

The background of the cover is a vibrant Indigenous Australian artwork. It features a large, stylized sun or star in the upper right corner, composed of concentric circles of white and blue dots on a black background. Radiating from this central point are several lines of blue and white dots. Below the sun, a thick, wavy black line with white dots runs horizontally across the middle. In the lower half, a large blue fish is depicted, facing right, with white dots forming its fins and body patterns. The bottom left corner shows a cluster of orange and yellow flowers, and the bottom right corner has some dark, vertical shapes. The overall color palette is dominated by blue, black, white, and orange.

Department for Correctional Services

Partnership Framework 2021-2025



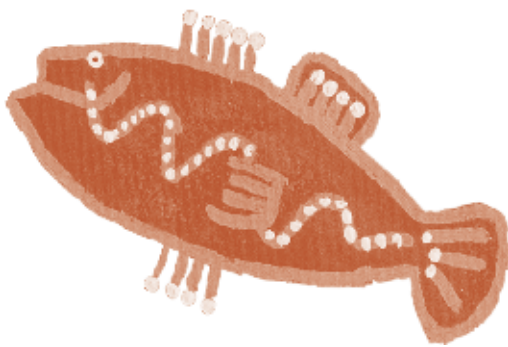
Government of South Australia
Department for Correctional Services



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department for Correctional Services (DCS) acknowledges that this Framework was developed on Kaurna land. DCS respects the Kaurna people as the Traditional Owners of the land and recognises their relationship with their country. We pay our respect to Kaurna Elders, and acknowledge the Kaurna people's connection to their country, cultural and spiritual practices are as important today as they always have been.

DCS also acknowledges that activities in this Framework will be carried out on the country of many different language groups across South Australia. We understand the continuing importance of language, land, culture and spiritual beliefs to all Aboriginal people and pay our respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal people from other regions of Australia.



This painting was created by a group of Aboriginal staff at the 2019 DCS Aboriginal Staff Forum. The two circles represent meeting places, where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal DCS staff, prisoners and offenders come together. The dots joining the circles are currents of the Murray River, representing flows of information and knowledge. The Pelican and Murray Cod are Ngarrindjeri totems, together with the fire they represent ongoing connection and custodianship. The dots in the corner of the painting represent fish eggs and new life, new beginnings and growth.

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PURPOSE

The Department for Correctional Services' (DCS/the Department) Partnership Framework establishes a whole-of-Department approach for engaging with our partners and stakeholders.

BACKGROUND

This document aims to provide a clear focus for DCS partner engagement in 2021-2025. Partnerships with government, non-government organisations (NGOs) and industries are key to successfully reaching key targets, including reducing reoffending, supporting the reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders, and improving community safety outcomes.

This document provides an overview of the appropriate scope, level and forms of engagement, sets out the key principles for engagement, and, in Appendix 1, begins to identify potential key partners for the Department.

In 2014 DCS created the *2014-2016 DCS Strategic Partnerships Engagement Framework*. While the principles for partnerships are in large unchanged, the 2020 COVID-19 experience and responses across sectors amplified the need for, and value in, strong partnerships. Lessons learnt, new relationships built, and new methods of engagement should be continued and leveraged into the future.

DCS has a wide range of meaningful relationships across sectors. This document differentiates between our partners and our stakeholders and describes a strategy for partner engagement and relationship management rather than broader stakeholder relationships.

Defining Partners and Stakeholders

For the purpose of this document the below definitions are proposed:

A **partner** is any organisation or individual that:

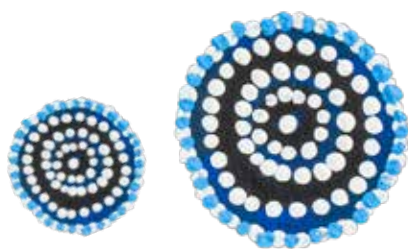
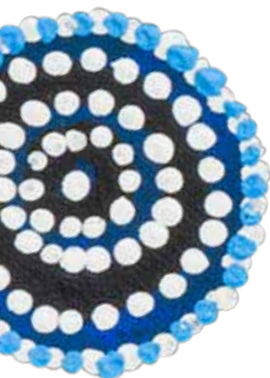
- has a clear common purpose with a DCS strategic priority or goal;
- plays a role supporting DCS staff, work groups and committees;
- provides a service to service users and/or their family and community; and/or
- actively engages with service users and is relied on to provide support to them and/or their family and community.

