of concerned women from the five communities of the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) met to talk about issues around child care and domestic violence. These women lobbied government and stayed true to their purpose, and from that meeting the RAATSICC organisation was established.

Today RAATSICC maintains a strong link with its founding members, but now has a workforce of 50+, with 90% being First Nations descendants, working from offices in Aurukun, Cairns, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, NPA, Pormpuraaw. Across the organisation, the aim is to deliver strengths-based, person-centred, trauma-informed and culturally necessary perspectives in governance, leadership and operations. Currently the RAATSICC program portfolio includes:

- Safe Active Family Engagement (S.A.F.E) – Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Family Support Service (Weipa cluster, Lockhart River, Kowanyama)
- Child Witnesses of Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service (Lockhart River, Kowanyama, Napranum, Mapoon)
- Family Participation Program (Aurukun, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum, NPA, Pormpuraaw)
- Ma'aathan Womens Shelter (Aurukun)
- Redress Support Service (Cairns, Cape York, Torres Strait)
- First Nations Family Connections - Delegated Authority (Kowanyama)
- Escaping Violence Payment – Cairns Based trial



In October 2021 the National Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) trial commenced, and in February 2022 DSS announced an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place-based EVP Trial. The following year (February 2023) RAATSICC's EVP Cairns-based trial RAATSICC began service delivery. The EVP is for people whose living situation has recently changed, or is about to change, because of intimate partner violence.

The EVP Cairns place-based trial is a specialised and culturally supported service that intends to assess and respond to the particular needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing intimate partner violence, to establish a home free from violence. Financial assistance and confidential support are offered to eligible individuals to assist them to move forward and set up a home free from violence.

Financial assistance packages of up to \$5000 are provided through the EVP:

- up to \$1500 in cash (prepaid debit card, vouchers, etc)
- up to \$3500 in goods and services (removalists, bonds, basics for a new home)
- confidential support and referrals up to 12 weeks.

The RAATSICC service footprint for this program is

- Cardwell to the south
- Cairns city and suburbs (including Yarrabah)
- Atherton Tablelands to the west
- Cape York communities
- Torres Strait Islands

Staff provide: -

- Telephone contact
- Video connect (MS Teams, Zoom)
- Face to face support
- Service client appointments
- Domestic and family violence in-service presentations

The focus of RAATSICC's EVP place-based trial has been on meeting immediate financial needs (such as purchase of food, clothing, bedding, emergency accommodation) and the relief of reduced financial stress has often been reported by EVP clients.

Another aspect of the support provided to individuals, is continuous assistance and encouragement to pursue goals/ambitions (for example, return to study, and employment)

The assumption from the EVP team is that individuals are best placed to know what they need to establish and sustain a life free from violence (principle of self-agency). The feedback to date has been positive: EVP service users who self-referred into the program generally described the case managers as non-judgemental, understanding, supportive, and responsive to their enquiries. Service users have also reported that staff have been proactive with communication – for example, phoning clients regularly to see how they were going, to update them on progress, and to offer emotional and practical support where needed (such as removing barriers to accessing documents if client has no internet for example).

Ms Laura McVey

eSafety's First Nations Focus

Laura spoke of the “three pillars”, linked by Partnerships, of safeguarding those at risk of online harm:

1. Prevention: Provide evidence-based safety resources and programs
2. Protection: Operate regulatory and reporting schemes
3. Proactive and systemic change: Identify emerging risks and ensure industry minimises harm

She then went on to outline recently undertaken First Nations research which identified the benefits of technology for young people. This included being able to

- find information about emotional and physical health
- share original music, video, stories and blogs at much higher rates than average
- have more engaged in current affairs and reading news online and
- be more in touch with their parents and Elders when it comes to having open conversations about their online lives.

However, there were also negative experiences which can have a profound impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These including being treated nastily online, and being exposed to potentially harmful online material. Further information about this research can be found in *Cool, beautiful, strange and scary: The online experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their parents and caregivers*.

Laura also spoke about the range of material available on the eSafety website. In particular, she noted that many resources can be downloaded in (some) First Nations languages on the eSafety First Nations webpage. Laura provided an overview of resources available for women generally, including guides, toolkits and advice, pointing out that “tech abuse in family violence is usually low tech”. Such “low tech” abuse could include stalking/monitoring, social media posts, multiple text messages and financial control.

Finally, for frontline workers there is a suite of online learning modules, including one related to Supporting First Nations Women.



