

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION  
INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**ATTACHMENT AS-7 TO STATEMENT OF ANGELA MAREE SINGH**

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Filed on behalf of: State of Victoria  
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This is the attachment marked '**AS-7**' produced and shown to **ANGELA MAREE SINGH** at the time of signing her Statement on 16 July 2015.

Before me: ...



**An Australian Legal Practitioner within  
the meaning of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria)**

Attachment AS-7

# **EASTERN METROPOLITAN INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE**



## **REGIONAL ACTION PLAN**

### **2011 - 2013**

## **TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

It is with deep respect and acknowledgement to the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nations, that we present the 2011-2013 Eastern Metropolitan Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Plan.

We acknowledge Elders past and present and their descendants who represent one of the oldest living cultures on this earth and ask that they continue to guide us as we work towards creating a safe, strong community that can live free from harm, yet prosper in good health and happiness.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS**

We are delighted to present to you the latest version of the EMR Indigenous Family Violence Strategic Regional Action Plan for 2011 – 2013. Contained in these pages is our commitment to work together in unison to protect and honor the rights of every member of our community; assist them to enjoy a safe and harm free life; build resilience, strength and leadership; model love and respect for culture and self; and continue to heal inwardly and outwardly in the hope that one day, family violence no longer exists.

Supported by members of the EMR Indigenous community, EMR Department of Human Services and other key stakeholders, we aim to continue to develop specific programs and activities that will build on the resilience of every individual who may be impacted by family violence.

We therefore acknowledge the challenges but also the triumphs that are yet to come and commend the EMR Regional Action Group for its commitment and continued vision in ensuring this action plan is implemented for the benefit of our people.

**Walter Harrison** and **Elke Smirl** (Co-chairs of the EMR IFVRAG).

## **MESSAGE FROM DHS REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

I am very pleased to acknowledge and support the work of the Eastern Metropolitan Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group. In partnership, the Action Group has developed this three year action plan with a focus on cultural safety, prevention, education and building strong partnerships between all organisations working with Aboriginal individuals, families and communities. Addressing family violence in the Aboriginal community is a priority for everyone and DHS actively supports this important work. I commend the action plan and encourage all organisations in EMR to actively work together to achieve the significant outcomes of this important plan.

**Mike Debinski** Regional Director Eastern Metropolitan Region, Department of Human Services.

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## BACKGROUND

Resulting from the **Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force Final Report 2003** and the Indigenous Victorian Family Violence Partnership Forum, the **Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families: towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities 10 year plan** was developed and launched in 2008.

*"Each day one in three Indigenous people in Victoria is the victim, have a relative that is the victim or witness an act of violence. This violence is not part of Indigenous culture."* 2003 Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force Final Report.

### *Values of the Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families: towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities 10 year plan*

- Safety and security for victims of violence
- Strong community leadership and positive role models
- Shared responsibility and support for one another
- Healthy lifestyles, harmonious relationships and respect for self and others
- Cultural integrity/respect and cultural safety within Indigenous and mainstream services
- Healing for victims and perpetrators
- No more violence – in the home, in the family, in the community or in the workplace

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Directly linked to the **Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families: towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities 10 year plan**, this Action Plan has been developed to implement holistic and integrated approaches to address family violence and sexual assault for Indigenous families in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR). This three year plan incorporates a range of strategies that are short, medium and long term. This plan requires partnerships, innovative approaches and commitment by government and community services to assist in the delivery and implementation of the action plan strategies.

The Action Group has identified specific Indigenous, mainstream, local and government service providers in the EMR to assist in the implementation of the strategies. The Action Group aims to support existing Indigenous services in the region and work in partnership to provide a higher profile of Indigenous people and family violence related issues in the EMR.

The EMR Department of Human Services (DHS) plays a pivotal role in supporting the Action Group to assist in implementing the strategies identified in this plan.

