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# Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs

**Prepared by**

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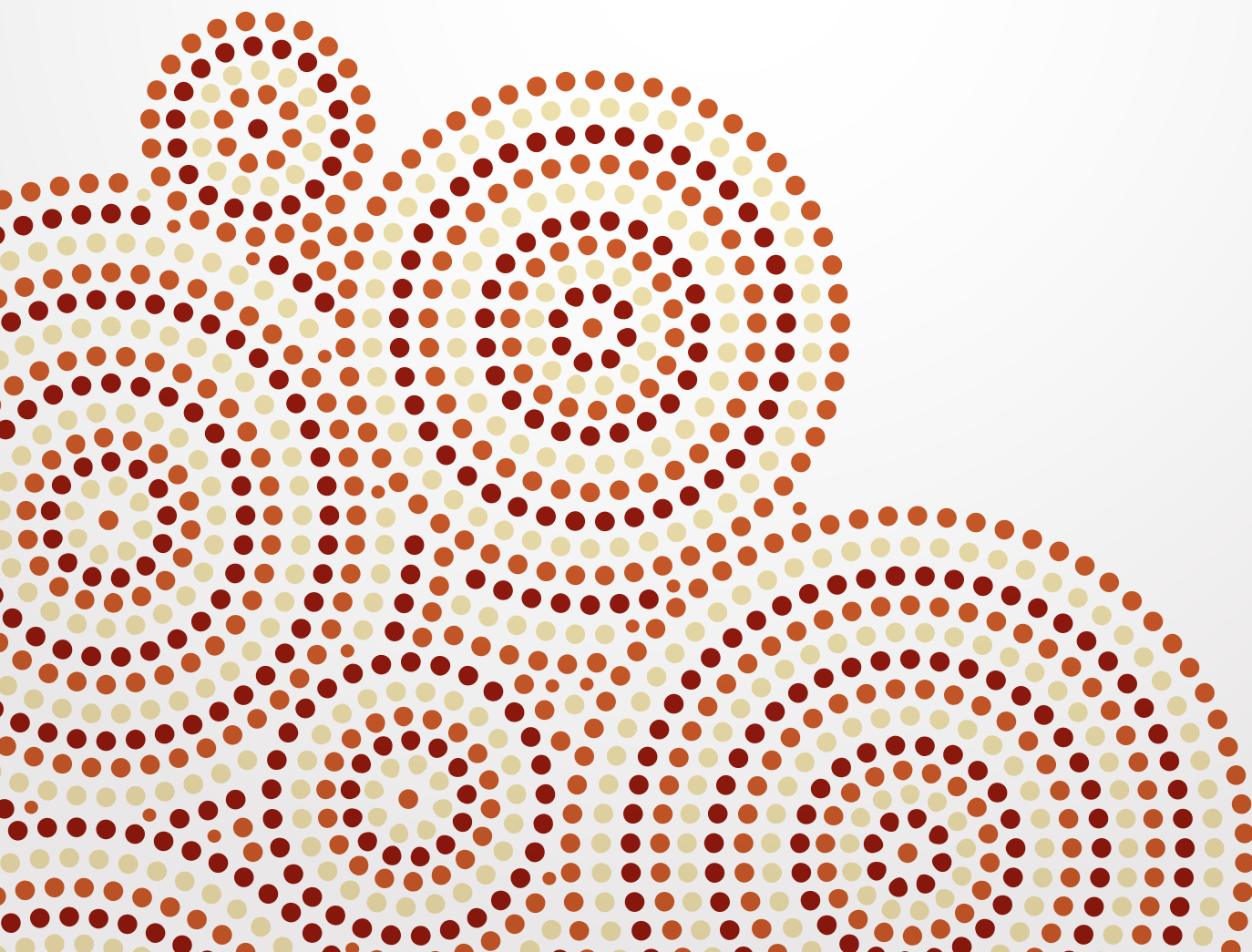
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# Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

We would like to acknowledge that the country we now call Australia was built on the stolen lands of hundreds of Aboriginal nations, each with their own unique language, culture and traditions – and that sovereignty was never ceded.

It is important to recognise that every day, those of us who are settlers to this country are working on stolen land and benefiting from a system that continually displaces, disadvantages and discriminates against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We would like to acknowledge that these standards were written and developed on what always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land – the land of Arrernte people here in Mparntwe.

We recognise the strength, resilience, knowledge, skills and lived experience of all Aboriginal peoples in this land.

We would like to pay respect for the ongoing spiritual and cultural connections to the land and to Country held by the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional custodians of this continent, whose cultures are among the oldest living cultures in human history. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging and extend our recognition to their descendants.

We would also like to thank the stakeholders who shared their expertise with us. The continual generosity and perpetual hope of the people working in the domestic, family, and sexual violence space in Central Australia humbles us. It is our hope that the *Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change* can provide inspiration and further drive the amazing work already underway.

It is our hope that MBCPs can be a valuable contributor in creating a strong future for women, children and men in the Northern Territory.

The Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs were developed in 2020 in consultation with:

- Tangentyere Council Family Violence Prevention Program:
  - Tangentyere Womens Family Safety Group;
  - Tangentyere Men's Family Safety Group; and
  - Tangentyere Men's Behaviour Change Program.
- Women's Safety Services of Central Australia (WoSSCA);
- Central Australia Women's Legal Service (NT);
- The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency;
- NPY Womens Council;
- Community Corrections NT;
- Department of Territory Families NT;
- Department of the Attorney-General and Justice NT;
- No to Violence (NTV);
- Doctor Daphne Hewson; and
- Eliza Arbaci – Bethany (Geelong).

Special thanks to *No to Violence* whose minimum standards have guided the Tangentyere Men's Behaviour Change Program for the past six years. Thank you for your support and ongoing commitment to the safety and wellbeing of women and children and for your expertise and leadership regarding work with men who use violence.

Right: Gwen Gillen,  
a member of TWFSG,  
translating the  
CAMS through art



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# Key Terms and Acronyms

The table below provides brief information about key terms and acronyms pertinent to the CAMS. This is not an exhaustive list nor are the definitions detailed enough to fully capture the context, this table is intended as an introduction only.

Term/Acronym	Definition
Aboriginal community-controlled organisation	Aboriginal community-controlled organisations are incorporated organisations that are governed and operated by local Aboriginal people to provide culturally appropriate support services for community members.
Aboriginal community healing groups	Healing groups are an inclusive process focussing on family and community to address emotional, mental, physical and spiritual needs that revolve around connections to culture, family and land (Healing Foundation, n.d.). While the MBCP has elements of healing, ethical healing work should be led and carried out by Aboriginal people to achieve solutions that focus on the promotion of cultural solutions and are driven by community ground up solutions (Healing Foundation, n.d.).
CAMS	Central Australian Minimum Standards.
Cultural safety	Cultural safety is an 'environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening' (Maori Nursing Fraternity in Williams, 2008).
Cultural competence	Cultural competence is the ability workers have to reflect an awareness of their cultural background, and how this influences their behaviours and attitudes. Culturally competent practice is the ability to reflect on the potential for unconscious bias and practice that may be automatic and deeply ingrained such as stereotyping. Cultural competence focuses on the capacity of a person to apply cultural awareness and knowledge to their behaviours and attitudes. In the Central Australian context, this primarily applies to non-Indigenous workers engaging with Indigenous clients, however, it also extends to their work with other culturally and linguistically diverse groups.
Cultural Advisory Group	A group made up of senior Aboriginal women and men <sup>1</sup> who advise the group about cultural complexities and give guidance to the program, particularly non-Indigenous workers. This group guides cultural safety and advises about potential conflict relationships between communities and provide feedback.
Cultural awareness	Cultural awareness includes acknowledging past histories, policies and practices and the impact these have had on Aboriginal people and communities. Cultural awareness acknowledges the historical legacies of invasion that have led to mistrust and misunderstanding that Aboriginal people continue to experience.
DFSV	Domestic, family, and sexual violence <sup>2</sup> 'Domestic, family and sexual violence has profound physical, psychological, social and economic effects on victims. These impacts can include serious injury, disability or death, chronic pain and disease, mental health issues, loss of employment, absenteeism and presenteeism, financial insecurity and isolation, and alienation from family and social support. Witnessing domestic and family violence causes serious, lasting harm to children. It impacts on attitudes to relationships and violence, as well as behavioural, cognitive and emotional functioning, social development, learning and later job prospects. Exposure to domestic and family violence also increases the risk of a child or young person experiencing other forms of abuse or neglect. We know that for children, exposure to domestic and family violence is highly correlated with child protection reports and may lead to cycles of youth offending. The burden of domestic, family and sexual violence is disproportionately carried by Aboriginal women and children as victims and Aboriginal men as perpetrators. The victimisation rates for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory are approximately 18 times higher than for non-Aboriginal people. This is significantly higher than in other states' (The Northern Territory Government, 2018, p. 5)
Facilitator/Worker	Practitioner responsible for delivering the MBCP for delivering group and individual content.

<sup>1</sup>At the Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program, the Cultural Advisory Group is made up of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group and Tangentyere Men's Family Safety Group.

<sup>2</sup>For a full definition, please see the Northern Territory of Australia Domestic And Family Violence Act (2017) [https://parliament.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/463034/Domestic-and-Family-Violence-Act.pdf](https://parliament.nt.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0020/463034/Domestic-and-Family-Violence-Act.pdf).