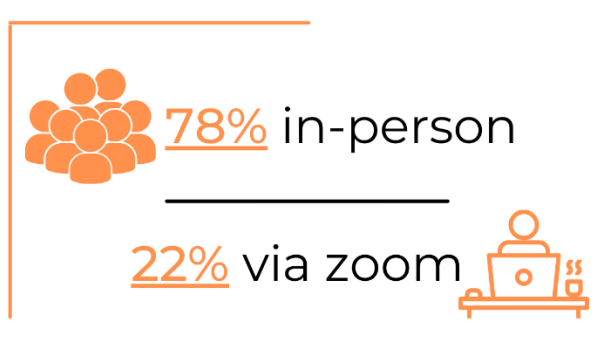
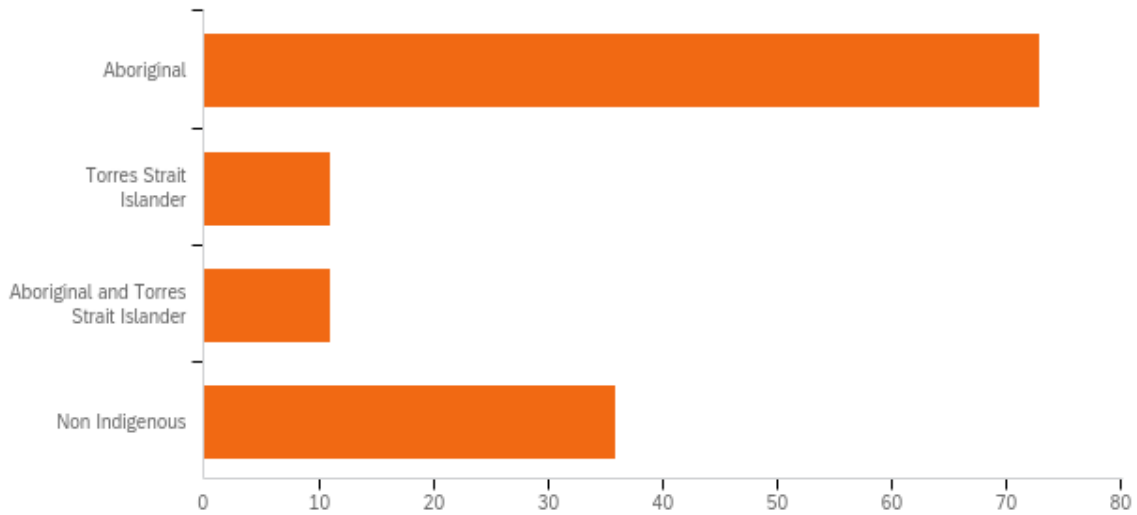
Networking Evening

The Forum Advisory Group embraced an innovation in the Forum Program in 2023: a twilight networking event, and based in its success, Forum organisers included this aspect again. Delegates seized the opportunity to connect over light refreshments and listen to local musicians Leah and Craig Barber from 'Barbswired'. There was fun to be had at a photo booth, and Bangarra legend, Patrick Thaiday, joined by the CAID Dreamtime Dancers, enthralled delegates.

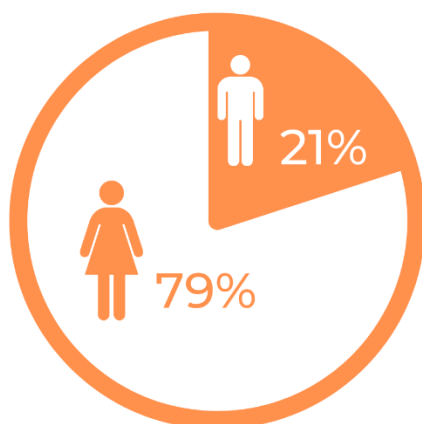


Overview of Forum delegates

Which best describes your cultural background?



