

# **PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP**

## **Terms of Reference**

<b>Co-Chairs</b>	A government official corresponding to the government co-chair for the Joint Council and a representative of the Coalition of Peaks.
<b>Membership</b>	Nominated senior officials from each jurisdiction. Representatives of the Coalition of Peaks.
<b>Governance Structure</b>	<p>The Partnership Working Group (PWG) is the main body established to drive implementation of the Partnership Agreement and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and support the workplan of the Joint Council. The PWG reports to the Joint Council.</p> <p>The PWG will be supported by a Drafting Group consisting of officials from up to three governments and representatives of the Coalition of Peaks.</p> <p>The PWG is responsible for developing and agreeing the Drafting Group’s Terms of Reference.</p> <p>The Drafting Group will develop and progress papers for Partnership Working Group meetings.</p> <p>The PWG may establish additional working groups at its own discretion. These may be time limited or ongoing, and will report to the PWG.</p>
<b>Operations and decision making</b>	<p>The PWG will operate in accordance with the Partnership Agreement Objectives (clause 13) and Principles (clause 14). These principles encompass support for self-determination, self-management and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control as fundamental to achieving our shared goals.</p> <p>The PWG will make decisions on the basis of consensus between parties wherever possible. Consensus decision-making requires equal participation and agreement on an outcome or course(s) of action. Consistent with the Partnership Principles equal participation includes identifying</p>

	<p>and addressing systemic and structural racism, discrimination and unconscious bias. While consensus decision-making does not require uniformity of actions by all parties, it does require agreement on the outcome of an item and wording of a resolution.</p> <p>The Commonwealth, States, Territories and the Coalition of Peaks will seek to maximise participation in the PWG and support continuity in their representation. Effective participation and shared decision making will be enabled through adequate time for consultation and consideration of key decisions, taking an outcomes focus in the work of the PWG and commitment to open and transparent negotiation.</p>
<p><b>Meetings</b></p>	<p>The PWG will meet monthly as required in order to progress the Joint Council’s priorities with the agreement of the co-chairs.</p> <p>For the purposes of determining whether a PWG meeting can proceed, a quorum will be taken to mean representation from the Commonwealth, a majority of states/territories and the Coalition of Peaks.</p> <p>Dates and tentative locations for the next year’s calendar for PWG meetings will be tabled at the final PWG meeting of the year and documented in the 100 Days Forward Work Plan. Any changes to these agreed dates are to be agreed in writing – either email or formal correspondence – between the Co-Chairs (or their delegates).</p> <p>Papers are to be distributed to PWG members at least five business days ahead of the PWG meeting, unless exceptional circumstances arise and as agreed by the Co-Chairs.</p>
<p><b>Scope of Partnership Working Group responsibility</b></p>	<p>The PWG’s primary role is the implementation of the Partnership Agreement, the National Agreement, and the decisions of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap including resolution of issues referred to it by the Joint Council.</p> <p>In addition to the Joint Council work plan published on the Closing the Gap website, a 100 Day Forward Work Plan has been developed to help PWG prioritise matters so that they lay the foundations for other actions, logically sequence them to build on one another; and ensure visibility of risks. The 100 Day Forward workplan will be updated ahead of each PWG meeting and tabled at the meeting for noting.</p>

	<p>Any Party can put forward proposals and/or papers for consideration by PWG. Papers should be submitted to the Drafting Group by the authoring party for comment ahead of finalisation for PWG.</p> <p>All papers for Joint Council must be agreed for consideration by the PWG at one of its preceding meetings.</p>
<b>Review and reporting</b>	<p>The PWG is constituted through the Joint Council on Closing the Gap.</p> <p>The PWG will report to the Joint Council on its progress, as requested by the Partnership Parties or agreed by the Joint Council.</p> <p>The PWG will review its terms of reference at the same time as the Joint Council to ensure the review periods are consistent, or more frequently as agreed by the PWG. Results from Partnership Health Check reports should inform amendments to future Terms of Reference.</p>
<b>Context and accountability</b>	<p>The PWG is accountable to the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. Individual members of the PWG are accountable to their jurisdictions (for officials) or the Coalition of Peaks (for its representatives).</p>
<b>Secretariat</b>	<p>The Secretariat for the PWG will be provided by the Commonwealth.</p> <p>The Secretariat will undertake the administration required to support the PWG, including developing agendas and facilitating meeting logistics.</p>
<b>Information and communication</b>	<p>Documents prepared for the Joint Council, representatives and officials will be treated as sensitive, unless otherwise agreed, and only distributed on a need-to-know basis.</p> <p>The Chatham House rule applies to the deliberations and discussions of the Joint Council, the PWG and any other working groups. This does not preclude members discussing or expressing an opinion on the agreed outcomes of a meeting.</p>