Term/Acronym	Definition
Intersectionality	<p>Intersectionality was first written by American scholar and civil rights advocate Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. The theory originally helped explain the intersection of oppressions experienced by African American women. Intersectional theories and frameworks examine how intersecting identities overlap to create unique forms of discrimination and systemic oppression that includes the intersection of race, gender, sexual orientation, class and abilities (Crenshaw, 1989).</p> <p>It is essential an intersectional lens is applied by workers/facilitators in the MBCP particularly during assessments. Intersectional frameworks guide the program's engagement, referral pathways and ways of working with both women and men. The program content is also developed using an intersectional lens. The MBCP's application of an intersectional framework acknowledges and attempts to address the impacts of discrimination /oppression experienced by women and men with whom the program engages.</p>
Kinship system	<p>'Kinship and family relationships and how people relate to each other continue to be at the heart of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal cultural identity' (Dobson &amp; Henderson, 2013, p. 7) Kinship relationships are both biological and non-biological based connections that form the basis of social relationships in Aboriginal culture. Kinship informs the roles, responsibilities and obligations that guide interactions and community life. Kinship systems also dictate 'avoidance relationships' – these relationships are designed to prevent conflict by separating certain people from each other, for example son-in-law and mother-in-law (Central Land Council, n.d.). it is not unusual to have Men in the MBC that are from the same kinship group, potentially impacting on men's engagement in the group and their ability to speak openly and honestly about their behaviour and the impact on this on their relationships. These connections are communicated to the MBCP workers by the men and the implications of these relationships is explained to non-Aboriginal facilitators by the Cultural Advisory Group.</p>
Lateral violence (sideways violence)	<p>Lateral violence has its origins in the ongoing impacts of invasion, racism, discrimination, intergenerational trauma and oppression. Lateral violence manifests when Aboriginal peoples' internalised pain and powerlessness is directed toward each other.</p> <p>Lateral violence frequently occurs toward and between families, individuals and communities, leaving the person/s experiencing it feeling shamed, blamed and socially isolated, which impacts on their mental and physical health and wellbeing.</p> <p>An awareness of lateral violence is imperative in the MBCP groups, in recognition that some men may have experienced lateral violence. They or their families may also be using lateral violence towards their partner or ex-partners as a controlling behaviour.</p>
MBCP	Men's Behaviour Change Program.
MBCP Advisory Group	Advisory group which consists of a group of diverse men representing language, age, experience, ethnicity and culture. This group includes men who have completed the program. The purpose of the advisory group is to discuss group content (see Appendix E).
Mandatory Reporting	<p>Domestic and Family Violence –</p> <p>'Every adult in the NT (over the age of 18) must report to the police if they believe either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person has caused, is causing, or is likely to cause, serious physical harm to someone they are in a domestic relationship with and/or the life or safety of a person is under serious or imminent threat, because Domestic and Family Violence has been, is being, or is about to be committed;</li> <li>• Physical harm can be temporary or permanent and it can include unconsciousness, pain, disfigurement, infection with a disease, any physical contact that a person might object to (whether or not they are aware of it at the time).</li> </ul> <p>'Serious physical harm' is any physical harm that endangers or is likely to endanger a person's life or where the effects are longstanding' (The Northern Territory Government, 2020).</p> <p>Child Protection –</p> <p>'A person is guilty of an offence if the person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Believes, on reasonable grounds, any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation;</li> <li>b) A child aged less than 14 years has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence;</li> <li>c) A child has been or is likely to be a victim of an offence against section 128 of the Criminal Code; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Does not, as soon as possible after forming that belief, report (orally or in writing) to the CEO or a police officer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) That belief; and</li> <li>b) Any knowledge of the person forming the grounds for that belief; and</li> <li>c) Any factual circumstances on which that knowledge is based.'</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>(Northern Territory of Australia, 2020).</p>

Term/Acronym	Definition
Men's business/Women's business	Within Central Australian Aboriginal communities some knowledge is segregated into women and men's business. Knowledge may include cultural stories, ceremonies and rituals that are specific for men/young men and women/young girls. The terms 'women's business' and 'men's business' are also used refer to certain gender specific practices in the contemporary context – for example women's health screenings.
Non- shaming	<p>Non-shaming practice recognises that shame can be an overwhelming and disempowering experience for many Aboriginal people and bears little resemblance to the dictionary definition or widespread beliefs that 'shaming' can be used as a restorative justice tool. Shame occurs when a person is singled out, disrespected or directly targets a person's dignity and self-worth causing shame and embarrassment. Shame can be a large barrier to seeking support and help.</p> <p>Non shaming practice is fundamental to the MBC processes and interactions with men who use violence. Singling out men for conversations in the group without a trusting relationship can cause shame and embarrassment and demonstrates a lack of cultural safety.</p>
Paternalism	<p>Broadly, paternalism has its genesis in restrictive government interventions and social policies put in place for the 'good of Aboriginal people'. Paternalism is thoughts or actions taken to 'protect' and/or change the behaviour of people that undervalues or undermines the decision-making capabilities of Aboriginal people. In the Central Australian context, paternalism has taken various forms, including forcible child removal and the Northern Territory Emergency Response (otherwise known as 'The Intervention') among others.</p> <p>Currently, paternalistic policies aim to change or control behaviour using income and welfare support, work for the dole schemes, and alcohol restrictions and prohibition, etc. Paternalism impacts on Aboriginal people's autonomy and choice and is frequently coercive in nature.</p> <p>Paternalism is particularly relevant in the work of the MBCP so requires constant reflective practice by non-indigenous staff. The aim of the MBCP is to ensure people have choices about their attendance and engagement and take responsibility for their behaviour. While the program recognises the intersectional barriers Aboriginal people experience, the program does not use coercion or actions that undermine Aboriginal men/women's ability to take responsibility for their own actions, make their own choices or have their own agency.</p>
Partner	Anyone currently in an intimate relationship with a man in the MBCP. Anyone who shares access to children with a man in the MBCP, irrespective of separation. Anyone, who in the last two years, has been in a previous intimate relationship with a man in MBCP (No To Violence, 2006; Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
Sorry business	<p>Sorry Business describes the time and bereavement activities and protocols associated with death. Sorry business is a time of mourning the death of an Aboriginal person and designed to let go of the memory of the person and heal the community. Depending on a range of factors, including agreement on burial details and funeral costs, 'sorry business' or bereavement activities and protocols can vary in time, from days to months.</p> <p>Sometimes the name of the person who has died cannot be mentioned in respect for the grieving family and may extend to those still living who share the same name. This is important to consider when asking for partners names or the names of family members that may have died during assessments or groupwork.</p>
Talking Straight	Talking straight means you 'say what you mean and mean what you say'. Talking straight is speaking honestly and clearly and not making assumptions. Talking straight is speaking without being evasive, nuanced, or indirect in your communication.
Two-way Learning	Two-way learning is 'communities talking amongst themselves and working together to understand the problems we face, the strengths we have and to come up with ideas and solutions for our future together. Working together we share our knowledge and strength to bring about good changes in the community, celebrating our successes and teaching each other the right message to spread to other communities. Two-way learning is Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people coming together to build a safe and strong community through working together. This is two-way learning and it is a step in the right direction to closing the gap to family and domestic violence' <i>Shirleen Campbell</i> .
Women's safety worker	Practitioner responsible for providing case management or short intervention support to partner and children, as well as informing partner of information pertaining to the MBCP, and providing the MBCP facilitators with relevant information relating to risk levels.



# Introduction

The Central Australian Minimum Standards (CAMS) articulate the expectations for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCP) operating in the Central Australian context.

The CAMS was developed out of recognition that the Northern Territory has the highest rates of domestic, family, and sexual violence (DFSV) in Australia (The Northern Territory Government, 2018). The CAMS are designed to acknowledge that experiences and perpetration of violence in Central Australia are compounded by contextual realities that make addressing this violence particularly complex.

Contextual factors such as extreme remoteness, a vast geographical space with a small population, lack of access to goods and service, lack of housing and infrastructure, high rates of poverty and inequality, a culturally and linguistically rich context, and unreliable funding streams for services mean that there are multiple cumulative risk factors that make women in the Territory particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence. Men in Central Australia also face additional barriers and multiple disadvantages which impact their lives and affect their engagement with programs and services.

To account for this complex context, it is necessary and important to develop contextually specific standards. The evidence tells us

that responses to DFSV must be flexible, holistic, multi-faceted and context appropriate (Cripps & Davis, 2012; Day, Francisco, & Jones, 2013; Bryant, 2009; Bott, Morrison, & Ellsberg, 2005).

The CAMS comprise six headline standards so that MBCP's are safe, effective, and context appropriate. The CAMS provide guidance on the practice of headline standards through the provision of indicator standards, which detail how the headline standard can be realised within the MBCP. Good and unacceptable practice are also outlined for each headline standards.

The CAMS were developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, in May and June of 2020. Stakeholders included women's safety services, women's legal services, corrections, child protection services, Aboriginal women's and men's groups, MBCP participants, and MBCP staff. The CAMS underwent four rounds of validation with program staff and external stakeholders to ensure that the standards are appropriate, aspirational, and continue to prioritise women and children's safety in the operation of MBCPs in Central Australia.

The CAMS are underpinned by ten principles of good practice to prevent violence against women in the Northern Territory, identified in the 'Hopeful, Together, Strong' framework (Brown, 2019). These ten principles are outlined in Table 1 on the following page. Guiding all of these principles is the central tenet and collective agreement to centre and prioritise the safety of women and children in united work to prevent DFSV.

The language the CAMS uses reflects the strengths-based and holistic approach to preventing DFSV. Language is important, it frames self-narrative and identity. In light of this, the CAMS deliberately make use of language that is inclusive and

**'Stakeholders included women's safety services, women's legal services, corrections, child protection services, Aboriginal women's and men's groups, MBCP participants, and MBCP staff.'**

Table 1: Principles of good practice to prevent violence against women in the Northern Territory (Brown, 2019)

Principles	Description
 Holistic	Caters to women, men and children; takes a whole-of-community approach; addresses underlying gendered drivers of VAW/DFSV (Brown, 2019); adopts holistic approaches to the problem, enabling the implementation of a range of different concurrent activities... Where appropriate, different levels of service provision could be provided through a 'one-stop-shop' model (Memmott et al, 2006).
 Community-driven	Indigenous people involved in conception, design and delivery; community owns, leads and governs; engages and mobilises Indigenous community (Brown, 2019).
 Culturally safe	Works in a way that is respectful and celebrates Indigenous culture; builds relationships with community; listens to community and values their knowledge and expertise (Brown, 2019); cultural safety; non-Indigenous organisations working as allies in culturally safe ways (Our Watch, 2018).
 Sustainable	Long-term, ongoing, well-funded government investment in community programs (TFVPP G2); has minimal layers of bureaucracy between the community-based project and the funding agency; utilises regionally based contact officers who can advise on the development of program activities (Memmott et al, 2006); provides a small funding component to enable the development of a small core of people within the community who can take a long-term view of the problem (Memmott et al, 2006).
 Educational	Trains the community to identify, intervene and report VAW/DFSV; challenges attitudes which condone VAW/DFSV; models equal and respectful relationships (Brown, 2019); training, raising awareness, exploring values, developing skills (Humphreys, 2000); capacity building and the transference of skills (Memmott et al, 2006).
 Accountability for men who use violence	Challenges men's use of violence, focuses on changing offenders' behaviour; integrates and elevates survivors' voices (Brown, 2019).
 Framework and theory informed	Has a gender lens and acknowledges the gendered nature of VAW/DFSV; uses an intersectional framework; is trauma-informed and contextualises VAW/DFSV within ongoing colonisation (Brown, 2019).
 Multi-agency coordination	Sharing resources and information; refers and follows-up with other services; participates in multi-agency meetings and contributes to integrated responses and strategies (Brown, 2019); collective care working as allies rather than competitors (TFVPP G2).
 Strengths-based	Non-judgemental and draws upon community assets; engages and strengthens social capital; strengthens and celebrates culture (Brown, 2019); prioritising and strengthening culture (Our Watch, 2018).
 Accessible	Uses assertive outreach; assists people to overcome barriers to access; takes the program to where people are (Brown, 2019); accessibility, equity and responsiveness (The Northern Territory Government, 2018).



acknowledges people's individuality. The CAMS chooses to use the language 'men who have used violence' and 'women' or 'female partner' rather than 'perpetrators' or 'victims' or 'survivors' of violence, to acknowledge their whole person and capacity to live a life free from violence and have an identity apart from violence.

