



Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendation

267. Review practices relating to diagnosis at a distance

That aerial medical services and the appropriate authorities review the effectiveness of practices relating to medical diagnosis at a distance, for example by radio or telephone, and consider the implementation of standard diagnostic protocols, where they are not currently being used.¹

Background²	The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) emphasised the importance of improving healthcare delivery to Aboriginal communities, particularly in remote areas where access to medical services is limited. The Commission highlighted risks of medical diagnosis at a distance that could be reduced through the introduction of standard protocols. This focus on enhancing the quality of medical care in remote settings was part of broader efforts by the Commission to highlight the importance of ensuring Aboriginal people could access culturally appropriate, effective healthcare services supported by trained professionals and informed by Aboriginal research and service delivery planning.
Intent	For aerial medical services and authorities to review practices relating to medical diagnosis at a distance and consider implementing standard protocols.
Responsibility	The Commonwealth and all state and territory governments.
Key contacts	Department of Health.
Key action taken	
2005 Review³	The Department of Human Services advised that Recommendation 267 was not relevant to Victoria.
2018 Review⁴	Deloitte found that the Commonwealth Government had fully implemented Recommendation 267 through the 2008 eHealth Strategy which promoted the use of telehealth and electronic consultation tools to enhance access to healthcare services for rural, remote, and disadvantaged communities. Deloitte concluded that Recommendation 267 was not relevant to Victoria, as remote diagnostic processes were not used in the state.

¹ Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Final Report, 1991) vol 4, 263 ('RCIADIC').

² Ibid vol 4, 252 [31.3.96]-[31.3.98].

³ Aboriginal Justice Forum (Vic), Department of Justice (Vic), *Victorian Implementation Review of the Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Review Report, October 2005) vol 1, 234 ('2005 Review').

⁴ Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Review of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Report, August 2018) 548-549 ('2018 Review').

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Since then	Department of Health⁵ The Department of Health was consulted on implementation of this recommendation in 2025 and confirmed that it was not relevant to Victoria.
Evidence of impact	
Authorising documents	None identified.
Outputs	None identified.
Outcomes	None identified.
Community views	None identified.
Related recommendations	
	None identified.
Assessment summary⁶	
Recommendation 267 is not relevant to Victoria as aerial medical services are not a common feature of the delivery of health services to Aboriginal communities.	

Bibliography

Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus (Project Team, In Person, 23 September 2025)

Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus Working Group (Project Team, Online, 1 September 2025)

Aboriginal Justice Forum (Vic), Department of Justice (Vic), *Victorian Implementation Review of the Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Review Report, October 2005)

Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Review of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Report, August 2018)

Department of Health (Vic), 'Review of Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) ' (Response to AJC Request, July 2025)

Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Final Report, 1991)

⁵ Department of Health (Vic), 'Review of Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) ' (Response to AJC Request).

⁶ Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus Working Group (Project Team, Online, 1 September 2025) ('*Working Group Meeting (1 September 2025)*'); Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus (Project Team, In Person, 23 September 2025) ('*AJC Meeting (23 September 2025)*').