### **The purpose of this document is to:**

- Have collaborative planning and support to implement innovative, community led approaches and solutions to address Indigenous family violence in the EMR
- Have programs and services that target Indigenous families in the EMR through a coordinated and holistic approach that focuses on community healing
- Assist government departments and service providers to be consistent with the broader understandings of healing the trauma and violence in the EMR Indigenous community and at the individual level that focuses on community change and regeneration

The objectives of this plan are to have prevention and intervention strategies implemented to stop the harm of Indigenous family violence in the EMR.

This Action Plan is designed as a living document and will be regularly monitored and up-dated by the Action Group allowing for strategies to be evaluated and improved or to include additional priorities across the three years.

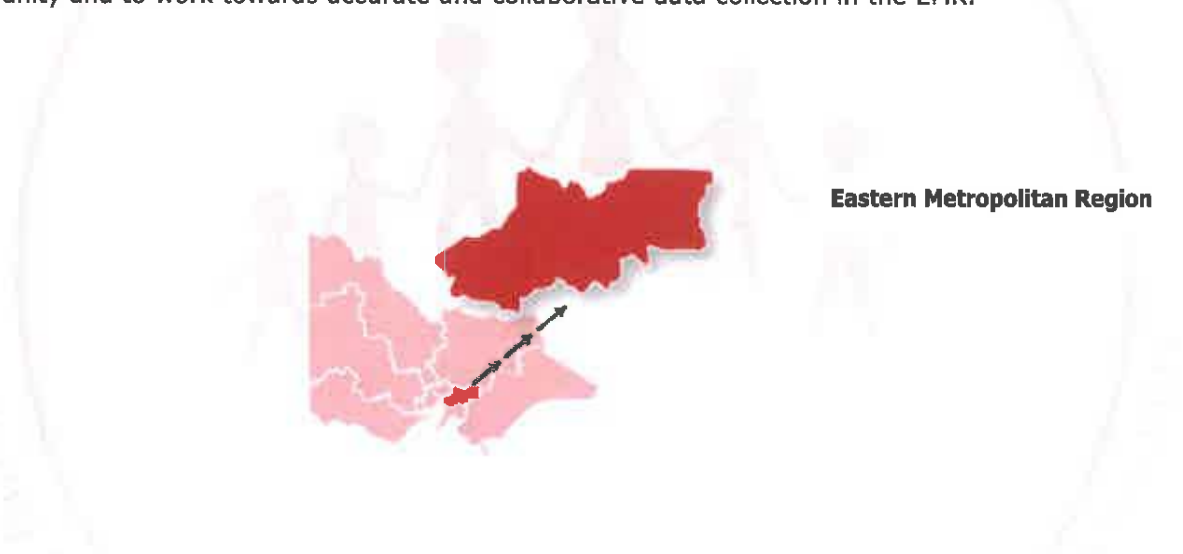
## HISTORY and POPULATION OF THE EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGION

The EMR comprises suburbs within seven local government areas; Cities of Boroondara, Whitehorse, Monash, Manningham, Maroondah, Knox and the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

The Indigenous community consists of the traditional custodians, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations; Indigenous people from all over Victoria, Australia and the Torres Strait Islands.

There is a history of transitional populations of Indigenous people in the EMR that reflect the diversity of Indigenous culture in the region.

It is envisaged through this plan, to give a visual and verbal presence of the EMR Indigenous community and to work towards accurate and collaborative data collection in the EMR.



### The EMR estimated Indigenous population:

2,576 people who identified as Indigenous in 2006 (2006 Census) in EMR, representing 8.5% of the total Victorian Indigenous population.<sup>1</sup>

### Location of Indigenous people across the local government areas (LGAs) in the Region:

- 33% of Indigenous people live in the Yarra Ranges Shire
- 56% live in Knox, Maroondah, Whitehorse, and Monash
- 6.5% live in Boroondara and 4.5% live in Manningham

<sup>1</sup> ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

NOTE: This data will be updated when new Census data is available

## VISION AND GUIDING OBJECTIVES

As our communities grow and prosper, so must our pledge to continue the fight in preventing and eliminating the impacts of intergenerational family violence. The importance of creating a community where our people can live free from abuse; be nurtured in rebuilding purposeful lives and strengthened to desire a healthier future is even more critical. Our communities, our families and our culture cannot live one without the other; so it is from this day forward that we must surge on in our quest for healing, forever conscious that the journey ahead is necessary if we are to build healthier futures for our children that are free from systemic violence.

