



NATSILS
National Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Legal Services
TRUE JUSTICE FOR OUR PEOPLE

11 November 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATSILS Media Release: Two deaths in three days: Gomeroi man shot dead by police, following the death of Aboriginal man in custody

We are deeply upset, shocked and angered to learn that a 45 year-old Gomeroi man was shot dead by police in Sydney on Tuesday morning.

We are also devastated to confirm another Black death in custody, reported at Cessnock Correctional Centre NSW on Sunday 7 November. Our thoughts are with the man's family and loved ones at this difficult time.

This horrifying news comes just weeks after a W.A police officer was found not guilty of murder, after shooting dead Yamatji woman JC in Perth in 2019.

"So far this year, 11 Aboriginal people have died in custody or in a police operation in NSW alone. We are absolutely devastated by this high loss of life. We are working with many of the families that have been left behind, providing support and advice.

"When an Aboriginal person dies in custody, we take instructions from their loved ones as to whether they wish to engage with the media or if they want the ALS to do this on their behalf. Out of respect for the wishes of bereaved families, we do not always speak out about individual deaths, but the community can be assured we are working hard to advocate for families that have been touched by the tragedy of a death in custody, get the answers they deserve, and bring about change in this brutal system."

Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) Acting CEO, Nadine Miles

April 15 marked 30 years since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and yet as the months pass by, more and more of our people have lost their lives. Almost 500 of our people - our brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children. All the while, governments continue to stall on urgent action to end these injustices. We have had the answers for over 30 years, and we want to see change now.

"The news that two of our brothers have lost their lives in custody this week is absolutely gut-wrenching. Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the two men's family and loved ones. If this is not proof that we are in the midst of a national emergency - I don't know what is. How many more of our people will lose their lives before we see change? Justice delayed is justice denied - our people's lives matter."

NATSILS Executive Officer, Jamie McConnachie

Our organisations have called for practical and necessary [policy and law reform solutions](#) for 50 years.
We need to see every recommendation of the Royal Commission implemented.

NATSILS stand in solidarity and deep respect with all families whose loved ones have died in custody in their calls for change, justice and accountability.

END OF RELEASE

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