The CAMS recognise that violence toward women is driven by gender inequality, in which cultural beliefs about women's characteristics and/or inequitable roles makes women vulnerable to experiencing violence. Men who use violence maintain beliefs and attitudes that allow men to excuse and disregard violence against women. The CAMS acknowledge that men also experience domestic, family, and sexual violence, and that some women use violence. However, the evidence is very clear that domestic, family, and sexual violence in all their forms are gendered: women and children primarily bear the brunt of men's use of violence (Cuneen, 2002; Olsen & Lovett, 2016; Our Watch, 2016). Therefore, group programs like MBCPs, aim to address men's choice to use violence, whilst other interventions are more suitable for individual women who use violence (State of New South Wales, 2017; Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).

The CAMS recognises that often men in Central Australia experience a range of additional structural and intersecting disadvantages that contribute to their use of violence, such as physical and mental health issues, homelessness, inadequate housing, housing overcrowding, alcohol and drug use, low levels of Western education and unemployment issues, plus socio economic and historic disadvantage that often contributes to serious harm in their relationships and communities. The CAMS acknowledge that these factors adversely impact on the relationships that men have with their partners, children and in their community. The CAMS reiterate that Men's Behaviour Change Programs are part of a holistic response to address these issues.

This document first outlines the CAMS, then details each headline standard's indicators and guidance on good and unacceptable practice. It then outlines the methodology and participants involved in the production of the CAMS.

**'The CAMS recognise that violence toward women is driven by gender inequality, in which cultural beliefs about women's characteristics and/or inequitable roles makes women vulnerable to experiencing violence.'**

## The CAMS Headline Standards

01

**Women and their children's safety is the core priority**

02

**The use of violence is challenged and men who use violence are held accountable**

03

**Women's safety and men's accountability are best achieved through an integrated response**

04

**Workers are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of Domestic, Family and Sexual violence**

05

**The Women's Safety Worker is essential to the safety of women and their children**

06

**The program is culturally safe and accessible**

# 01

## Headline Standard One

Women and their children's safety is the core priority

The safety of women and their children is at the centre of Men's Behaviour Change Programs operating in Central Australia.

**A**longside partner organisations, all decisions are made within an integrated response to keep men in view so that women and children are kept safe and free from DFSV. Women and children's wellbeing and right to safety is prioritised above men's right to confidentiality. Aboriginal women's voices and perspectives are privileged in recognition that they are disproportionately affected by DFSV.

The CAMS also acknowledge the role women play as caregivers to extended family members' children. These relational and kinship structures are important support networks and social capital; however, they can also add complexity to the dynamics of DFSV in Central Australia.

### Indicator Standards

- 1.1 Women's safety is supported by justice and legal responses.
- 1.2 Women's diverse needs are considered and supported by the program.
- 1.3 Women's voices are heard, amplified, and centred.
- 1.4 Women and children's views, safety and freedom from DFSV are built into the core of the MBCP's design and implementation (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
- 1.5 Women's perspectives are privileged and upheld throughout the engagement with men and guides the response. The MBCP is accountable to women, particularly Aboriginal women.
- 1.6 Risk assessment and management of the person who has used violence centres the experiences of women and is undertaken with the Women's Safety Worker.
- 1.7 Women experiences are included in the risk assessment, and women's self-perception of risk and feelings of fear are validated and taken seriously.
- 1.8 The MBCP is transparent and group content is communicated to women via Women's Safety Worker.
- 1.9 The MBCP delivers content about the specific impacts of violence on children and the safety of children is kept in view at all times.

# 01

**'All decisions are made within an integrated response to keep men in view so that women and children are kept safe and free from DFSV.'**

### Good Practice

- ✓ The MBCP content is informed by women's perspectives, experiences, and the needs of their family members;
- ✓ Risk assessments are evidence –based, informed by women's own assessment of risk and workers professional judgement;
- ✓ Information sharing<sup>3</sup> is relevant, specific and constructs a full picture of the patterns of violence beyond physical violence;
- ✓ Respectful language regarding partners is used;
- ✓ What men learn in MBCP is shared with women through the Women's Safety Worker;
- ✓ The Women's Safety Worker provides context that contributes to group content regarding the experiences of women and children;
- ✓ Respect for women is highlighted in the language used in group;
- ✓ Aboriginal women's voices and lives are celebrated and important; and
- ✓ The MBCP is developed in full recognition that the children who witness/experience DFSV are also detrimentally impacted by violence, and this affects their development, wellbeing, and their relationships.

### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ Poor practice inadvertently puts women and children at risk of harm;
- ✗ Partners are disrespected in group and their privacy is disregarded<sup>4</sup>;
- ✗ Violence is not named and is minimised and /or validated or authorised;
- ✗ The language used minimises or obscures the experience of women and children, seeks to equate women's use of violence with male violence, and/or casts violence as a private issue within a relationship;
- ✗ Workers collude with men who use violence through language/actions and put women and children at greater risk through their language/actions; and
- ✗ The experiences of children impacted by violence are ignored or disregarded.

<sup>3</sup>For the NT DFSV information sharing guidelines, see <https://territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/publications-and-policies/guidelines-for-information-sharing>.

<sup>4</sup>Due to close kinship and family relationships in Central Australia, this may mean men do not use their partner's name in group to uphold their partner's privacy.

# 02

## Headline Standard Two

The use of violence is challenged and men who use violence are held accountable

Men's Behaviour Change Programs in Central Australia 'talk straight' to men about their use of violence and the impacts of their use of violence on themselves, their partners, children and their communities.

**T**he program challenges attitudes and beliefs which justify, minimise, or condone men's use of violence against women and their children. Men who use violence will be invited to hold themselves to account and will be supported to stop their use of violence and change their behaviour. Men who use violence learn to empathise with women's experiences and are encouraged to work towards gender equality, and equity in their relationships. Healing work is important but is separate to work of Men's Behaviour Change Programs which are about accountability and responsibility.

### Indicator Standards

- 2.1 Men attend the 2-hour MBC Group Program for 16 consecutive sessions<sup>5</sup>, and may only miss two sessions for valid reasons, such as illness or sorry business and this must be communicated to program workers.
- 2.2 A maximum of 12 men should be in one group, with good practice at 10 men.
- 2.3 All men, of all backgrounds, ages, and ethnicities, are included in the group: Aboriginal, Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and culturally and linguistically diverse men.
- 2.4 Men learn about the impacts of colonisation and its links to DFSV.
- 2.5 Men learn about gender equality and how it benefits women and men.
- 2.6 Men learn specific strategies of non-violence.
- 2.7 Men learn about jealousy and its destructive effects on relationships. Destructive and gendered attitudes and beliefs about jealousy are addressed and challenged.
- 2.8 Men learn about lateral violence (sideways violence) and its impacts on themselves, their partners, children, and community.
- 2.9 Men learn about cyclical violence and the impact of their violence on women and children.
- 2.10 Men learn about trauma and its links to violence, and especially the impact of trauma on women and children.
- 2.11 Men who complete the program are encouraged to continue to attend voluntarily.
- 2.12 Referrals are received from a range of pathways and sources, including self-referrals and family-referrals.

# 02

- 2.13 There are clear group rules which encourage confidentiality, trust and manage the potential for conflict between men in the group, and that promote respect for women and their children.
- 2.14 Risk will be continually assessed and monitored, and any escalation is reported to relevant authorities, including mandatory reporting to police and/or Territory Families as per mandatory reporting guidelines.
- 2.15 Men take responsibility and are held accountable for their use of violence in all interactions with the program and its staff.
- 2.16 Risk assessments are undertaken alongside the Women's Safety Worker at different intervals throughout the program and a clear referral pathway is followed depending on the level of risk<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.17 Any new threat to the safety of the female partner or children is documented and communicated to those at risk and through the referral pathways (Appendix D).

### Good Practice

- ✓ Men who have completed the group are encouraged to attend the group voluntarily;
- ✓ The program aims to engage men before they come into contact with the criminal justice system;
- ✓ Men and their families are encouraged to self-refer and attend group;
- ✓ The MBCP aims for long-term engagement with men and their families to continuously monitor risk, develop relationships, and support men to make better choices to keep women and children safe;
- ✓ Men who exit the program are linked into support services if required;
- ✓ Workers may do individual work with men to assess risk and escalation, as well as with men who have cognitive impairments or speak English as a second language and/or who are struggling to access group content;
- ✓ Small group work is used to differentiate the work men undertake in group<sup>7</sup>: men new to the group learn introductory concepts whilst men who have been attending for some time advance onto new content; content is adapted based on the men's longevity in the program and their level of ability;
- ✓ Internal conflicts and/or family relationships between men in the group are communicated to staff and acted upon in an appropriate manner;
- ✓ Men are encouraged to share their story in a non-judgemental and non-shaming space; and
- ✓ Group rules acknowledge potential for conflict between families and communities in a Central Australian context. This is acknowledged and managed by consultation with the Cultural Advisory Group (see Appendix E).

### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ Workers use coercion;
- ✗ Workers collude with men's attitudes and use of violence;
- ✗ Women are blamed for the violence or responsible for ending the violence they and their children are experiencing;
- ✗ Workers taking ownership and responsibility for the men's change process, for example, adjudicating the men's punctuality or attendance;
- ✗ Workers have a paternalistic attitude towards Aboriginal men which excuses their use of violence and/or attendance at group; and
- ✗ Workers not paying attention to risk indicators or having inadequate or inappropriate responses to risk situations.