The EMR Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group has identified the following objectives:

- Strengthening and educating community
- Strengthening Regional Action Group through recruitment, good governance, mutual support and by having an inclusive approach to our work
- Establishing and maintaining partnerships with the Indigenous community as well as Indigenous and mainstream organisations and government departments
- Healing the impact of family violence through supporting our members, community and activities/programs
- Continue to develop and support family violence and **sexual assault** programs in our community
- Helping to ensure mainstream agencies are delivering services culturally, safely and effectively for our community

## NATURE AND EXTENT OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

The following table highlights the varying degrees of violence that exist and the extent to which the violence affects victims. This includes short term, medium and lifelong injuries with psychological scars and traumatic experiences that affect victims.

Victims	Type of Violence	Varying Degrees of Violence
Babies	Verbal Abuse/Threats	Short term
Children	Threatening	Physical Injuries which will heal
Youth	Behaviour	Psychological scars which can be healed
Women	Physical Abuse/Assault	Medium term
Men	Sexual Abuse/Assault	Support needed over an extended period to heal physical injuries and psychological scars
Elders	Damaging Property	Lifelong
Community	Deprivation	Permanent Disfigurement or Physical Injury
Workers	Social Abuse	Permanent Mental & Psychological Scars which will never heal and require ongoing support
Same Sex	Financial Abuse	
Couples	Emotional Abuse	
	Cultural Abuse	
Extended family	Stalking	Traumatic
		Death - Trauma counselling for family members



## **DHS COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND (CIF)**

The DHS CIF is available for Indigenous organisations to apply for once a year to develop innovative programs that will prevent and provide awareness about family violence. Applications are considered by a regional panel before being endorsed by DHS Central Office.

### **CIF has supported the following initiatives in the Eastern Metropolitan Region**

- Establishing the Indigenous Women's and Men's Network and activities
- Implementation of the recovery from family violence program for Indigenous women
- Family gatherings from Indigenous Women and Men's networks
- Counselling for victims of family violence
- Healing the Hurt program for Indigenous women and Indigenous young people
- Wellbeing project to assist young Indigenous people bring about positive behavioral change
- Indigenous Expo
- Women's anti violence diary and calendar
- Worawa Ranger Cadet Program for Indigenous youth leadership development
- Indigenous men's camp
- Trauma and art therapy linking counselling, meditation and support services for Indigenous families

## **EMR BOORNDAWAN WILLAM ABORIGINAL HEALING SERVICE**

The Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service focuses on providing a culturally relevant prevention and post intervention program and service for Aboriginal people in the Eastern Metropolitan Region who have been or are affected by family violence. The Healing Service operates holistically to provide programs and activities for Aboriginal men, women, children and young people. The Healing Service will also provide education and awareness to support and strengthen service responses to family violence situations that occur throughout the Eastern Metropolitan Region. The Healing Service recognizes the importance of providing appropriate counseling and cultural support to victims and perpetrators alike and aims to ensure that programs respond to the needs of the community through the voices of the community.

## **EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL FOCUS AREAS**

The Regional Action Group has developed this Action Plan to respond to the needs of the EMR's Indigenous women, children, same sex couples, young people, Elders and men who have experienced and/or witnessed family violence.

