



Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendation

67. Research program to monitor consequences of alcohol use

That the National Drug Abuse Data System of the NCADA institute a regular research program to establish baseline data and monitor changes over time in relation to the health, social and economic consequences of alcohol use among Aboriginal people.¹

Background²	The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) emphasised the lack of data on the economic impact of alcohol use and the levels of expenditure on alcoholic beverages. It noted that while Aboriginal people bear the social and health costs of alcohol misuse, they do not share in the economic benefits of the alcohol industry. The Commission also emphasised the culturally specific harms of alcohol in Aboriginal communities, including its role in disrupting ceremonies and contributing to family and community breakdown. The RCIADIC recommended a dedicated research program to track these impacts over time and inform more effective, culturally appropriate responses.
Intent	Establish a research program that monitors changes over time in the economic, social and health impacts of alcohol on Aboriginal people.
Responsibility	The Commonwealth Government.
Key contacts	Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS); Department of Health.
Key action taken	
2005 Review³	The Victorian Government considered Recommendation 67 to be the sole responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. Review Team The Review Team agreed that Recommendation 67 was primarily aimed at the national level, however, such data was also considered vital at a state level. The Review Team considered that Recommendation 67 was relevant to Victoria.
2018 Review⁴	Deloitte considered Recommendation 67 the sole responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. Whilst the NCADA has been discontinued, Deloitte concluded that the Commonwealth Government had fully implemented this recommendation by continuing the

¹ Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Final Report, 1991) vol 2, 331 ('RCIADIC').

² Ibid vol 2, 224-326 [15.3.4].

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, 246, 270 ('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) 138 ('2018 Review').

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	collection and publication of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health surveys through the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
Since then	Department of Health⁵ In their 2025 response, the Department of Health deemed this recommendation a Commonwealth Government responsibility and considered it fully implemented. They noted that the department has not commissioned any comprehensive alcohol related research in relation to Aboriginal cohorts in 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 67 was a Commonwealth Government responsibility.	

Bibliography

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

Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus Working Group (Project Team, Online, 4 July 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), 'Updates on Implementation of 43 RCIADIC Recommendations Related to Health, Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Policies and Services.' (7 July 2025)

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

⁵ Department of Health (Vic), 'Updates on Implementation of 43 RCIADIC Recommendations Related to Health, Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Policies and Services.'

⁶ Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus Working Group (Project Team, Online, 4 July 2025) ('*Working Group Meeting (4 July 2025)*'). Meeting with Aboriginal Justice Caucus (Project Team, In Person, 23 September 2025) ('*AJC Meeting (23 September 2025)*').