<sup>6</sup>Currently in Central Australia, many men attending the MBCP are mandated to attend the program for the duration of their alcohol and drug rehabilitation program. These men attend MBCP for 8 or 12 weeks, then many men return to remote communities where there is no access to MBCP. If the men who have been released from prison are on supervised community-based orders, Community Corrections Officers will do everything possible to ensure the men can complete the MBCP, however the need to return to country can make this difficult. The CAMS recognise this contextual complexity, whilst upholding the aspirational standard that men attend MBCP for a minimum of 16 weeks.

<sup>8</sup>Risk is determined through structured professional judgement, the victim's self-perception of risk, and consideration of risk factors. The MBCP risk assessment tool (Appendix C) is completed four times whilst the man is engaged by the program.

<sup>7</sup>This will accommodate the 'rolling group' structure wherein men can join the group at any time, meaning men in the group will have been attending for different lengths of time.

# 03

## Headline Standard Three

Women's safety and men's accountability are best achieved through an integrated response

Women's safety and men's accountability are best achieved in a holistic response and integrated programs that complement each other and build over time.


**T**hese programs share a commonality of practice and are mutually reinforcing, and they identify and respond to dynamic risk. Integrated services operate with a shared specialist understanding of DFSV frameworks. Men who use violence are linked to a range of timely responses which address their use of violence. These responses work together to address risk factors and the man's choice to use violence. Challenging domestic and family violence requires a sustained commitment to professional practice, transparency and collaboration with services.

### Indicator Standards


- 3.1 MBCP attends multi-agency meetings and shares relevant information with other services.
- 3.2 MBCP receives referrals from a wide range of services.
- 3.3 MBCP makes referrals to a wide range of services and links men into services to support them with mental health, drugs and alcohol, housing, and financial support services.
- 3.4 MBCP communicates with the Women's Safety Worker, corrections officers, lawyers, and police to inform them of men's progress in group and any escalation.
- 3.5 External stakeholders and services can attend and observe groups.
- 3.6 Assertive outreach is used to assist men who don't have transport to attend group.
- 3.7 Men who are assessed ineligible for the group are referred to other appropriate services or criminal justice system, and their female partners are referred to women's services.

# 03





**'These programs share a commonality of practice and are mutually reinforcing, and they identify and respond to dynamic risk.'**



#### Good Practice

- ✓ Men who have completed the group can attend the group as peer-educators to share their experiences;
- ✓ Group sessions are regularly observed by external stakeholders and services;
- ✓ MBCP is open and transparent, and shares policies and procedures with external stakeholders and services;
- ✓ All services working together, collaborating for a violence free future;
- ✓ Men's groups link up and promote education for men;
- ✓ Provision of services to support men leaving prison housing, education, health, jobs, and counselling; and
- ✓ Long term contact and engagement with men.

#### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ MBCP works in isolation and does not share information;
- ✗ MBCP does not make or accept referrals from a wide range of sources;
- ✗ MBCP does not share information with Women's Safety Worker; and
- ✗ MBCP minimises risk to female partners and children.

# 04

## Headline Standard Four

Workers are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family, and sexual violence

People working in Men's Behaviour Change Programs in Central Australia have specialist training in DFSV and be skilled in responding to men's use of violence.

Workers are able to use their professional judgement to assess, monitor and respond to risk and be responsible for communicating their assessments through appropriate pathways. Workers routinely engage with emerging evidence so that their practice is reflective and aligned with good practice. Facilitators of group sessions should include women and men, and Aboriginal and non-Indigenous staff who are able to work together in a culturally safe context and a spirit of two-way learning.

### Indicator Standards

- 4.1 The program and its workers are grounded in the evidence-base and constantly engage with emerging evidence.
- 4.2 Regular reflective practice with appropriate supervision. Supervisors need to have significant levels of skill and experience in male family violence prevention and men's behaviour change programs. It is incumbent upon supervisors to maintain current knowledge of issues in male family violence and the Men's Behaviour Change field (No To Violence, 2006).
- 4.3 Workers have relevant and ongoing training and/or qualifications in intersectional feminist theory and frameworks, specialist DFSV training, training and observation of men's behaviour change programs, trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, family safety framework training and child protection<sup>8</sup>.
- 4.4 The MBCP contributes to the evidence-base through internal monitoring mechanisms, and external evaluations which is shared with stakeholders in a transparent process.
- 4.5 The principal facilitator/MBCP supervisor has over 100 hours of facilitating MBCP experience .
- 4.6 Workers are able to contextualise their practice to the Central Australian context.
- 4.7 Groups are facilitated by female and male workers in a co-facilitation model.
- 4.8 Workers are able to manage conflict, as well as group dynamics and/or difficult behaviour. They are able to identify and challenge collusion and minimisation of DFSV – in their own practice, as well as in others. They

# 04

### Good Practice

- ✓ Female facilitators are essential to share the stories and perspectives of women;
- ✓ Indigenous workers are important to help to contextualise and explain concepts and nuances to men who use violence and non-Indigenous staff;
- ✓ Workers practice is adaptable and driven by an evidence base and knowledge of the community context;
- ✓ Workers are adaptable and willing to change their minds, they are open to challenge, and will share knowledge and listen;
- ✓ Diversity in the MBCP workers greatly strengthens the program; and
- ✓ MBCP is designed to run with one female and one male facilitator.

### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ Workers operate on the basis of misguided approaches, assumptions and/or biases;
- ✗ There are no monitoring and evaluation processes;
- ✗ Workers are unsupported and do not have access to debriefing and supervision in a supportive environment; and
- ✗ No consistent or regular female worker/facilitator.

\*A full list of relevant and appropriate frameworks can be found in the Tangentyere Men's Behaviour Change Program Manual 2020 (Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group, 2020).

plan and conduct group sessions that are engaging and constructive and respond appropriately to issues as they arise in group. (No To Violence, 2006).

- 4.9 Workers are committed to anti-violence practice, and to living without violence (No To Violence, 2006).
- 4.10 Workers continually demonstrate their willingness to challenge their own gendered thinking and the power-imbalances in their relationships (No To Violence, 2006), and organisations support this practice through provision of appropriate training and supervision.
- 4.11 Workers have significant knowledge and understanding of the ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the impacts of trauma.

**'All decisions are made within an integrated response to keep men in view so that women and children are kept safe and free from DFSV.'**

# 05

## Headline Standard Five

The Women's Safety Worker is essential to the safety of women and their children

The Women's Safety Worker is a vital part of Men's Behaviour Change Programs in Central Australia.

**T**his position should be fully funded and resourced, so that the worker can work with and alongside women whose partners attend the MBCP. Women should only be engaged by the Women's Safety Worker with their free and informed consent – women are not obliged to engage with the MBCP.

The Women's Safety Worker ensures the program is accountable to women; women's experiences, stories and perspectives are at the centre of the program. The Women's Safety Worker engages with other services to ensure a coordinated and integrated response to support women.

### Indicator Standards

- 5.1 The Women's Safety Worker assess and monitors risk assessment, shares information and makes referrals (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
- 5.2 The Women's Safety Worker makes contact with women whose partners are in the group, in a way that is agreed to by the woman.
- 5.3 The Women's Safety Worker supports women and communicates what the men learn in the group.
- 5.4 The Women's Safety Worker provides case management and communicates with other services linked to the woman to ensure a coordinated response.
- 5.5 The Women's Safety Worker gains full, informed, and ongoing consent to continue to engage with women whose partners are in the group.
- 5.6 The Women's Safety Worker is in weekly contact with MBCP workers to convey their professional judgement and women's self-perception of risk.
- 5.7 The Women's Safety Worker attempts to contact engaged women on a fortnightly basis, as agreed upon by the woman and if it is safe to do so.
- 5.8 Men's risk assessments are conducted with guidance from Women's Safety Workers.
- 5.9 The Women's Safety Worker attends multi-agency meetings and shares information to keep women safe.
- 5.10 The Women's Safety Worker must have solid experience in case management and appropriate frameworks to engage and support women and children (No To Violence, 2006).

# 05

### Good Practice

- ✓ The Women's Safety Worker provides transparency about what has been talked about in MBCP;
- ✓ The Women's Safety Worker and MBCP work closely together and share information in line with relevant legislation;
- ✓ The women and children's safety and freedom underpin all programs within the Men's Behaviour Change program;
- ✓ Where possible all partners will be offered the opportunity to engage with the program for support;
- ✓ Women have free and informed consent to engage with the Women's Safety Worker; and
- ✓ The Women's Safety Worker engages with services in remote communities to make referrals and continue to support female partners who are in remote communities.

### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ Unacceptable Practice
- ✗ There is no contact with women whose partners are in the MBCP unless the woman has chosen not to be contacted or there are clear reasons why this should not happen;
- ✗ The Women's Safety Worker is excluded from risk assessments;
- ✗ The Women's Safety Worker position is not fully funded and resourced; and
- ✗ Women are coerced into engagement with the Women's Safety Worker.

<sup>9</sup>At the time of writing the CAMS, there is no Children's Safety Worker nor the resources to recruit one. The CAMS are aspirational and reflect good practice for the Central Australian context, regardless of funding and resourcing limitations.

- 5.11 The Women's Safety Worker must be aware of different services and options open to women and children, and skilled at assisting them to access these. (No To Violence, 2006).
- 5.12 The Women's Safety Worker must be effective at communicating women's and children's voices and needs to other program staff (No To Violence, 2006).
- 5.13 There is a Children's Safety Worker<sup>9</sup> who works in partnership with the Women's Safety worker to support, represent, and advocate for children impacted by violence.
- 5.14 The Women's Safety Worker engages in regular reflective practice with appropriate supervision. The supervisor has a significant level of skill and understanding regarding the gendered nature of Domestic, Family and Sexual violence, as well of the Central Australian context.

**'Women's experiences, stories and perspectives are at the centre of the program.'**

# 06

## Headline Standard Six

The program is culturally safe and accessible

Men's Behaviour Change Programs operating in Central Australia must be culturally safe and accessible for men, especially Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse men.

Cultural safety is created in the physical environment in which group work is undertaken, including the interactions between staff and men. Aboriginal men are supported to walk in both worlds, learning about culture and the inherent respect for women and anti-violence stance in Aboriginal culture in Central Australia<sup>10</sup>. Assertive outreach is used to assist men who experience multiple disadvantages to access and participate in the group. A variety of creative techniques are used to make the group content understandable and context appropriate.