The following are areas identified by the EMR Action Group as focus areas for this Action Plan:

- Cultural safety/respect training for all EMR family violence and sexual assault service providers
- Invite mainstream services to community events (eg. Family Days, NAIDOC events, Health Expo) to strengthen partnerships
- Organise family activities in the EMR once a year to promote and encourage healthy relationships and community participation
- Strengthen the Regional Action Group to have a public education role with a strong presence in the community by taking ownership on what family violence is and informing community about family violence prevention

### Regional Action Group Priorities for 2011

Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Outcomes	Timeframe
Mainstream services understand Aboriginal culture and the specific client needs to enhance service response for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Give guidance and support to Australian Childhood Foundation & Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault cultural inclusion plans.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs	Mainstream services are culturally safe and respectful of the Indigenous community and its clients.	December 2011 Review annually
	Develop and promote cultural safety workshops/training with local community relevance and meaning.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead - Chairs & Coordinator		December 2011
Strengthen the Regional Action Group	Encourage community to become active participants in the Regional Action Group by ongoing recruitment for members and promotion of the action group, action plan and its objectives.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead - Coordinator	Increased awareness of Indigenous family violence in the community and programs/services available.  Strong and active Regional Action Group leading change in the EMR community.	Elect new Co-Chairs July 2011 Recruitment of members ongoing
	Invite local mainstream service providers to the Regional Action Group meetings.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead - Coordinator	Wider involvement and understanding of the Regional Action Group. This will also promote sharing of cultural knowledge and develop pathways to work together.	Ongoing
	Training and development of Regional Action Group community members eg. Governance training, public speaking/media training.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Building the skills of the Regional Action Group will strengthen the capacity and capability of the group to build partnerships and work effectively to prevent family violence in the EMR community.	December 2011
	Annual review of Action Plan/Planning Day.	RAG members/Coordinator  Lead - Chairs	Regular evaluation of the Action Plan will ensure acknowledgement of achievements, identify gaps/areas for improvement	Reviewed annually – end of financial year

			and include emerging strategies/actions.	
<b>Community Activities</b>	Host a Reconciliation Week Family Day to promote Regional Action Group and encourage strong, healthy families.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Executive	Raise the profile of the RAG and build partnerships with community and service providers.	5 June 2011
	Coordinate NAIDOC Living Books community event in partnership with local Indigenous community and workers.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead - Coordinator		July 2011
	Participate in White Ribbon Day by taking a group of community members along to participate in Statewide event.	RAG members  Lead – Men in Regional Action Group		25 November 2011
<b>Linking with other Regional Frameworks</b>	Regional Action Group to work with EMR Close the Health Gap project team to effectively utilise the available funding to build on regional family violence work.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs	A shared vision with EMR's Close the Health Gap Strategy to progress the health aspects of regional family violence plans and services to reduce the health impact family violence has on young people and families.	This is a 3 year funding agreement with Department of Health and Regional Action Group

### Regional Action Group Priorities for 2012

Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Outcomes	Timeframe
<b>Mainstream services understand Aboriginal culture and the different client needs</b>	Develop independent community group that has the ability to offer advice and audit service providers in an effort to make their services more accessible to Indigenous clients.	RAG members Lead - Chairs	Mainstream services are culturally safe and respectful of the Indigenous community and its clients.	December 2012
	Review cultural inclusion plan with Australian Childhood Foundation & Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault.	RAG members / Coordinator Lead - Chairs & Coordinator		December 2012 Review annually
<b>Build on and strengthen partnerships with community organisations and service providers to ensure greater access of family violence and sexual assault services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community</b>	Regional Action Group and Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service in partnership develop MOU's with other mainstream service providers – 2 per year.	RAG members Lead – Chairs & Boorndawan Willam Healing Service	Strong partnerships with mainstream service providers to meet needs of the Indigenous clients.	Ongoing – commencing December 2011
	Hold an event to celebrate MOU's with service providers and other Indigenous organisations, highlight best practice models.	RAG members Lead – Chairs & Boorndawan Willam Healing Service		Annually
	Advocate for a Time Out Service – investigate how to establish a safe place for men to go if involved in family violence and sobering up.	RAG members / Coordinator Lead – Chairs	A Time Out Service will provide opportunities for healing for victims and perpetrators of family violence and provide a response to trauma and violence.	Ongoing
	Build relationship and work in partnership with other local Indigenous networks/groups including RAJAC & LIN's	RAG members / Coordinator Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Greater service continuum for EMR Indigenous community.	Ongoing
<b>Strengthen the Regional Action Group</b>	Training and development of Regional Action Group members eg. Governance training, public speaking/media training.	RAG members / Coordinator Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Building the skills of the Regional Action Group will strengthen the capacity and capability of the group to build partnerships and work effectively to prevent family violence in the EMR community.	Ongoing – reviewed annually