A **stakeholder** is any organisation or individual that:

- has an interest in, or is affected by, the activities of DCS;
- provides a service to a similar cohort as DCS; and/or
- impacts on or influences DCS' operating context.

An **Aboriginal partner or stakeholder** is any Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO), community, or individual that, in addition to the elements defining a mainstream partner:

- represents culturally specific needs and views of Aboriginal service users and their families and supports;
- provides cultural advice and/or support to DCS staff; and/or
- is nominated by an Aboriginal community as their preferred interface with DCS.



CURRENT STATE

Formal / Strategic Partners

DCS currently maintains partnerships with organisations across sectors. These tend to focus on service provision (e.g. OARS Community Transitions, responsible for delivering the Home Detention Support Services Program) or through inclusion on topic-based focus groups for specific services (e.g. the Aboriginal Reference Group). These relationships tend to be managed at a central office level, with a focus on procurement and contract management, and high-level (i.e. Executive Director/Director) contact.

These relationships are meaningful and important. Through this strategy, DCS aims to deepen and strengthen these existing partnerships and look to create new strategic partnerships with previously unreachable organisations and individuals.

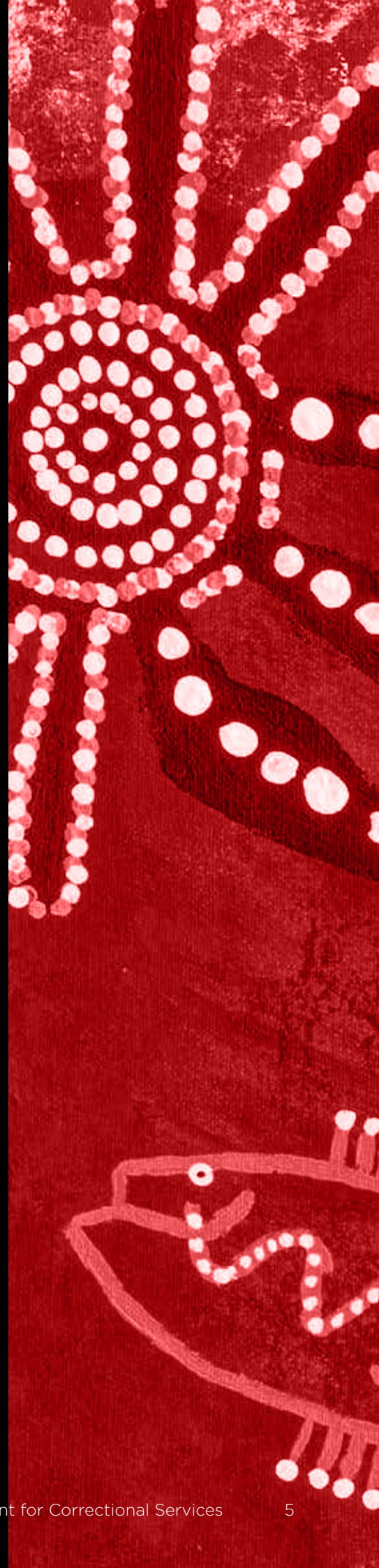
Informal Partners

Many important relationships are managed by individuals and are often informal. These informal relationships have been utilised to improve outcomes (e.g. through GM-partner relationships and site-based service delivery), however improvements can be made. It is important that these relationships are broadened and embedded in the Department. Opportunities for the Department and our partners should have continuity in times of change.

Lessons from COVID-19

The state-wide experience of COVID-19 in 2020 showed us how important close partnerships are and exposed us to new ways of engaging that should be carried into the future. The network of agencies that were identified and engaged through this time were key to mitigating risk to protect our communities and to reduce the understandable anxieties of service users, staff and their families about possible ramifications of the virus. The Department's initiation of clear communication channels gave them regular, up-to-date assurance of transparency and comfort through information on our proactive, thorough planning and actions. Similarly, phone and online channels DCS initiated and maintained with government agencies through the pandemic's impact on South Australia, provided a forum for current and relevant information to flow, and shared issues to be identified and resolved.

