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Submission Senate Enquiry – IAS

Having worked within the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations, and specifically being involved in the implementation of Labour Market Programs such as, JOBSTART and TAP throughout Western NSW. I believe I am well versed as to the limitations of Government Funding in this ever increasing commercial world. We do understand this even more as being a stand- alone commercial entity, something that we were of the belief the Government was encouraging, and further more, endorsing.

Our company has publicly supported, and endorsed many of the directions which have been taken in addressing Indigenous Unemployment/Contracting. We do believe that many of the things that have been done in the past, realistically have not worked, and we can't continue to head down this path, albeit, some have worked and we have strived to re-create these with our "Walkabout to Work Programs".

We are at a complete loss as to how a 100% Privately Owned and Operated Indigenous Company that receives no Commonwealth or State Funding could have been assessed as, **NOT SUITABLE** to deliver a small proportion of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, when 55% of allocations went to NON Indigenous entities. Some not even addressing the core criteria of Employment and or Training needs of Aboriginal people and industry. What is even more distressing is that we have sought clarification with nothing forthcoming.

The Government through its Exemption 17 Rule within Commonwealth Procurement has endorsed that 3% of the \$36 billion dollars spent on Government Services should be directed to Indigenous Organizations or Partnerships, and this will be mandated across Departments.

Realistically, how is this going to happen when the organisation endorsing this does not even have the foresight to allow a 100% Privately Owned and Operated Indigenous Company that is commercially driven, with regulated ISO Systems, and strong corporate governance, the opportunity to be involved with these programs. We are being asked to change the perception and the direction that an Aboriginal business is, not just a NOT for Profit, Community based organisation, that mows lawns, makes didgeridoos and facilitates work for the dole.

Our company "Ticks" all the boxes

Our company is:

- A registered RTO (TRAIN 365) delivering vital training to the construction, mining and infrastructure industries
- Group Training Capacity
- Employment Provider – Indigenous Contracting in a range of Industries both Casual and Fulltime
- Has endorsement from Industry Providers (Employers)
- Registered as a provider to the Department of Defence
- NSW Contingent Workforce provider – Mainstream
- Pre-qualified with a range of large Mining Houses.
- As well as range of other mainstream and Indigenous Specific services.

Much of the East Coast of Australia has been disadvantaged in this allocation of funds, and it seems as though Aboriginal Australia has stopped at the West Australian and Northern Territory borders.

Our proposal alone to train people in remote areas through our mobile training facility was of enormous benefit to the Commonwealth and generated cost savings, through taking our training to the communities in where the jobs are. The Job Network will not do this, they contract this out to major centres having people stay overnight and travel, adding enormous costs to attaining the skills that will make them competitive as an entry point to these industries.

Please humor us and read this months article in the "Rockface Magazine" and you will see that what we are doing, it is not hot air, and the warm a fuzzy stuff. It is real. !!!!!

Many organizations propose that they are Indigenous, when in fact they are majority owned by major corporate organizations that that see a quick buck in this. We are here for the long haul and for all the right reasons. But we often second guess as to whether the Departments driving this change are really on board, and with the decisions that have been made without consultation support this.

Regards

Brad Draper

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Director
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