



Additional Senate Estimates – CEO Opening Statement 9 February 2026

National Indigenous Australians Agency, CEO, Julie-Ann Guivarra

Good morning,

I begin by acknowledging the Ngunnawal people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, and I pay my respects to the Ngambri people and other families with connections to these lands.

I extend my respect to Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and to First Nations Senators and witnesses appearing today.

I would like to acknowledge that this Friday marks the 18th anniversary of the National Apology. It is a time to reflect and listen to the many Stolen Generations survivors that have travelled to Canberra for the anniversary and other events.

I am proud of the Agency's work in supporting Stolen Generations survivors, particularly the Stolen Generations Redress Scheme, which is helping survivors and their families in healing the trauma arising from removal from family or community as children in the Territories. The Scheme has now received more than 2,500 applications and made payments to more than 1,600 eligible applicants.

In December, I outlined some of the Agency's major initiatives. In 2026, the NIAA remains focused on delivering the Government's commitments – by working in genuine partnership with First Nations communities, stakeholders, and all governments – to ensure meaningful progress on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and improve the lives of First Nations people.

Advancing First Nations economic empowerment will remain central to our work.



The third Remote Jobs and Economic Development grant round opens in early 2026, building on the 1,700 jobs already created.

All Round 1 projects under the expanded Indigenous Rangers Program are now operational, supporting up to 1,000 jobs. Round 2 will add over 900 more, keeping us on track for 3,800 jobs by 2030 and significantly increasing the number of women rangers.

The Low-Cost Essentials Subsidy Scheme is providing real cost-of-living relief for many living in remote communities across the North of Australia, with 113 stores participating and 30 essential low-cost items now accessible. An independent review of the Scheme is also underway to ensure it continues delivering results. Meanwhile, the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation, in partnership with the NIAA, has commenced delivery of the First Nations Nutrition Workforce, with 21 positions to be filled by July 2026.

Through the Efficiency and Resilience Grants, we are uplifting infrastructure and building supply chain resilience. At the Bayulu ('bay-u-lu') Supermarket in WA, for example, power disruptions often threaten food storage and supply when transport routes are cut-off. An off-grid solar system has transformed wet season reliability, reduced costs, and helped make food affordable.

Action continues to establish safe, secure housing where it's needed most. Since commencement of the 4 billion dollar Northern Territory Remote Housing Package in July 2024, more than 300 homes have been delivered across remote First Nations communities and town camps, improving living conditions while strengthening tenancy management, safety, and long-term asset maintenance.



The Central Australia Plan is also delivering impactful outcomes. Expansion of the Apmere Mwerre ('upmerra merra') Visitors Park has created 20 additional short-term beds for women, young people, and children affected by family violence. Over summer, the Government partnered with 11 organisations across Alice Springs and surrounding communities to deliver free, safe, and engaging activities, from splash parties to movie screenings, with over 15,400 attendances at these events.

The NIAA will continue to lead efforts across the Commonwealth, and work with states and territories, to Close the Gap and drive meaningful progress on the Priority Reforms.

The Commonwealth Closing the Gap Annual Report and Implementation Plan will soon be tabled by the Government. The NIAA will work to deliver the commitments it is responsible for under the Commonwealth Implementation Plan.

Thank you. I welcome your questions.