The learnings from 2020 and changes made in response to COVID-19 should be embedded within DCS through ongoing engagement with the sector focus on proactive engagement, planning and communication.



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This Partnership Framework aligns with key DCS strategic documents.

Table 1 – Strategic Alignment

Strategic document	Priority	Action
Business Plan 2020-21	Key Priority 3.6: Strengthen stakeholder relationships through improved information sharing, collaboration and engagement.	Initiative: 3.6.1 Plan and implement metropolitan community/stakeholder forums to engage the community on the work of Corrections.
Reducing Reoffending: 10% by 2020 Strategy	Strategy 2: Employment and Industry.	Partnerships are developed between DCS and the South Australian business sector to improve the employment outcomes for prisoners and offenders.
	Strategy 6: Partnerships and Collaboration.	Partnerships with other government agencies and public and private sector partners that ensure the successful delivery of services and programs.
Aboriginal Strategic Framework 2020-2025	Theme 3: Increase Aboriginal economic participation and strengthen partnerships with organisations, businesses and Aboriginal communities	Increase engagement with Aboriginal Communities.
		Increase partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
Strong Foundations and Clear Pathways2: Women's Action Plan 2019-24	Priority 3: Pathways to community, cultural linkage and support are established for women in custody and community.	Drive community connected and interagency initiatives to support women's successful reintegration and diversion from custody.
		Engage our partners to assist in reducing Aboriginal women's over-representation in custody and the criminal justice system.

2021 AND BEYOND

DCS partners must feel valued, heard, and see the impact of their input. While, as a large government department with a clear mandate and strategic direction we can integrate appropriate partner advice or ideas, a true partnership goes both ways. The Department should continue to offer appropriate advice and (non-financial) support to help its partners achieve shared goals.

How?

Engagement with partners should be ongoing, personal and active.

While new, remote methods of engagement are valuable (especially with partners in regional and remote locations) and should be maintained, it is vital to recognise the value of face-to-face, place-based engagement opportunities. This is especially true for community-based partnerships.

Where?

Engagements with partners should be face-to-face and in their communities wherever viable.

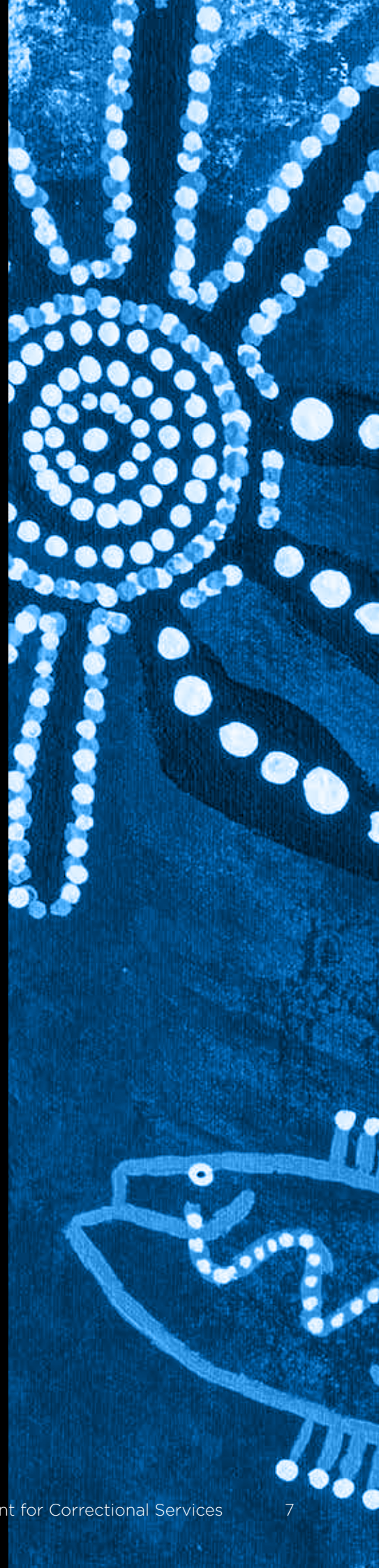
Aboriginal and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, in particular, value face-to-face engagement occurring in their community. Activities that take place in communities, formal or informal, are a clear statement of the value DCS places on the relationship. Engagements made outside of DCS locations show the Department's commitment to community, provides DCS additional insight into that community and enables a more equal relationship. Some communities or individuals may not be comfortable to attend an engagement at a DCS facility but have valuable input if engaged at a place within their community.