### Indicator Standards

- 6.1 The MBCP is supported by a cultural advisory group of Aboriginal women and men to advise on cultural matters.
- 6.2 Visual aids, such as pictures and experiential tools, are used to help communicate group content and materials to men.
- 6.3 Central Australian Aboriginal women's groups, who have lived experienced and/or undertaken specialist training in DFSV, inform the work of the MBCP.
- 6.4 MBCP staff engage with services in remote communities to make referrals and continue to support men who have returned to remote communities<sup>11</sup>.
- 6.5 Workers, including the Women's Safety Worker, receive training and are skilled in culturally safe practice.
- 6.6 Workers receive training and are skilled in delivering psycho-educational content to culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

# 06



**'Aboriginal men are supported to walk in both worlds, learning about culture and the inherent respect for women and anti-violence stance in Aboriginal culture in Central Australia.'**

#### Good Practice

- ✓ Non-Indigenous workers are guided and supported by the cultural advisory group to ensure culturally safe practice regarding the content of the program;
- ✓ There is a bi-monthly meeting between the cultural advisory group and facilitators;
- ✓ Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff work together to ensure cultural safety;
- ✓ MBCP engages with multi-cultural centre and creates an environment and expectation of inclusion and diversity;
- ✓ Workers, including the Women's Safety Worker, engage in regular supervision focusing on culturally safe practice; and
- ✓ MBCP contributes to and engages with culturally safe community DFSV education.

#### Unacceptable Practice

- ✗ Workers treat men as a homogenous group;
- ✗ Group materials are not adapted to the cultural and linguistic context;
- ✗ Culture is used as an excuse or to minimise men's use of violence; and
- ✗ Workers discuss cultural issues and norms, such as men's business/ ceremony, women's business/ ceremony which is not the focus of MBCPs.

<sup>10</sup>Aboriginal culture does not condone violence against women. Aboriginal culture cannot be used as an excuse for violence. There is strength in culture, and it can be a protective factor, but it cannot be manipulated to condone violence against women. This standard particularly addresses two key drivers of violence against Indigenous women as identified by Our Watch (2018): the ongoing impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and the ongoing impacts of colonisation on non-Indigenous people.

<sup>11</sup>6.4 indicator standard is aspirational as, at the time of writing the CAMS, there is no access to MBCPs in remote communities and very few services. Currently, there are few, if any, services to make referrals to.

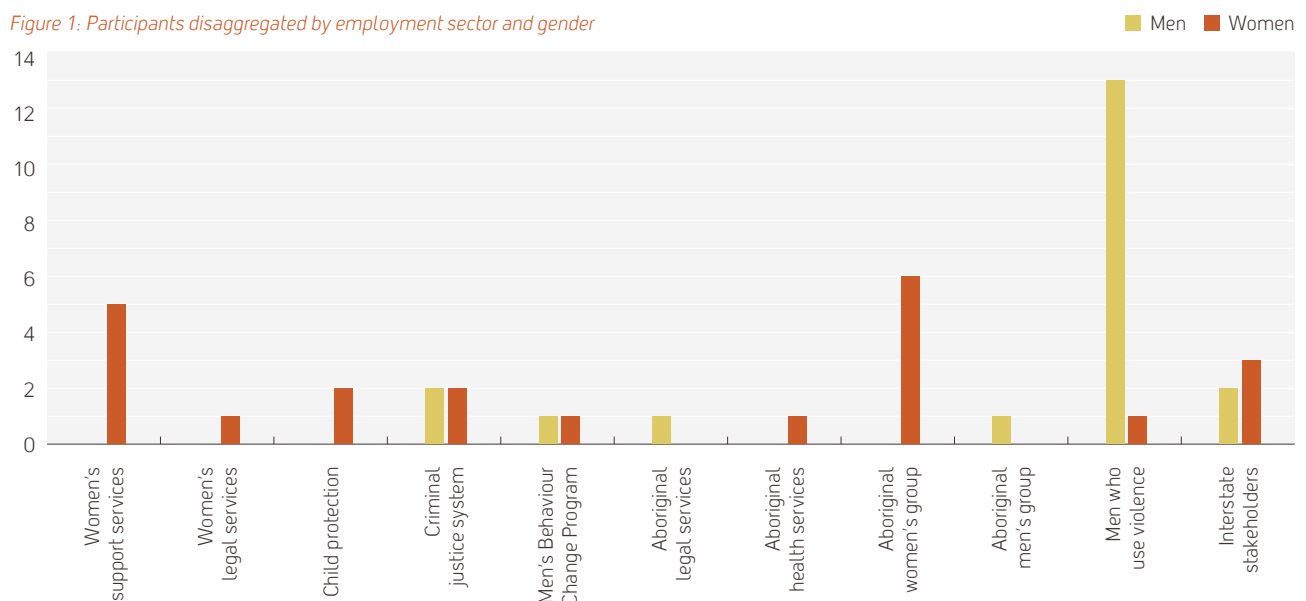
# Methodology

The CAMS were developed in a participatory action process with a range of stakeholders in Alice Springs.

The diverse participants include women who have experienced violence, men who have used violence and attend the MBCP, Aboriginal women and men, women's support services, people who work in the criminal justice system in various capacities, and MBCP staff. The development of the CAMS also involved a rigorous validation process that drew upon the expertise of a range of stakeholders, both within the Northern Territory and interstate. There were 41 participants in total (see Figure 1), and these are made up of equal numbers of women and men.

The methodology took a phased approach and began with consultations with MBCP staff, then proceeded in four collaborative workshops with participants in May and June of 2020. The products from each workshop were then compiled into NVIVO software and triangulated. The comparative analysis of the workshop products produced the six headline standards, as well as their indicator standards and guidelines around good and unacceptable practice. The CAMS was then drafted and underwent four rounds of validation to ensure efficacy. The specific methods used in each workshop and validation round are detailed opposite.

Figure 1: Participants disaggregated by employment sector and gender



# Stakeholder workshop

Fourteen participants took part in the stakeholder workshop in May 2020, and seven different organisations were represented.

The purpose of this workshop was to evaluate existing MBCP standards and select/write Central Australia specific standards. The workshop began with a presentation (Appendix B) which explained Men's Behaviour Change Programs and detailed other frameworks and standards for MBCPs found elsewhere in Australia. The presentation also gave a rationale for the development of Central Australian-specific minimum standards for MBCPs.

Stakeholders were then divided into three groups. Each group included a MBCP staff member and mix of stakeholders from other organisations. The groups were given a list of headline standards (Appendix A) and they were asked to evaluate each standard and select six that they considered to be the most important for Central Australian MBCPs. They were also advised that they could edit the standards or write their own.

Once they had selected their six standards, they were invited to develop indicator standards for each headline standard. To do this they were given the guiding questions: what are the criteria

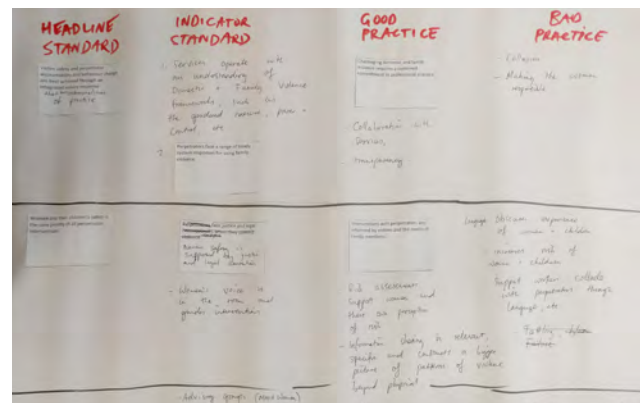


Figure 2: Group product from the stakeholder workshop

(for the headline standard)? How will (the headline standard) be measured?

Each group was then asked to develop guidelines for good practice, and were given the following guiding questions: what would the headline standard look like in practice? What is aspirational/optimal practice of this headline standard? Similarly, each group was asked to outline unacceptable practice for each standard using the guiding questions: what kind of practices are incompatible with the headline standard? What practices are risky/dangerous/collusive/undermining? Most groups were unable to complete the tasks for all six standards, but all groups produced a minimum of three headline standards with some indicator standards and practice guidelines. Most groups elected to write their own standards using the list of headline standards (Appendix A) as a guide.

**'The groups were given a list of headline standards and they were asked to evaluate each standard and select six that they considered to be the most important for Central Australian MBCPs.'**

# Aboriginal women's group, Aboriginal men's group and men who use violence workshops

The following three workshops followed a different format and were aimed at developing specific practice guidelines for the CAMS.

There were six participants in the Aboriginal women's group workshop, and one participant from an Aboriginal men's group in a separate workshop, and sixteen<sup>12</sup> participants in the workshop with men who use violence. These workshops began with an explanation of the workshop's purpose: to collaborate to develop Central Australian specific minimum standards for MBCPs. It was also explained that underpinning every decision should be the central tenet and collective agreement to prioritise women and children's safety.

In groups, participants were then asked a series of questions to complete Table 2 on poster paper. This table was completed in multiple workshops with multiple groups means so that multiple knowledge products were produced which strengthened the data collection and data analysis.

If they were not previously discussed in the completion of Table 2, participants were asked specific additional follow-up questions: what do you think about female and male facilitation? What do you think about non-Indigenous people facilitating the groups? These questions were not specific to any particular facilitator, rather they were questions about gender and perspective. Participants were also asked if they wanted to contribute any other ideas or views. All groups in these three workshops were able to complete the table and additional questions.

The group products were collated and analysed alongside those produced in the stakeholder workshop. Through this analysis, the standards which participants considered the most important for the Central Australian region were identified, with their respective indicator standards and practice guidelines.

