CHANCE FOR GENERATIONAL CHANGE

Australia can take a significant step towards generational change in Indigenous communities tomorrow when the Council of Australian Governments meets in Canberra.

Chief Minister Clare Martin said the time is right for a long term plan to significantly narrow the gaps between Indigenous people and other Australians – as identified by the ‘Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage’ report produced by the Productivity Commission.

“This could be the best chance we get to achieve generational change in our Indigenous communities,” Ms Martin said.

“The gaps are such that it will take a national commitment, over a generation, to make a major difference to the disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians.

“That’s why I’ve called for a long term plan to improve housing, health, law and order, education, and governance – indigenous communities must also play their part.

“We have to take indigenous issues out of this country’s political cycles and create a platform for concerted, sustained action.”

The life expectancies for Aboriginal males and females are at levels last seen for Australian males and females in 1919 and 1925 respectively.

“A plan to tackle the gap between Indigenous people and other Australians needs real targets at 5, 10, 15 and 20 years.

“These targets need to be tied to Productivity Commission indicators so we can measure our progress.

“A plan would build on the National Framework of Principles for Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians and recognise the individual needs of each jurisdiction.

“A focus of tomorrow’s COAG meeting will be the National Reform Agenda, in particular making the most of Australia’s human capital.

“A national generational plan for Indigenous Australians applies the same principles.

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