Who?

All staff should understand who our partners are, the importance of partnerships and what their role is within relevant partnerships.

Senior staff across the state should be empowered to identify their local community partners and create strong relationships. The skills required for these activities can be expanded or acquired through training and development (e.g. Better Together training), from their peers or a specialist within the Department (e.g. the Aboriginal Services Division).

DCS Executive will be the champions of the Department's partnership strategy. To assure our partners of the importance of the relationship, it is suggested that groups of partners are assigned an Executive contact, who they can form a relationship and correspond with. For example, private sector for-profit businesses may be linked with the Executive Director, Business and People Services and non-profit service providers with the Executive Director, Offender Development.





PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

Partnership Engagement Principles

DCS' Partnership Framework is governed by eleven strategic principles:

1. Clear and meaningful communication;
2. Transparency, openness and honesty;
3. Appreciative enquiry and listening;
4. Appropriate levels of engagement¹;
5. Acknowledgment of partner expertise;
6. Alliance based approaches;
7. Collaboration and co-design;
8. Practice development and engagement;
9. Pursuing opportunities for innovation;
10. Respect for diversity within partners and their differing views;
11. Cultural values and obligations of partners are heard and respected; and
12. Lived experience is valued.

¹ i.e. engaging with individual or clustered partners at a level and frequency that reflects the scope and scale of the relationship, current opportunities and the needs of the partner.

Table 2 – 2021 High-Level Approach

	Partner with	Outcomes	Engagement
Reintegration / Reoffending	NGOs ACCOs	Improved outcomes for service users	Program development Program delivery in prisons and community
Exit Planning	NGOs ACCOs	Improved housing and service contact	Service development and delivery
Cultural Supports	ACCOs	Improved outcomes for Aboriginal service users Improved service engagement Improved staff engagement with Aboriginal service users	Cultural support and advice
Research	Universities Research organisations	Expanded data collection opportunities Innovation	Areas of mutual interest
Employment and Training	Private sector Public Sector TAFE and other RTOs	Improved employment outcomes for service users	Program development Program delivery in prisons and community Community Corrections
Prison Industries DCS Procurement	Private sector Aboriginal Controlled Business Local Engagement	Commercial opportunities	Industry expansion New industry opportunities Strategic procurement decisions
Funding	Philanthropy	Funding for service users' programs	Program development and delivery in prisons and community

Partnership Engagement Objectives

Strong partnerships create better outcomes and opportunities by allowing for diverse voices in issue identification and response creation. Moreover, genuine engagement with the right partners is key to achieving many DCS strategic objectives and complements the ethics and values of the Department.

Through the development of our partnership strategy and networks, DCS aims to improve relationships with organisations and communities that will lead to improved outcomes for service users, staff, the Department as a whole, and for the broader community.

Table 3 – Partnership Objectives

	Outcomes	Key Relationships
Service Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintegration • Reduced reoffending • Programming opportunities • Industry opportunities • Targeted procurement • Community Corrections programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOS • ACCOs • Private sector • Philanthropy
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Cultural capability • Wellbeing • Local partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOS • ACCOs
DCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Understanding of DCS • Industry opportunities • Targeted procurement • Collaboration • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOS • ACCOs • Private sector • Philanthropy
Victims of Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Improved communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner for Victim's Rights • Victim support groups
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Understanding of DCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCS Custodial and Community Corrections

