Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

Modern Slavery Statement

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Introduction: Our history, our people, our responsibility

The Board of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Congress) releases this inaugural Modern Slavery Statement to reaffirm our deep commitment to human rights, ethical leadership, and culturally safe practice across all operations and supply chains. For over 50 years, Congress has stood with Aboriginal people in the struggle for justice and equity. From those beginnings, we have grown to become the largest Aboriginal community-controlled health organisation in Central Australia, with more than 500 staff delivering comprehensive, holistic, and culturally appropriate primary health care, mental health services, aged care, NDIS support, and early childhood programs to Aboriginal people in Alice Springs and remote communities throughout Central Australia.

Aboriginal people carry the lived memory of slavery-like practices and institutional racism in this country—the stolen wages, the removal of children from families, and labour conditions that were exploitative and unsafe. Those histories are part of our collective memory here in Central Australia, spanning pastoral stations to domestic work. We know, from our Elders' voices and our communities' experiences, that the fight against modern slavery is not an abstract obligation; it is a continuation of the justice, dignity, and fairness we fight for every day in health, education, and social equity.

Our commitment to human rights is not only about compliance. It is a deeply human promise to protect the health, dignity, and wellbeing of everyone connected to Congress—from the people we serve to the workers, suppliers, and partners who support our mission. Addressing modern slavery is consistent with our values of Cultural Integrity, Respect, Accountability, Compassion and Self Determination.

A living document: evolving with our community

We view this Statement as a living document.

We will review and update risk assessments, controls, and policies annually.

We will seek input from the community, staff, partners, and experts to strengthen practices.

We will align with evolving legal and regulatory expectations and international standards.

Our commitments in practice: turning values into action

Ethical practice as a core extension of our health mission: just as we work to improve the health of our people, we must ensure the systems that support us are free from harm.

We are committed to working with suppliers, contractors, and service providers in ways that promote transparency, fairness, and respect for human rights. We will engage openly and constructively with our community to strengthen our practices, address risks, and celebrate progress.

Conclusion: shared responsibility and hopeful action

This Modern Slavery Statement marks the beginning of a journey. It is a pledge that we will continue to improve, learn, and adapt—together with our community, our staff, and our partners. We invite ongoing dialogue and input as we map risks, lift expectations, train our people, and establish robust systems to respond to exploitation wherever it may be found. Our commitment to ethical practice remains an extension of our commitment to health: when the people we serve are healthy, they are free to live with dignity. Together, we can end modern slavery and build a safer, fairer future for Central Australia.

Donna Ah Chee

Chief Executive Officer

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Congress)

Compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)

This Statement has been prepared in accordance with section 16 of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)* and addresses all mandatory criteria:

(a) Identifies the reporting entity.

(b) Describes the structure, operations, and supply chains of the reporting entity.

(c) Describes the risks of modern slavery practices in the operations and supply chains of the reporting entity and any entities it owns or controls.

(d) Describes the actions taken to assess and address those risks, including due diligence and remediation processes.

(e) Describes how the entity assesses the effectiveness of such actions.

(f) Describes the process of consultation with entities the reporting entity owns or controls.

(g) Includes other information the reporting entity considers relevant.

This Statement also includes, as required under section 16(2), details of approval by our principal governing body.

What we do and who we are

(Addresses criteria 16(1)(a) and (b))

Congress provides primary health care, mental health services, aged care, NDIS support, and early childhood programs across Alice Springs and remote Central Australian communities. In serving our communities, we rely on a wide range of suppliers and partners. With every relationship we build, we condemn all forms of slavery, forced labour, human trafficking, and exploitation.

Risks of modern slavery in our operations and supply chains

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(c))

Given that our operations are based entirely in Australia, our geographic risk for modern slavery is low according to the Global Slavery Index.

We acknowledge that some sectors connected to our operations and supply chains carry elevated modern slavery risks, including:

medical consumables, equipment, and pharmaceuticals sourced through global supply chains

ICT hardware and electronics

Construction

labour-hire arrangements.

We recognise that these risks can arise through complex, multi-tiered supply chains where visibility is limited and vulnerable workforces may be present.

