

## MEDIA RELEASE

Date 05/05/2015

### **NATSILS funding secured**

Today National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) welcomed the restoration of its funding after one and a half years of uncertainty about its future.

NATSILS Chairperson, Shane Duffy, said that, "We are encouraged to have received the news that we will be funded. Until this announcement there wasn't going to be a NATSILS on 30 June this year, which has been a great concern for our member organisations, my staff and the sector which relies on NATSILS advice and expertise."

"NATSILS brings together over forty years of expertise in providing quality frontline legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people making NATSILS the expert in this area. Given the rates at which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are imprisoned and experience violence it is crucial that NATSILS is able to provide strategic advice to all levels of government."

Mr Duffy said, "NATSILS advice is essential to addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' adverse experiences with family, civil and criminal law systems and we are very pleased that the government has recognised our value."

"We have been overwhelmed by the support that NATSILS had received from so many organisations within the legal and community service sectors" Mr Duffy said.

"It is obvious to me that we couldn't have achieved this result without the co-ordinated support of so many organisations. It is only because the value of our services has been championed by so many that the government has decided to commit to funding NATSILS for the next five years."

"This really highlights to me the value of working together across sectors. I believe that when we all stand together we will be able to improve the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all areas of the justice system. We want to change the record and we are looking forward to working across sectors and with all levels of government to achieve that."

"We are absolutely delighted to have received the news that NATSILS is here to stay and we are committed to working towards a better way forward for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and our communities."

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