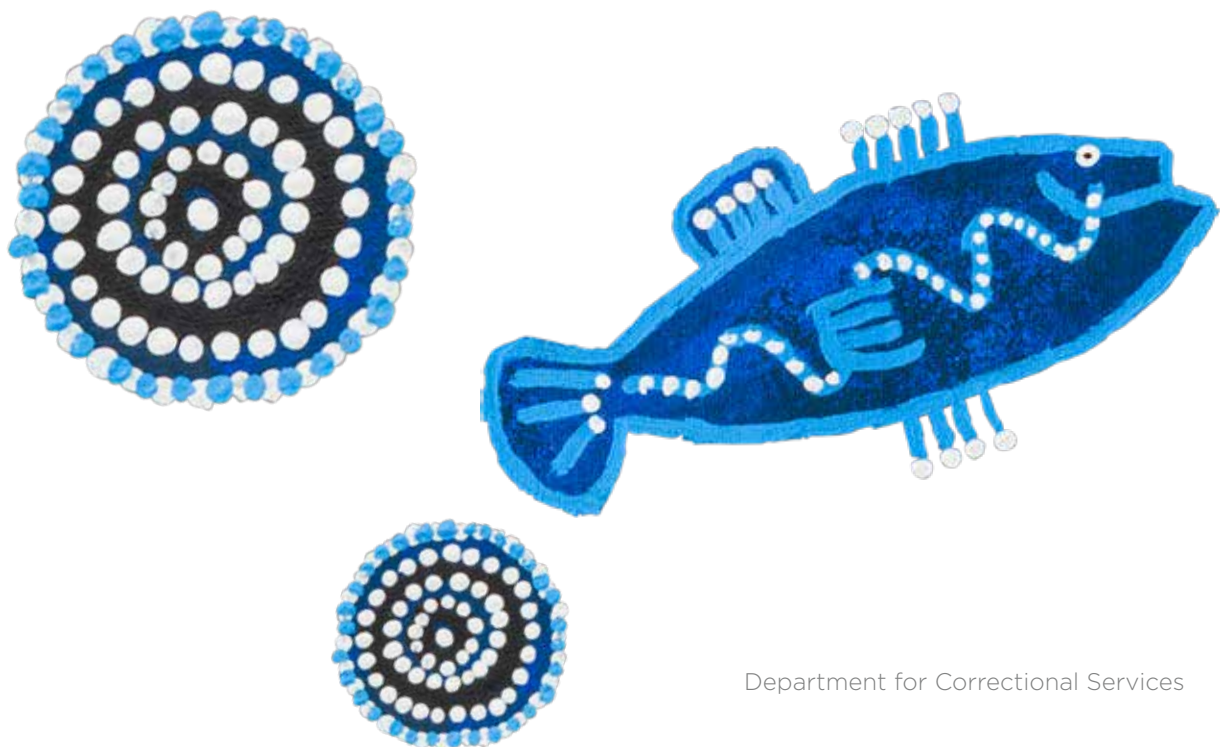
Through this Partnership Framework and the strategies outlined, DCS aims to ensure that:

- Partners feel valued in the work they do for and with DCS;
- Partners have access to the information, contacts and resources they need to operate in the Corrections environment;
- New partners have the opportunity to build their understanding of the roles and functions of the Department;
- We gain an improved understanding of the roles and functions of our NGO partners;
- DCS actively contributes to building the capacity of NGOs, with a special focus on ACCOs;
- DCS staff responsible for working with partners have the skills to undertake collaborative engagement;
- Innovation is encouraged with a wide range of views being heard and considered; and
- Certainty is provided through formal partnership agreements describing the relationship (where appropriate).

Engagement Methods

To ensure that our partners have a clear understanding of our partnership objectives and engagement opportunities DCS will:

- Provide written communication to current and potential partners outlining the key elements of this strategy;
- Hold a workshop/forum for all NGO partners and stakeholders;
- Hold a series of small, area-focused, NGO partner workshops that provide an opportunity for open dialogue and future planning; and
- Survey partners and stakeholders on their preferred engagement method/s.



PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

Priority 1: Know our Partners

Action 1.1: To actively engage with a wide range of metropolitan and regional partners and stakeholders.

As part of Action 1.1, DCS will:

- Undertake local area scans to identify key local partners and stakeholders.
- Strengthen current relationships and build relationships with new partners and stakeholders.
- Listen to the aims and activities of its partner organisations to leverage areas of mutual interest and strategic goals.

Action 1.2: To ensure that our partners and relationship engagements are documented.

As part of Action 2.1, DCS will:

- Create and maintain a list of current DCS partners.
- Create a recording and reporting template that documents partner engagements for use by all business units.

Action 1.3: To understand stakeholder needs and experiences.

As part of Action 3.1, DCS will:

- Develop and circulate a short survey to partners and stakeholders on an as needs basis.
- Utilise survey findings to inform overarching and local engagement strategies.