	Annual review of Action Plan/Planning Day.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Regular evaluation of the Action Plan will ensure acknowledgement of achievements, identify gaps/areas for improvement and include emerging strategies/actions.	Reviewed annually – end of financial year
<b>Community Activities</b>	Hold EMR White Ribbon Day local community event.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Men of Regional Action Group	Raise the profile of the Regional Action Group and build partnerships with community and service providers.	November 2012
<b>Support and promotion of Community Prevention Initiative Funds Projects</b>	Develop ongoing parenting/family support program utilising virtual dolls and puppets.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs & Members	Promote and support healthy relationships; strengthen families and develop the skills of young parents.	December 2012

### Regional Action Group Priorities for 2013

Strategy	Action	Responsibility	Outcomes	Timeframe
<b>Building strong partnerships with community organisations and service providers to ensure greater access of family violence and sexual assault services to community</b>	Regional Action Group and Boorndawan Willam Healing Service in partnership, develop MOU's with other mainstream service providers – 2 per year.	RAG members  Lead – Chairs and Boorndawan Willam Healing Service	Strong partnerships with mainstream service providers to meet needs of the Aboriginal clients.	Ongoing
	Hold an event to celebrate MOU's with service providers and other Indigenous organisations.	RAG members  Lead – Chairs and Boorndawan Willam Healing Service		Annually
<b>Mainstream services understand Aboriginal culture and the different client needs</b>	Review cultural inclusion plan with Australian Childhood Foundation & Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead - Chairs & Coordinator	Mainstream services are culturally safe and respectful of the Indigenous community and its clients.	December 2013 Review annually
<b>Strengthen the Regional Action Group</b>	Training and development of RAG community members eg. Governance training, public speaking/media training.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Building the skills of the RAG will strengthen the capacity and capability of the group to build partnerships and work effectively to prevent family violence in the EMR community.	Ongoing
	Annual review of Action Plan/Planning Day.	RAG members / Coordinator  Lead – Chairs & Coordinator	Regular evaluation of the Action Plan will ensure acknowledgement of achievements, identify gaps/areas for improvement and include emerging strategies/actions.	Reviewed annually – end of financial year
<b>Community Activities</b>	Hold EMR White Ribbon Day local community event - Family camp.	RAG members/Coordinator  Lead – Chairs and Healing Service	Prevention, promoting healthy family relationships	November 2013

## **LINKAGES WITH KEY INDIGENOUS STRATEGIC PLANS, POLICIES & AGREEMENTS**

The EMR Regional Action Plan has been developed in conjunction with a number of other key Victorian 'whole of government' strategic frameworks. DHS EMR in partnership with the EMR Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group will collaboratively plan, develop, review and evaluate family violence services to prevent and stop family violence occurring with Indigenous families in the EMR.

### **Victorian Indigenous Family Violence – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families – Towards a Safer Future for Indigenous Families and Communities 10 Year Plan**

Website: [www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/indigenous/indigenous-family-violence](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/indigenous/indigenous-family-violence)

### **National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children**

Website: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au>

### **No to Violence**

Website: <http://ntv.org.au/pages/about-us/introducing-no-to-violence.php>

### **Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA2)**

Website: [www.justice.vic.gov.au](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au)

### **Wannik – Learning Together Journey to Our Future (EMR DEECD Action Plan & LAECG's)**

Website: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

### **DHS Reconciliation Action Plan**

Website: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aboriginalhealth/downloads/rap2010.pdf>

### **EMR DHS Aboriginal Services Plan**

Website: <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpcd/koori/plans.htm>

### **Department of Health – Close the Health Gap Plan Eastern Metro Region**

Website:

[http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aboriginalhealth/vip/eastern\\_metro.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aboriginalhealth/vip/eastern_metro.htm)