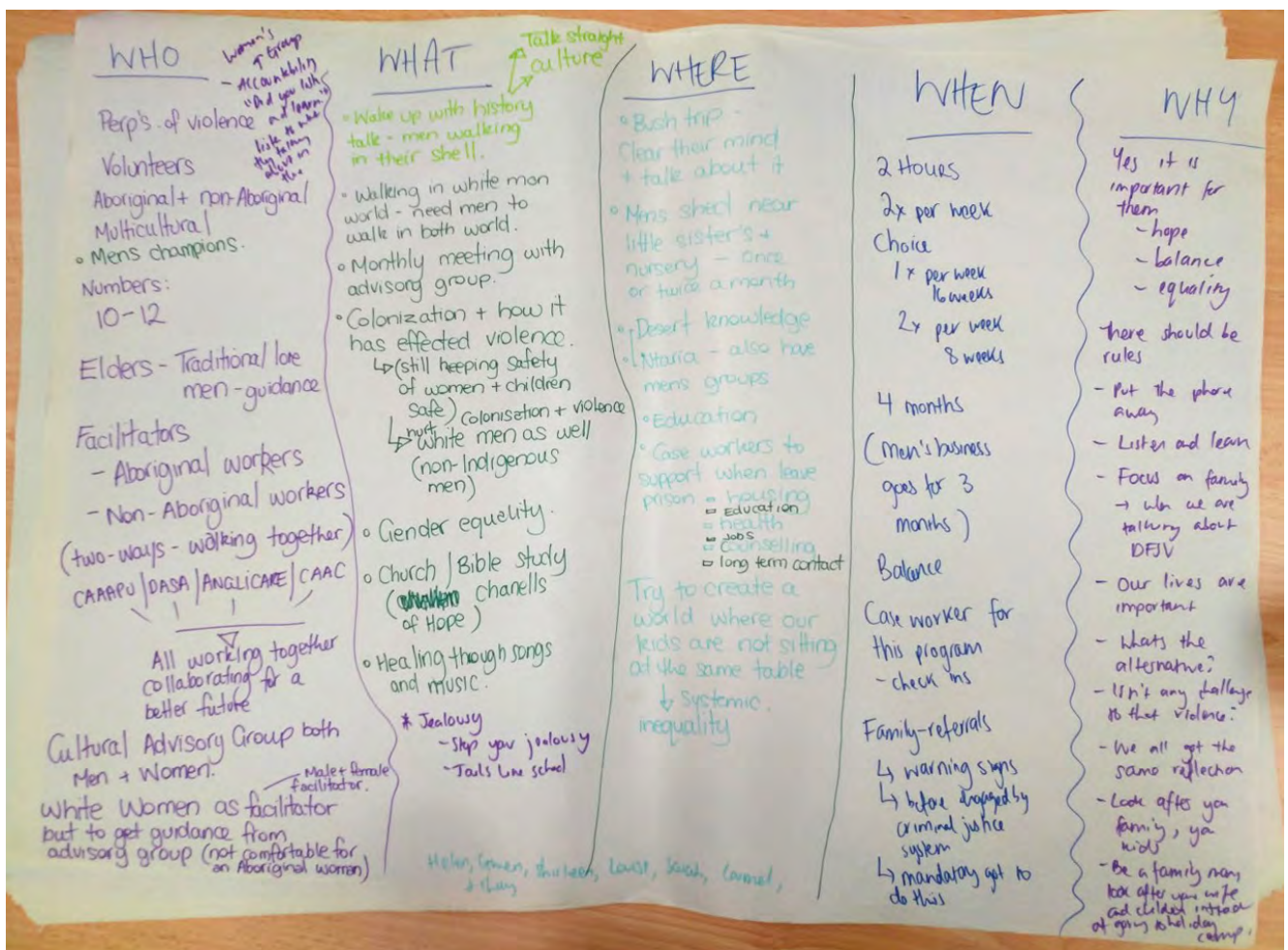
Table 2: Table completed in three workshops

Guiding questions for facilitators				
Who?	What?	Where?	When?	Why?
<b>Who should be in the group?</b> i.e. how many people? Who should be included? <b>Who should facilitate the group?</b>	<b>What should be talked about in the group?</b> <b>What should be covered?</b>	<b>Where should the group take place?</b> <b>Where else can the group help the men?</b> i.e. with referrals to other services.	<b>When should the group happen?</b> i.e. how many hours for each session? How many weeks? <b>At what point should men join the group?</b> i.e. self-referral, mandated etc.	<b>Why is the group important?</b> <b>Why should there be rules about how the group is run?</b>

<sup>12</sup>This number includes three MBCP staff who also participated in the stakeholder workshop.

'Through this analysis, the standards which participants considered the most important for the Central Australian region were identified, with their respective indicator standards and practice guidelines.'

Figure 3: Group product from the Aboriginal women's group workshop



# Validation process

The CAMS underwent a rigorous validation process with MBCP management and staff, and external stakeholders in a rolling approach.

The CAMS were drafted and sent to the MBCP program manager, who provided two rounds of feedback on the headline standards, indicator standards, and practice guidelines. The feedback included examining choices about terminology and lexis, and adding necessary contextual background. The manager also made corrections and additions to the introduction.

In the second phase, the CAMS were sent to MBCP staff who developed additional indicator standards and practice guidelines. The staff also contributed to developing the contextual information in the abbreviations and acronyms section, and the development of makeup of the Cultural Advisory Group.

In the third round of validation, the CAMS were sent to interstate stakeholders, including No To Violence, who suggested changes concerning language, and the experiences of women, and making indicator standards more specific and rigorous.

In the final round, the CAMS were emailed to stakeholders who participated in the workshop. These participants provided additional comments and feedback on cultural safety, key terms important to the Central Australian context, and finessed the language in specific indicator standards.

The validation process took more than a month in total, and involved diverse stakeholders, extending to interstate stakeholders as well as those who participated in the development workshops. Individual stakeholder's feedback was used to redraft the CAMS, which was completed in consultation with MBCP management. The process was iterative, so the CAMS was drafted and redrafted many times, before arriving at this final draft. Therefore, the CAMS is a reflection of the collective expertise and knowledge of Central Australians, which was strengthened through the support of interstate stakeholders.



**'The validation process took more than a month in total, and involved diverse stakeholders, extending to interstate stakeholders as well as those who participated in the development workshops.'**





# Conclusion

The CAMS was developed using a highly participatory approach in order to harness local expertise and knowledge.

A variety of stakeholders, including Aboriginal women's and men's groups, helped to develop the CAMS. This process was essential to ensuring the CAMS are rigorous contextually-appropriate standards that prioritise the safety of women and children in Central Australia. Participating stakeholders are experts who know that MBCPs are vital to preventing violence against women and children in the Northern Territory. The CAMS offer a foundation and an aspirational benchmark for MBCPs operating in Central Australia, and reflect that MBCPs are one part of an ecosystem of services and programs working to make a better violence-free future, with women and children at the centre.



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# Appendix A

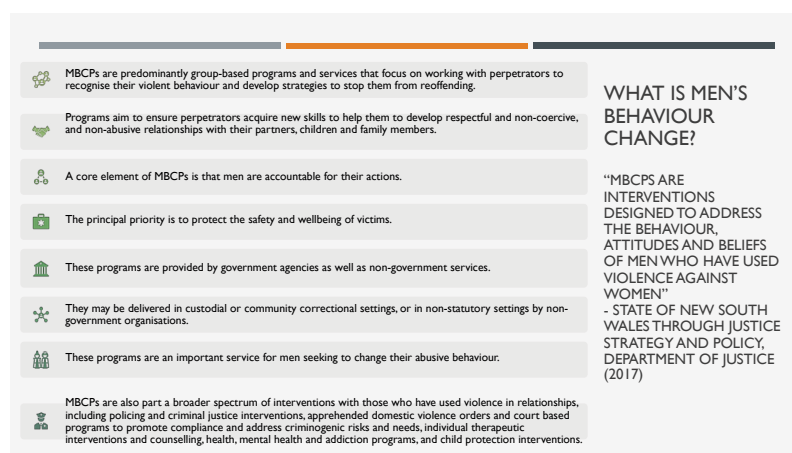
## List of headline standards

This list of headline standards was provided to the participants in the stakeholder workshop. Participants evaluated each standard and considered whether to include it in the CAMS. Participants were also able to edit or add to these standards, or to write their own. The references in each standard indicated from where it was sourced.

1. Victims', including children's, safety and freedom underpins all interventions with perpetrators of family violence. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
2. Perpetrators are kept in view through integrated interventions that build upon each other over time, are mutually reinforcing, and identify and respond to dynamic risk. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
3. A systems-wide approach collectively creates opportunities for perpetrator accountability, both as a partner and a parent. Actions across the system work together, share information where relevant, and demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of family violence. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
4. Interventions with perpetrators are informed by victims and the needs of family members. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
5. Responses are tailored to meet the individual risk levels and patterns of coercive control by perpetrators, and address their diverse circumstances and backgrounds which may require a unique response. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
6. Perpetrators take responsibility for their actions and are offered support to choose to end their violent behaviour and coercive control. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
7. Perpetrators face a range of timely system responses for using family violence. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
8. Perpetrator interventions are driven by credible evidence to continuously improve. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
9. People working in perpetrator interventions systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence. (Family Safety Victoria, 2018).
10. Victim safety and perpetrator accountability and behaviour change are best achieved through an integrated service response (State of New South Wales, 2017).
11. The safety of victims, including children, must be given the highest priority (State of New South Wales, 2017).
12. Effective programs must be informed by a sound evidence base and subject to ongoing evaluation (State of New South Wales, 2017).
13. Men responsible for domestic and family violence must be held accountable for their behaviour (State of New South Wales, 2017).
14. Challenging domestic and family violence requires a sustained commitment to professional practice (State of New South Wales, 2017).
15. Programs will respond to the diverse needs of the participants (State of New South Wales, 2017).
16. Women and their children's safety is the core priority of all perpetrator interventions (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
17. Perpetrators get the right interventions at the right time (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
18. Perpetrators face justice and legal consequences when they commit violence (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
19. Perpetrators participate in programmes and services that enable them to change their violent behaviours and attitudes (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
20. Perpetrator interventions are driven by credible evidence to continuously improve (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
21. People working in perpetrator intervention systems are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence (Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services), 2015).
22. MBCP providers and support services will undertake risk assessments for victims and children (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).
23. The intervention is culturally safe and supported by a cultural advisory group. Workers receive cultural awareness training and are culturally competent so that Aboriginal women's voices are represented; Women's Safety Worker's practice is culturally safe; the environment is inclusive and culturally safe without minimising the use of violence; and non-Indigenous workers are guided and supported. (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).
24. The intervention makes use of a co-facilitation model with both female and male facilitators. Co-facilitation models equal respectful relationships between men and women, and ensures women's perspectives are included in the room. Co-facilitation acts as an accountability measure for the program and workers. The intervention is not 'men's business', women's voices are represented and valued. (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).
25. The intervention is accessible. Assertive outreach is used to help men to access the program. Language and concepts are adapted to be accessible for men in the group. Men who are assessed as ineligible for the group are referred to other services. (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).
26. The intervention participates meaningfully in multi-agency coordination including information sharing. The intervention is not solely responsible for making change but works in partnership and concurrently with other interventions. The intervention works alongside drugs and alcohol services, police, and other services. The intervention shares information as part of their risk management: women's and children's safety overrides men's rights to confidentiality (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).
27. The partner contact / family safety worker works to support women who have experienced violence. The woman's self-perception of risk and feelings of fear are included in the risk assessment. Women's self-assessments are valued and validated. (Brown & Corbo, Meeting minutes: Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, 2020).