Priority 2: Ensure Culturally Competent Engagement



Action 2.1: To build cultural competence across all levels of DCS.

As part of Action 2.1, DCS will focus on:

Knowing

- Gaining knowledge of culture, customs, histories, and place-based circumstances.
- Understanding current and past experiences and listening to lived experience.

Doing

- Taking action in a culturally appropriate way.
- Supporting our partners to build capacity in their organisations and communities.

Being

- Demonstrating authentic respect for culture in all interactions.
- Being aware of personal values and biases and their impact on others.
- Having integrity and cultural sensitivity in decision-making.

Action 2.2: To prioritise culturally competent engagement with DCS' Aboriginal partners.

As part of Action 2.2, DCS will

- Continue to recognise Aboriginal language groups and cultures across South Australia as distinct and diverse.
- Build a knowledge base that enables engaging with all Aboriginal communities and individuals in ways that are appropriate to their specific culture and lore.
- Seek guidance and advice from the Aboriginal Services Directorate, local Aboriginal Cultural Advisors, and the DCS Aboriginal Reference Group.

Action 2.3: To develop competent engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities and partners.

As part of Action 2.3, DCS will

- Continue to maintain relationships with various culturally and linguistically diverse communities across South Australia.
- Increase community specific knowledge to ensure that engagement and communication methods are appropriate.

Action 2.4: To ensure competent gendered engagement that considers the complex and varied needs of women across the criminal justice system.

As part of Action 2.4, DCS will

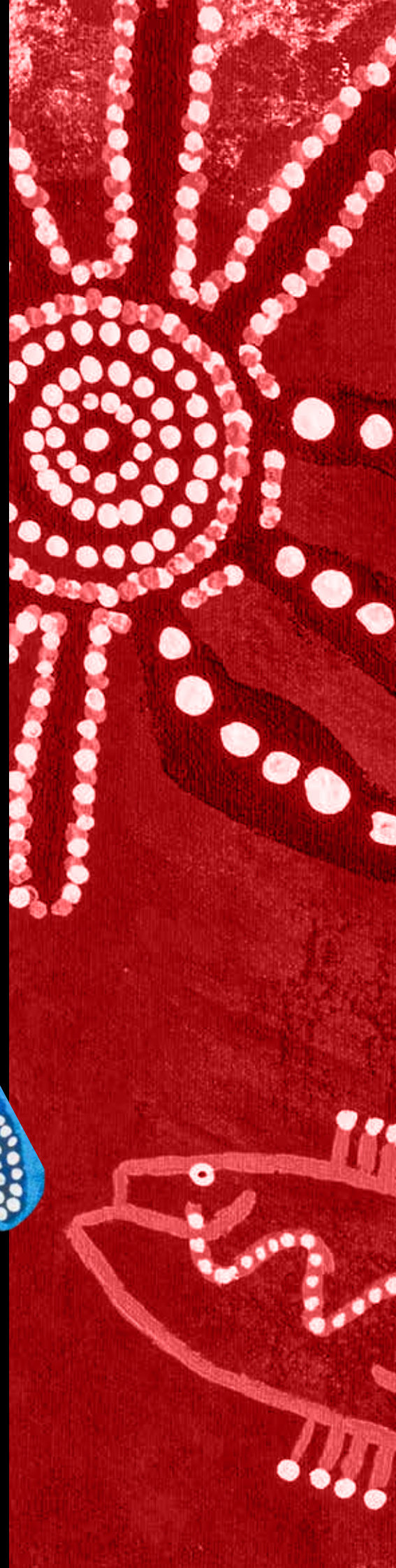
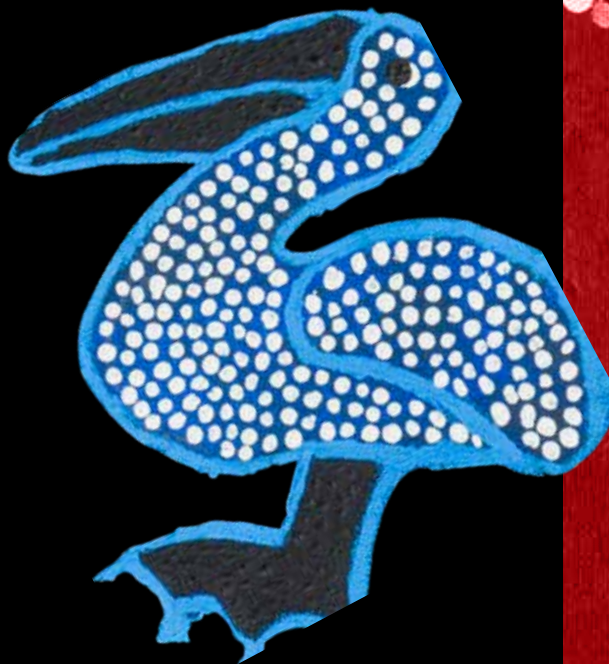
- Ensure women's pathways into the criminal justice system are at the forefront of partner engagement and service responsiveness.
- Continue to build internal and partner competence in providing services to women that are trauma informed, relational, and holistic.
- Consider the wide-reaching impacts of women's incarceration on families, especially children, as central to partner engagement.
- Seek advice from the Principal Advisor, Women Offenders when engaging partners.

