



# North Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Service (NAAFLS) response to the consultation document on the establishment of a Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Resource Centre

May 16, 2023

NAAFLS calls for a rethink of the NT DFSV Resource Centre proposal as it does not reflect what is needed to support efforts by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people, in the NT.

NAAFLS, CAAFLU and others have called for a NT Aboriginal Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence ('DFSV') Prevention Strategy for many years but still there is no Strategy.

Why does the DSVS Resource Centre proposal lack appropriate consideration of Aboriginal people? Because there is no NT Aboriginal DFSV Prevention Strategy. If there was, there would be influential leadership, principles and processes backing Aboriginal people and organisations to keep things on track.

Given what we know about the necessity of Aboriginal led solutions for Aboriginal issues, the planning and design of this Resource Centre is a sad demonstration of repeating past mistakes. It is destined to fail.

Instead, Aboriginal specific policy frameworks must be applied, to guide the development of a NT Aboriginal DFSV Prevention Strategy before further work happens on the DFSV Resource Centre proposal.

The relevant Aboriginal policy frameworks include:

- Aboriginal Peak Organisation NT [Partnership Principles for working with Aboriginal organisations and communities in the Northern Territory](#)
- [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) principles and strategies
- the [NT Aboriginal Justice Agreement](#)
- [NT Aboriginal Health Plan](#), and
- the [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan](#) (in development) with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children.

The DFSV Resource Centre proposal is not reflective for consultation with Aboriginal people about Aboriginal responses to DFSV in the NT. Also, it is not reflective for consultation about Aboriginal workforce needs, including day-to-day needs in remote and very Aboriginal remote communities.

The DFSV Resource Centre proposal is vastly out of step with expectations.

The proposal is a centralised approach and we cannot see a pathway for an Aboriginal person working in a remote community who needs to upskill in DFSV being able to do this without proper support.

We think the DFSV Resource Centre proposal marginalises Aboriginal people and we fear this how the whole plan will unfold if it proceeds this way.



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That is, if training and accreditation of front-line workers is not done properly there will be a marginalising effect for Aboriginal workers who are often already battling the claimed authority of non-Aboriginal people in this space.

We also believe if DFSV training and accreditation sat under the NT [Aboriginal Affairs Strategy](#), and applied the principles and frameworks indicated above, it would be developed on a regional/community basis and in collaboration with communities to be delivered by community.

### **Summary**

The proposal highlights the structural deficiencies of DFSV prevention in the NT and reaffirms the need for a NT Aboriginal DFSV Prevention Strategy.

There are lessons to be learned from other jurisdictions that have First Nations specific strategies for targeted DFSV. For example the [Western Australian Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy](#) which begins with a dedication to Aboriginal victims/survivors who have lost their lives to family violence

We believe this DVSR Resource Centre proposal should be a catalyst for driving action to create a NT Aboriginal DFSV Prevention Plan.

We call again on the NT Government, and on all stakeholders, to move this forward.

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