% of total registrations



% of female to male delegates

QUEENSLAND ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE 2024 FORUM

Arrilla Indigenous Consulting Services Pty Ltd	Aboriginal Family Legal Services Queensland
Bayside Community Justice Group	Act for Kids
COOEE Elders Inc	Department of Social Services
Cooktown District Community Centre	Maramu Jungu "Healing Together" Logan CJG
CQID	Palm Island Community Company
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services	Coroner's Court of Queensland
Department Of Education	Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts
Department of Justice and Attorney General	Department of Youth Justice
Gympie & District Women's Health Centre	SNAICC
North Queensland Women's Legal Service	eSafety Commissioner
Queensland Corrective Services	Far West Indigenous Family Violence Service
SERO4	First Nations National Plan Steering Committee
Social Justice Interagency Services (Torres Strait)	Five Bridges and Murri Sisters
Strong Women Talking	Helem Yumba
The Centre for Women & Co.	Lena Passi Women's Shelter Inc.
UnitingCare Community	Mackay Children and Family Centre
Warringu Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corp	Marabisda Inc
Arrilla Indigenous Consulting Services Pty Ltd	Mura Kosker Sorority Inc
Bayside Community Justice Group	QIFVLS
COOEE Elders Inc	Queensland Police Service
Cooktown District Community Centre	Sisters Inside Inc
CQID	South Burnett CTC Inc
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services	UnitingCare Queensland
Department Of Education	Victim Assist Queensland
Department of Justice and Attorney General	Warringu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corp
RAATSICC	WorkUp Queensland
Reconcile Life	Wuchopperen Health Service
Sera's Women's Shelter Inc	Yiliyapinya Indigenous Corporation



Outcomes from the Forum

What was achieved?

99.23% Strongly Agree or Agree



Question:

I learnt new things at today's Forum sessions.



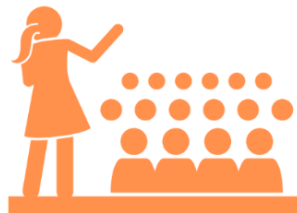
Question:

I can use what I learnt today in my own work (paid or voluntary).



99.23% Strongly Agree or Agree

98.47%
of delegates were very pleased or satisfied on the content/topics/presentations



100%
of delegates were very pleased or satisfied with networking opportunities



Feedback from participants

As in other years, most Forum delegates chose to provide additional comments. These quotes illustrate the recurring themes of this feedback.

“So relevant. Really enjoyed and benefitted from the layered program - national/state/regional”

“The community presentations were very informative and beneficial”

“Loved Jeremy's story and journey such an inspiration”

“Very educational, insightful and reflective”

“Collaboration; connections; conversations in a safe environment”

“Insight of the presenters and great yarning”

“Connecting with mob. Networking, listening and yarning. Talking about culture.”



Appendix 1: 2024 Program

Day 1

Tuesday, 14th May

Program
Registration
Opening address: Dr Heather Lovatt, Director, QCDFVR
Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country
Welcome: Dr Heather Lovatt, Director, QCDFVR
Keynote Presentation <i>Pain, Strength, Health and Happiness</i> Mr Jeremy Donovan
MORNING TEA
Who's who in the room?
Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Nations Justice Office, Department of Justice and Attorney-General: Mr Stephen Tillett• <i>Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence</i>: Mr Rayden Quakawoot
Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-25 and the First Nations National Plan</i>: Ms Sandra Creamer, Ms Kate Hamilton, Ms Muriel Bamblett and Ms Belle Arnold
LUNCH
Queensland Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of the Independent Implementations Supervisor: Ms Cathy Taylor (IIS)
Community Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to Domestic and Family Violence in the Torres Strait: Ms Rachel Bruce and Ms Aletia Twist• Healthy Relationships from Cultural Perspectives: Mr Namarca Corowa
Workshop <i>Coloured Pain</i> Mr Jeremy Donovan
NETWORKING EVENING Catering and entertainment

Day 2

Wednesday, 15th May

Program
Registration
Welcome to Day 2
Presentations – <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. VAQ: financial assistance for victims of violent crime: Ms Babette Doherty and Ms Kelly Teitzel2. Domestic and Family Violence and the Coroner’s Court of Queensland: Mr Adam Chapman
MORNING TEA
Workshop: <i>Coercive control and the law in Queensland</i> Presentation and facilitated discussion: Ms Tanya Quakawoot and Ms Davina Hickling
LUNCH
The Scene: National, State, Regional <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The <i>Workforce Capability Framework</i> – What does good look like?: Ms Rona Scherer and Ms Christine Payne• RAATSIC’s trial of Escaping Violence Payment: Ms Lyn Gertz and Ms Lynette Bullio• eSafety’s First Nations Focus: Ms Laura McVey
Workshop Feedback: <i>Coercive control and the law in Queensland:</i> Ms Rachel Apelt, Visual Recording Artist
Forum Conclusion

Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum



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