

NATIONAL FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION LEGAL SERVICES

WORKING TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED JUSTICE OUTCOMES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

26 May 2016

Bold action to address violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

The National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum (National Forum) has welcomed the Australian Green's bold election commitment to address family violence.

The announcement includes a targeted focus on addressing violence against Aboriginal women and investing in Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS). The National Forum calls on the Coalition and the Australian Labor Party to match this investment.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are at the epicentre of the national family violence crisis, the Green's election platform announced today demonstrates a genuine commitment to confronting this challenge," said Antoinette Braybrook, Convenor of the National FVPLS Forum. "Our women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised from family violence and 10 times more likely to die of violent assault – these dire statistics require a strong targeted response."

The Australian Greens will boost federal funding for FVPLSs by \$144m over 4 years and will provide security for FVPLSs through 10 year funding agreements. The announcement includes a welcome \$4.5m in funding for the National FVPLS Forum for capacity building and ensuring that there is national coverage of services within 3 years.

"FVPLSs provide essential services for safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence and deliver early intervention prevention programs to break the vicious cycle of violence. It is very pleasing that the Greens have committed to that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women regardless of their geographic location will be able to access our services can access these services for safety within 3 years."

The Greens \$2.2 billion plan including includes the creation of a new 10 year National Partnership Agreement on Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women. The National Forum supports this as a key mechanism to drive collaboration, coordination and accountability between the Commonwealth, and state and territories governments. The National Forum also welcomes the important investment into the Safety First in Family Law.

The Forum notes that the Greens will have further commitments for funding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and community legal centres who are facing significant cuts.

"Violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is at epidemic levels. It will cost the nation \$2.2 billion by 2021-22. Its moral cost – which sees lives lost and communities destroyed - is unquantifiable. The type of investment announced today is what we need to end violence against women and we call on the other parties match these commitments."

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Media Release