Priority 3: Build Local Relationships

Action 3.1: To build and maintain local relationships with local leads.

As part of Action 3.1, DCS will:

- Enable staff across the State to build and strengthen local relationships, particularly in the NGO and ACCO space.
- Facilitate Prison General Managers, Executive Directors, Community Corrections Regional Directors and Area Managers to take the lead in these local partnerships.
- Encourage networking opportunities across business units to ensure all interested parties are able to leverage these relationships.



Monitoring and Measuring Performance

Partnerships and key stakeholder relationships should primarily be measured by depth and quality rather than quantity. It is, however, appropriate to set targets for new relationships and methods for measuring the strength and mutually beneficial products of the relationship.

Monitoring and measuring stakeholder engagement and outcomes should be both qualitative and quantitative. Some examples include:

Quantitative indicators of participation	Qualitative indicators of participation
Improved and more effective service delivery	Organisation and community awareness of DCS' role and functions
Numbers of project level meetings and attendance levels	Growing solidarity and mutual support
Percentages of different groups attending meetings (e.g. women, Aboriginal)	Interest to be involved in decision making at different stages
Numbers of direct project beneficiaries	Increasing ability of stakeholders to propose and undertake actions
Take-up rates of project recommendations	Representation in other government or community bodies with relation to DCS
Numbers of organisations and communities assuming positions of responsibility	Emergence of people willing to take on leadership
Numbers of organisations and communities who develop formal relationships with DCS	Interaction and the building of contacts with other groups and organisations
Numbers of organisations and communities who are involved in different stages of the project	People begin to have a say in and influence DCS' policy development

SPICED

The SPICED² approach to measuring engagement is a participatory approach that helps to capture information that is meaningful, useful and context specific. This framework will be used for the collection, collation, and reporting on engagement information.

- S Subjective:** A special viewpoint, unique insight or experience expressed by a stakeholder might have a high value for the organisation. What might be seen by some as 'anecdotal' becomes critical data because of its source.
- P Participatory:** Indicators are developed collaboratively between the organisation and its stakeholders.
- I Interpretable:** Indicators need to be set as proxies for tracking of the achievements related to the specific objectives. Interpretation and translation of an indicator into a measure of progress towards the objective or goal needs to be pre-determined.
- C Communicable and comparable:** Indicators set need to be easy to communicate and relevant. They also need to be comparable over time and space, and between different groups of stakeholders.
- E Empowering:** Stakeholders are actively involved in the process of setting and monitoring goals and assessing progress. This involvement and the learnings from this process contribute to their empowering.
- D Disaggregated:** Different groups of stakeholders might be interested in different types of indicators. Therefore, sets of indicators might need to be disaggregated to allow for this pluralism.

² Roche C. 1999



Edelman Relationship Index

The Edelman Relationship Index (ERI) will also be used to diagnose and benchmark the quality of existing relationships between DCS and our key stakeholders, and in the course of the engagement, to measure changes in the quality of key relationships so that adjustments can be made if needed.

Trust – One party's level of confidence in, and willingness to open oneself up to, the other party. There are three elements of trust:

- Integrity: the belief that an organisation is fair and just
- Dependability: the belief that an organisation will do what it says it will do
- Competence: the belief that an organisation has the ability to do what it says it will do.