# Appendix B

PowerPoint presentation delivered in the stakeholder workshop



## WHAT IS MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE? – NO TO VIOLENCE (2020)



“Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) are predominantly group-based programs and services that focus on working with perpetrators to enable them to recognise their violent behaviour and develop strategies to stop them from using violence.”



“MBCPs typically involve assessment, including risk assessment, and then:

- \* Group work, individual counselling and case management for men.
- \* Support, information, referral, safety planning and (in some cases) counselling and case management for women and children.”



MBCPs are not self-help processes. MBCPs required trained workers with professional supervision and accountability and should only exist if they meet the Minimum Standards for Men's Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Programs.”



“The Men's Behaviour Change Network recognises the gendered nature of domestic and family violence and works within a feminist framework that calls for men who are abusive to take responsibility for their use of violence and abuse and for a system to be accountable to the overall safety of women and children.”

## WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM STANDARDS? – NO TO VIOLENCE (2020)

- “In 1994, No to Violence developed the Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) so that all programs reflected good practice and were safe and effective in working with men who used family violence.”
- “In 2017, the Victorian Government (Family Safety Victoria), Monash University, No to Violence and its MBCP members, initiated a review of the standards in order to adapt them to the current practice environment; particularly the need to lengthen programs, align them to Information Sharing changes, and cater to a more diverse cohort of men.”
- The Minimum Standards for MBCPs have been distilled down into 10 key standards for MBCPs in Victoria,
- “While there is room for variation in the methods and approaches adopted by individual program providers, the Minimum Standards set benchmarks that apply to all programs and ensure that women and children are not at increased risk as a result of men's participation in MBCPs.”

## WHAT ARE THE PRACTICE STANDARDS?

- STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES THROUGH JUSTICE STRATEGY AND POLICY, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (2017)

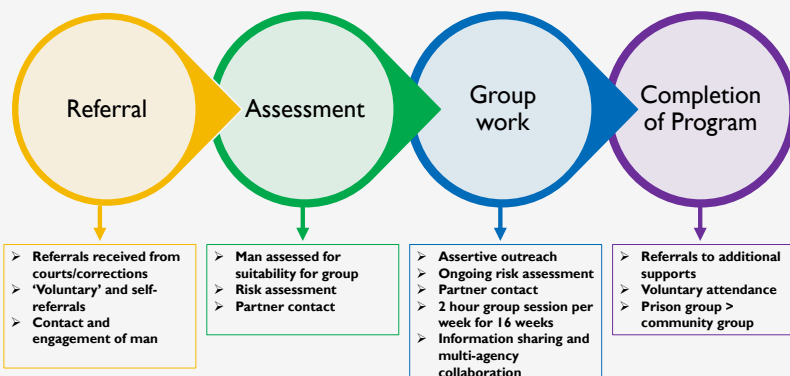
- The Practice Standards for Men's Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Programs (the Practice Standards) articulate the NSW Government's expectations of Men's Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) providers and give guidance to ensure that programs are safe and effective.
- Holding perpetrators to account is also a priority at the national level. In December 2015, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI). Developed as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022, the purpose of the NOSPI is to guide and measure the actions of governments and community partners when intervening with male perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence against women and their children. The NSW Practice Standards are consistent with the NOSPI.



## WHY DO THE STANDARDS FOCUS ON MEN?

- The significant majority of perpetrators of domestic violence are men, and victims are predominantly women (Manjoo, 2012; Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; World Health Organization/London School of Hygiene and Tropical, 2010).
- Evidence shows that gender inequality and societal attitudes towards women are significant factors underlying the majority of violence against women (Our Watch, 2018; ANROWS, 2015; World Health Organization/London School of Hygiene and Tropical, 2010)
- The proportion of female-perpetrated domestic violence is significantly lower, and international research indicates that women often commit violence as an act of self-defence or as a response against controlling or violent behaviour of a partner (Dobash and Dobash 2004; State of New South Wales through Justice Strategy and Policy, Department of Justice, 2017). Because of the lower number of female perpetrators and the complex dynamics of these cases, individual interventions are generally more appropriate (State of New South Wales through Justice Strategy and Policy, Department of Justice, 2017).

## THE MARRA'KA MBARINTJA MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAM 'MENS CHANGING BEHAVIOUR' - HG



## WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO DEVELOP CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS?

The Northern Territory in Australia has the highest rates of domestic, family, and sexual violence in Australia (The Northern Territory Government, 2018).

Police typically attend 61 incidents of domestic and family violence every day (The Northern Territory Government, 2018).

Indigenous women have been found to be hospitalised as much as 69 times the rate of non-Indigenous women due to assault (Havnen, 2012).

Indigenous women in the Northern Territory have the highest rate of DFSV victimisation of any group in the entire world (The Northern Territory Government, 2018).

In the Northern Territory, the prison population is 92% male, and 8% female, 84% Indigenous, and highest percentage of offenders derive from Alice Springs (19%) (Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit, 2017).






'Acts intended to cause injury' is the single greatest offence type of offenders in custody (47%), followed by 'sexual assault and related offences' (11%) (Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit, 2017).






In the same time period, 58.6% of assaults were related to domestic violence (Department of Attorney-General and Justice, 2018).

The rate of recidivism in the Northern Territory in 2016 was 58.3 – the highest rate in Australia (Criminal Justice Research and Statistics Unit, 2017).

## WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO DEVELOP CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS?

- Contextual factors such as like remoteness, a high Indigenous population, a vast geographical space with a small population, lack of access to goods and service, lack of housing and infrastructure, high rates of poverty and inequality, a culturally and linguistically rich context, and unreliable funding streams for services mean that there are multiple cumulative risk factors that make women in the Territory particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence
- Men in Central Australia also face additional barriers and multiple disadvantages which impact their lives and affect their engagement with programs and services
- To account for this complex context, it is necessary and important to develop contextually specific standards. The evidence tells us that responses to DFSV must be flexible, holistic, multi-faceted and context appropriate (Cripps & Davis, 2012; Day, Francisco, & Jones, 2013; Bryant, 2009; Bott, Morrison, & Ellsberg, 2005).

	PRINCIPLES	DESCRIPTION
	<b>HOLISTIC</b>	Caters to women, men, and children; takes a whole-of-community approach; addresses underlying gendered drivers of VAW/DFSV (Brown, 2019); adopts holistic approaches to the problem, enabling the implementation of a range of different concurrent activities... Where appropriate, different levels of service provision could be provided through a 'one-stop-shop' model (Memmott et al, 2006)
	<b>COMMUNITY-DRIVEN</b>	Indigenous people involved in conception, design, and delivery; community owns, leads, and governs; engages and mobilises Indigenous community (Brown, 2019)
	<b>CULTURALLY SAFE</b>	Works in a way that is respectful and celebrates Indigenous culture; builds relationships with community; listens to community and values their knowledge and expertise (Brown, 2019); cultural safety; non-Indigenous organisations working as allies in culturally safe ways (Our Watch, 2018)
	<b>SUSTAINABLE</b>	Long-term ongoing, well-funded government investment in community programs (TFVPP G2); has minimal layers of bureaucracy between the community-based project and the funding agency, and utilises regionally based contact officers who can advise on the development of program activities (Memmott et al, 2006); provides a small funding component to enable the development of a small core of people within the community who can take a long-term view of the problem (Memmott et al, 2006)
	<b>EDUCATIONAL</b>	Trains the community to identify, intervene, and report VAW/DFSV; challenges attitudes which condone DFSV/VAW; models equal and respectful relationships (Brown, 2019); training- raising awareness, exploring values, developing skills (Humphreys, 2000); capacity building and the transference of skills (Memmott et al, 2006)

	<b>ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MEN WHO USE VIOLENCE</b>	Challenges men's use of violence; focuses on changing offenders' behaviour; integrates and elevates survivors' voices (Brown, 2019)
	<b>FRAMEWORK AND THEORY INFORMED</b>	Has a gender lens and acknowledges the gendered nature of VAW/DFSV; uses an intersectional framework; is trauma-informed and contextualises VAW/DFSV within ongoing colonisation. (Brown, 2019)
	<b>MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION</b>	Sharing resources and information; refers and follows-up with other service; participates in multi-agency meetings and contributes to integrated responses and strategies (Brown, 2019); collective care working as allies rather than competitors (TFVPP G2)
	<b>STRENGTHS-BASED</b>	Non-judgemental and draws upon community assets; engages and strengthens social capital; strengthens and celebrates culture (Brown, 2019); prioritising and strengthening culture (Our Watch, 2018)
	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	Uses assertive outreach; assists people to overcome barriers to access; takes the program to where people are (Brown, 2019); accessibility, equity and responsiveness (The Northern Territory Government, 2018)

## GROUP WORK

1. SELECT/WRITE SIX **HEADLINE STANDARDS**
2. **INDICATOR STANDARD:** WHAT IS THE CRITERIA? HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED?
3. **GOOD PRACTICE:** WHAT WOULD THE STANDARD LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE? ASPIRATIONAL/OPTIMAL PRACTICE OF THIS STANDARD. BE SPECIFIC: HOW LONG SHOULD THE PROGRAM GO FOR? HOW OFTEN SHOULD PC MAKE CONTACT? WHAT SHOULD THE GROUP SIZES BE?
4. **UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE:** WHAT KIND OF PRACTICES ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE STANDARD? PRACTICES THAT ARE RISKY/DANGEROUS/COLLUSIVE/ UNDERMINING.
5. **JUSTIFICATION:** WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? HOW IS IT RELEVANT FOR THE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT?

HEADLINE STANDARD	INDICATOR STANDARD	GOOD PRACTICE	UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE	JUSTIFICATION
The safety of women and children is centered.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Risk assessment and risk management for the perpetrator's partner or impacted family members</li> <li>2. Partner contact worker engages with perpetrator's partner</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ongoing risk assessment, risk assessments completed at four different intervals during the training</li> <li>2. Partner contact worker has weekly contact with the perpetrator's partner</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The program has no written procedures to assess risk</li> <li>2. Infrequent or inadequate support for partners.</li> <li>3. Partners are not contacted as part of assessment.</li> </ol>	

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW?