Governance, accountability, and our living framework

(Addresses criteria 16(1)(c) and (d))

Ultimate accountability rests with the Congress Board, with the Congress Executive charged with implementing controls, monitoring risk, and delivering regular reporting to the Board.
We maintain a formal governance framework aligned with international human rights standards, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
This framework guides how we identify and mitigate risks across operations and supply chains.
We operate under a comprehensive Procurement Policy that requires us to identify, assess, and map material modern slavery risks.

Prevention, control, and remediation: How we manage risk

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(d))

Supplier risk is managed through:

- contractual prohibitions on forced labour and exploitation
- supplier due diligence checks
- ongoing monitoring and risk-based engagement for high-risk suppliers
- remediation pathways to address identified abuses, with accountability mechanisms for suppliers and Congress personnel

Our suppliers include preferred suppliers with long-term relationships, short-term suppliers for urgent requirements, and one-off suppliers on ad hoc basis.

Most of our direct suppliers are located in Australia, although many of these suppliers rely on global supply chains. Our suppliers are expected to manage their business and supply chain in a manner that respects human rights.

Training and capacity building

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(d))

Role-based training is provided to staff, managers, and procurement personnel, focusing on risk recognition, reporting channels, and remedial processes. Training effectiveness is measured through completion rates, assessment results, and post-training audits. Training participation is tracked annually as part of the Congress compliance calendar.

We promote modern slavery to all staff and provide opportunities for all staff to report any concerns they have about modern slavery.

Speaking up, listening, and acting

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(d))

We provide accessible, confidential channels for workers, staff, contractors, and community members to report concerns without fear of retaliation.
Reported concerns are acknowledged, investigated, and remediated promptly, with corrective actions tracked to resolution.
A Whistleblower Policy is in place, with safeguarding measures to protect individuals who raise concerns.

Monitoring effectiveness and continuous improvement

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(e))

We view this Statement as a living document.
We will:

review and update risk assessments, controls, and policies periodically

monitor implementation through our risk and compliance function

measure training outcomes, supplier screening completion, and incident response times

report progress to the Board annually through the Audit and Risk Committee.

Consultation and collaboration

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(f))

This statement was developed in consultation with the Congress Executive, Finance, Procurement and Governance teams, and the Congress Board.
We will continue to build awareness and consult with staff, community members, and suppliers as our approach evolves.
Congress does not currently own or control any separate entities; if this changes, future statements will describe consultation with those entities.

Our commitments in practice: turning values into action

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(g))

- Ethical practice as a core extension of our health mission: just as we work to improve the health of our people, we must ensure the systems that support us are free from harm.
- Zero tolerance toward exploitation and forced labour in all forms.
- Ongoing efforts to protect the rights and dignity of all people connected to our services and supply chains.

A collaborative future: working with community, staff, and partners

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(g))

We are committed to working with suppliers, contractors, and service providers in ways that promote transparency, fairness, and respect for human rights.
We will engage openly and constructively with our community to strengthen our practices, address risks, and celebrate progress.

In 2026, our focus will be on delivering against the following Modern Slavery commitments;

Commitment	Comment
Developing a Modern Slavery Policy	We will develop a Modern Slavery Policy that will guide our actions to reduce the risk of modern slavery being present in our operations
Procurement Policy	We will review our Procurement Policy to ensure it adequately addresses the risk of modern slavery
Employee Awareness	We will continue to provide role-specific training to relevant staff and raise awareness with all staff, including providing opportunities for staff to report any concerns they have regarding modern slavery.
Modern Slavery Contract Clauses	We will review our supplier contracts and tender templates to include anti-slavery clauses specifically to address the prevention of modern slavery practices.

Conclusion: shared responsibility and hopeful action

(Addresses criterion 16(1)(g))

This Modern Slavery Statement marks the beginning of a journey. It is a pledge that we will continue to improve, learn, and adapt—together with our community, our staff, and our partners.
We invite ongoing dialogue and input as we map risks, lift expectations, train our people, and establish robust systems to respond to exploitation wherever it may be found.
Our commitment to ethical practice remains an extension of our commitment to health: when the people we serve are healthy, they are free to live with dignity. Together, we can end modern slavery and build a safer, fairer future for Central Australian.

Approval

This Modern Slavery Act Statement was approved by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Board of Directors on the 26th of November 2025.

This Statement is made in accordance with the Australian Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth).

Ebony Abbott-McCormack

Chair