

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – DECEMBER 6, 2019

**Funding cut to ATSI peak body must be immediately reversed:  
Jesuit Social Services**

The Federal Government’s funding cut to the National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services Forum (National FVPLS) is unjustified, unwarranted and must be immediately reversed, says Jesuit Social Services.

“Jesuit Social Services, along with many of our colleagues in the community services sector, is extremely concerned at the Federal Government’s decision to cease funding the country’s only national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims and survivors of family violence and sexual assault,” says Julie Edwards, CEO of Jesuit Social Services.

“The voices and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are vital to the national conversation and our hopes of addressing violence against women and creating stronger, more cohesive communities.”

“Just four months ago, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. This funding decision flies in the face of the National Plan’s aim to eradicate violence against women and children.

Jesuit Social Services’ The Men’s Project works to support boys and men to live respectful, accountable and fulfilling lives free from violence. Ms Edwards says work such as that undertaken by The Men’s Project must be complemented by adequately funded services and organisations that work directly with victims and survivors.

Ms Edwards also says it is vital that Aboriginal people, Aboriginal community controlled organisations, and communities are adequately resourced, funded and empowered to make decisions about issues that impact them.

“We call on the Federal Government to immediately reinstate the National FVPLS’ annual funding of \$244,000 and provide additional resources to ensure the voices and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women aren’t eliminated – rather they are strengthened.”

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