



NATSILS

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES
STRAIT ISLANDER LEGAL SERVICES

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATSILS Welcomes Labor Party Commitment to Addressing Family Violence

Today National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) welcomed the Labor Party's commitment to addressing the crisis levels of family violence through additional funding and a National Crisis Summit.

NATSILS Chairperson, Shane Duffy, said, "Family violence is a particular concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children who remain chronically disadvantaged in terms of their access to justice, especially in regards to situations of family violence."

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 34.2 times more likely than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to be hospitalised due to family violence related assaults" Mr Duffy said.

"NATSILS supports the idea of a National Crisis Summit that will address this complex issue in a holistic way with a whole of government approach. We continue to work closely with Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS) to take a co-ordinated approach to family violence and are collectively well positioned to provide expert advice."

Mr Duffy said that it was essential that the Federal Government took a leadership role in addressing the crisis and that this role must include gaining state and territory buy in.

"This leadership should include setting justice targets in the Closing the Gap Strategy under the safe communities 'building block' to incorporate reduced imprisonment and violence rates" Mr Duffy said.

"We note that the current Government has set targets in other key areas such as education and we believe that justice, including family violence, is a core area that should have targets."

Mr Duffy said that emerging justice reinvestment alternatives in both NSW and South Australia provided a model of how to address the crisis rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incarceration and family violence.

"Current approaches by governments to address 'community safety' largely focus on the operation of the criminal justice system and fail to address the underlying reasons why violence and crime occur in the first place." Mr Duffy said.

"NATSILS supports justice reinvestment which is an approach which addresses the underlying social and economic causes of family violence and crime by reducing incarceration and investing into communities."

Media contact:

Eddie Cubillo,

Executive Officer

Phone: 0407 084 619

Email: eddie.cubillo@atsils.org.au