ANALYSIS OF THE  
GROUP PRODUCTS



DRAFTING OF CA  
MINIMUM STANDARDS



INVITATION FOR  
FEEDBACK



FINAL DRAFT  
PRESENTED

# Appendix C

## MBCP risk assessment tools

Name				Date
<b>Risk factors – VICTIMS</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Victim's self-perception of risk				
Pregnancy/new birth				
Child maltreatment or child witness to DFV				
Isolation and barriers to help-seeking				
Low education				
Harmful use of alcohol				
Mental health issues				
Immigration issues				
<b>Risk factors – PERPETRATOR</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Suicide attempts or threats				
Misuse of drugs or excessive alcohol consumption				
Misogynistic views/attitudes that condone domestic violence				
Low education				
Child maltreatment or child witness to DFV				
Infidelity or multiple partners				
Prior use of violence against strangers or acquaintances				
Minimisation or denial of domestic violence history				
Mental health issues				
Prior police contact				
Violated court order or breached DVO				
Man's family poses threat to victim				
Unemployment				
<b>Risk factors – RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Separation				
Financial difficulties				
Court orders and/or parenting proceedings				
Presence of unequal gendered norms				
Have children				
Children witness to violence				
<b>Assessment</b>				

Risk factors – Behaviours (man to woman)	Escalation			Indicators	Comments
	Frequency 0-5	Recency 0-5	Severity 0-5		
Intimate partner sexual violence					
Non-lethal strangulation					
Stalking					
Threats to kill					
Access to or use of weapon					
Coercive Control					
History of family or domestic violence					
Economic abuse					
Spiritual Abuse					
Sexual Jealousy					
Threats to harm					
Threats to harm children or family members					
Destruction or damage of property					
Abuse of pets or other animals					
Victim's feelings of fear					

**ESCALATION KEY****Frequency**

0 - No evidence / 1 - Rare (once) / 2 - Sometimes (unusual, not often) / 3 - Occasional (several times, every now and then) / 4 - Regular (often) / 5 - Frequent (habitual)

**Recency**

0 - No evidence / 1 - More than 12 months ago / 2 - Within the last 12 months / 3 - Within the last six months / 4 - Within the last three months / 5 - Within the last month

**Severity**

0 - No evidence / 1 - No injuries, pain, suffering or consequences / 2 - No lasting injuries, pain, suffering, or consequences / 3 - Some minor injuries, pain, suffering, or consequences / 4 - Continuing/lasting injuries, pain, suffering, or consequences / 5 - Sustained/major/ permanent injuries, pain, suffering, or consequences

**Assessment**

Most recent offence	Victim	Relationship to victim	When it occurred	Harm	Risk behaviours/factors present

Protective factors	Yes	No	Indicators	Comments
Woman moves away and is unlocatable				
Man is incarcerated				
Woman is employed				
Woman has strong social network				
Woman has access to resources – money/transport/accommodation				
Woman is engaged with advocacy services				

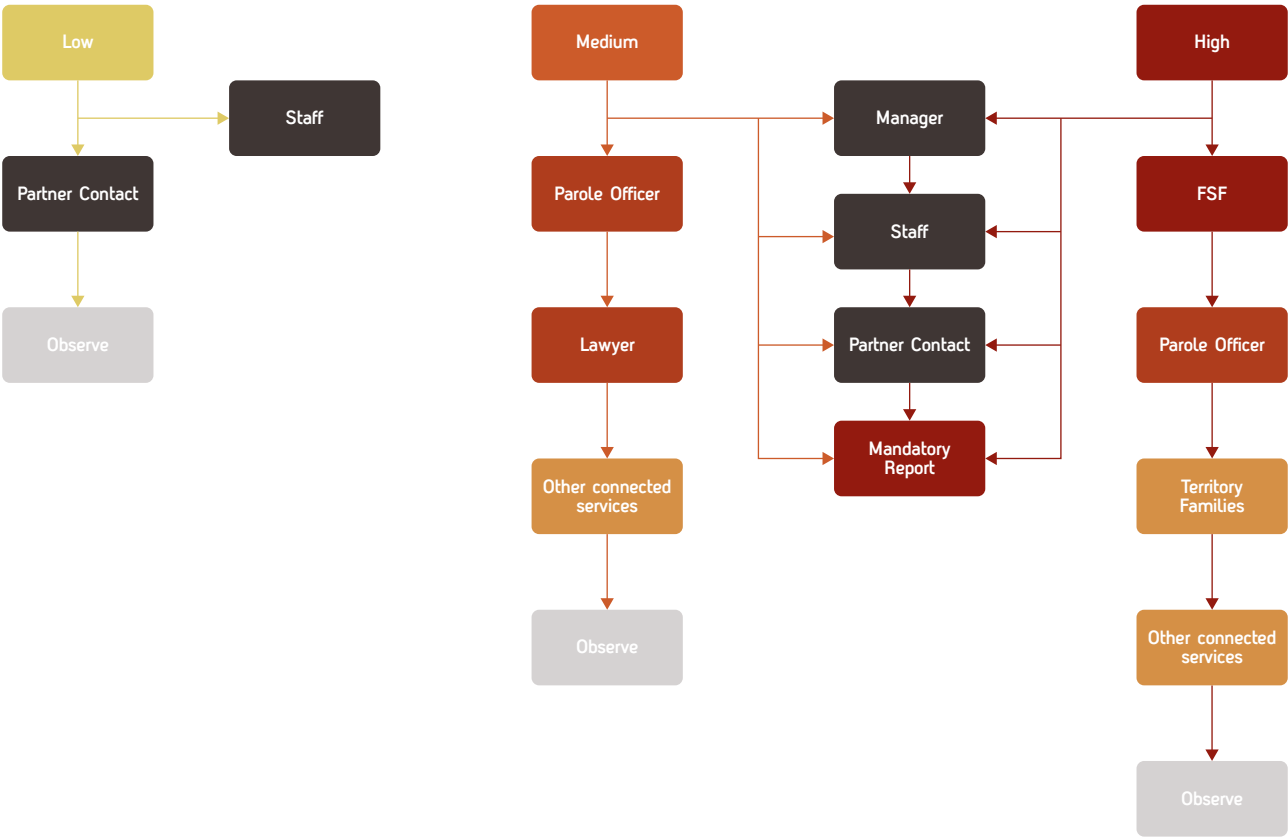
<b>Assessment</b>
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Assessment of risk (Professional judgement, victim's assessment of risk, consideration of risk factors)	Comments
High-risk factors and behaviours	
Potential escalation	
High	
Medium	
Low	



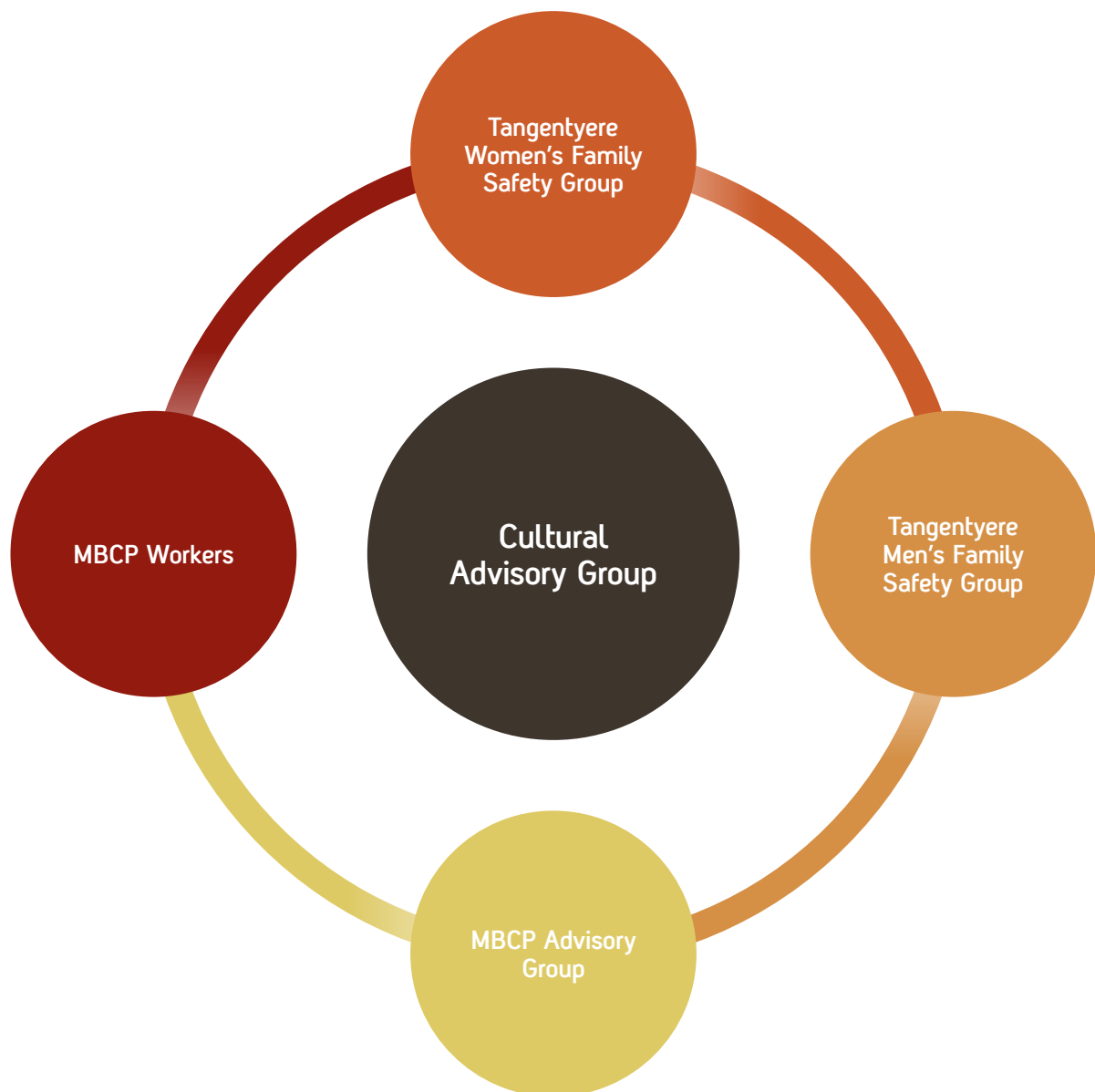
# Appendix D

## Risk management process



## Appendix E

The makeup and relationship of the Advisory Groups







WORKING  
TOGETHER  
WALKING  
TOGETHER

[tangentyere.org.au](http://tangentyere.org.au)