Mutuality of control – The degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another.

Commitment – The extent to which each party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote.

Satisfaction – The extent to which each party feels favourably toward the other because positive expectations about the relationship are reinforced.

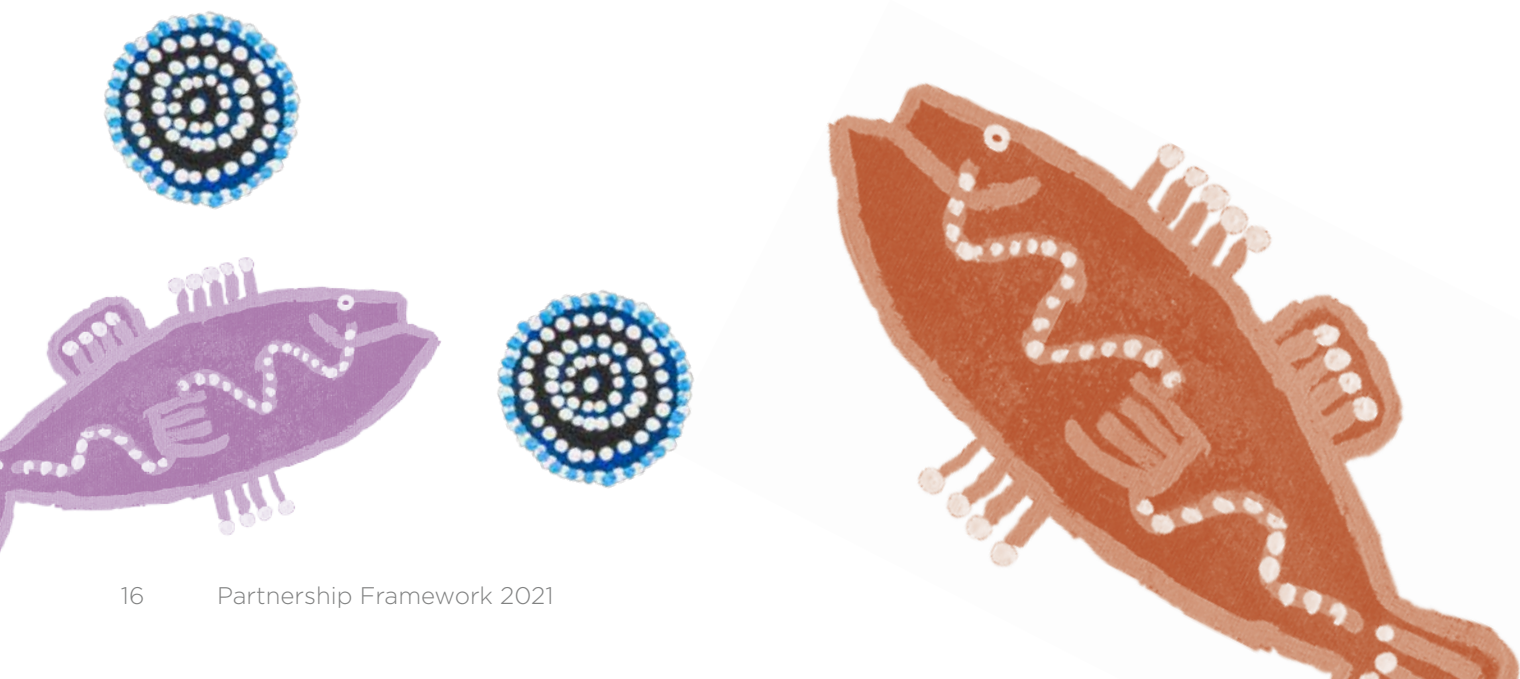
Surveying Partners and Stakeholders

Partners and stakeholders will be invited to respond to short, targeted surveys on an as needs basis. Utilising the SPICED and ERI tools, these surveys will focus on partner/stakeholder perceptions of and engagement with DCS, and how these change over time.

Results from these surveys may be used to guide a change in approach to a sector, organisation or community and may be incorporated into subsequent Action Plans.

Governance and Reporting

The DCS Partnerships Framework will continue to be overseen by SPPP. Progress against the Partnership Framework will be monitored by DCS' Strategic Executive Meetings with regular reporting to occur to the Minister for Correctional Services.



Notes

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