### **Whitehorse City Council - Reconciliation Action Plan**

Website:

<http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Whitehorse%20Draft%20Reconciliation%20Action%20Plan%202011-2015.pdf>

### **Manningham City Council – Indigenous Policy**

Website: [http://www.manningham.vic.gov.au/maccwr/assets/main/lib90038/02%20-%20pdf%20files/manningham%20indigenous%20policy\\_lr.pdf](http://www.manningham.vic.gov.au/maccwr/assets/main/lib90038/02%20-%20pdf%20files/manningham%20indigenous%20policy_lr.pdf)



## **EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL CONTACTS**

**Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention & Legal Service – 1800 105 303**

<http://www.fvpls.org/>

**Anglicare Victoria – 1800 809 722**

<http://www.anglicarevic.org.au>

**Australian Childhood Foundation – 1800 176 453**

<http://www.childhood.org.au/home/>

**Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service - 03 9871 2676**

**Department of Justice – Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council**

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/justlib/doj+internet/home/your+rights/indigenous+victorians/aboriginal+justice/justice+-+regional+aboriginal+justice+advisory+committee>

**Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault – 1800 806 292**

<http://www.easternhealth.org.au/services/community/communityecasa.aspx>

**Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) – 03 9259 4200**

**Eastern Victims Assistance & Counselling Programs - 1800 819 817**

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/victimsofcrime>

**Knox Community Health**

<http://www.kchs.org.au/>

**Monashlink**

<http://www.monashlink.org.au/>

**Ngwala Willumbong**

[www.ngwala.org](http://www.ngwala.org)

**Regional Family Violence Partnership**

<http://www.easternfamilyviolencepartnership.org.au/>

**Relationships Australia**

<http://relationships victoria.com.au//>

**Whitehorse Community Health**

<http://www.wchs.org.au/>

**Yarra Valley Aboriginal Health Service**

<http://www.easternhealth.org.au/locations/yarrangeshealth/serviceDirectory/service,serviceId,11440.aspx>

<b>ACRONYMS</b>			
<b>AAV</b>	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	<b>IFVRAG</b>	Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group
<b>ABS</b>	Australian Bureau of Statistics	<b>KESO</b>	Koorie Engagement Support Officer
<b>AFDM</b>	Aboriginal Family Decision Making Program	<b>LAECG</b>	Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
<b>AFVPLS</b>	Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service	<b>LGA's</b>	Local Government Areas
<b>ACF</b>	Australian Childhood Foundation	<b>MMIGP</b>	Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place
<b>BWAHS</b>	Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service	<b>NTV</b>	No To Violence
<b>CHAOS</b>	Community Houses Association of the Outer Eastern Suburbs	<b>OOH</b>	Office of Housing
<b>DEECD</b>	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	<b>OWP</b>	Office of Women's Policy - DPCD
<b>DOJ</b>	Department of Justice	<b>PASA</b>	Program And Services Advisor
<b>DPCD</b>	Department of Planning and Community Development	<b>RAJAC</b>	Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
<b>DVIRC</b>	Domestic Violence Incest Resource Centre	<b>RAV</b>	Relationships Australia Victoria
<b>EACH</b>	Eastern Access and Community Health	<b>SAAP</b>	Support and Accommodation Program
<b>ECASA</b>	Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault	<b>VACCA</b>	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
<b>EDVOS</b>	Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Service	<b>VAEAI</b>	Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated
<b>EASTERN HEALTH</b>	Eastern Health - Aboriginal Health Team at Healesville	<b>VAHB</b>	Victorian Aboriginal Housing Board
<b>FaHCSIA</b>	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	<b>VAHS</b>	Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
<b>FV PASA</b>	Family Violence Program & Service Advisor	<b>VALS</b>	Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
<b>HACC</b>	Home and Community Care	<b>VLA</b>	Victorian Legal Aid
<b>HALO-HACC</b>	HACC Aboriginal Liaison Officer	<b>WHE</b>	Women's Health East
<b>YVCHS</b>	Yarra Valley Community Health Service		

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