



Commissioner announcement is a big leap forward

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AbSec has enthusiastically welcomed the announcement by the Federal Government of a new national Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People.

AbSec CEO John Leha said people throughout the child protection sector were ecstatic with the news.

“This is something we have been demanding for a very long time and it’s gratifying to see the Federal Government has listened,” Mr Leha said.

“The moment the news broke our internal communication channels erupted with people celebrating the news.

“This is exactly what we need to take the next step in the long journey towards keeping our children not only safe, but cared for within their own community.”

Details have not yet been released, but Prime Minister Anthony Albanese outlined the vision for the position.

“[It] will be dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights, interests and wellbeing of First Nations children and young people, as well as calling on their strengths, sense of hope and ideas for change,” he said.

The prime minister added that the commissioner will address “unacceptable rates of out-of-home care”.

The announcement came on the same day the latest Closing the Gap report was tabled in parliament, revealing only four of the 19 socio-economic targets are on track.

"It's blatantly obvious that the old ways of trying to fix these long-standing problems simply aren't working," Mr Leha said.

"We desperately need some new approaches, which is why we commend the prime minister and his cabinet for listening to Aboriginal communities on the need for a commissioner."

According to Mr Albanese, an interim national commissioner will be appointed this year.

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