
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Indigenous Australians at work

Successful Initiatives in Indigenous Employment

House of Representatives

Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

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Foreword

The Positives

The Aboriginal face on the Australian \$50 note is David Unaipon, author, inventor and sometimes thought of as “Australia’s Leonardo”. As a remarkable example of the capacity of Indigenous people, I am sure that there are many David Unaipons across Australia and I dedicate this foreword to his memory and the future creativity of every Indigenous Australian.

In discussing our request to the Minister of the need for a positive approach to Indigenous matters, employment was an area where progress could be demonstrated. At a time of strong economic performance at the national level and with workforce shortages a growing reality, the opportunities for further development of Indigenous employment appeared to be significant.

Over the past two years we were fortunate to share the views and better understand the outcomes for many individuals, companies and the wider community in this vital human activity.

The central role of work and the workplace in most Australian’s lives is something that we perhaps take for granted – but the lessons of the past two years remind all of us that the variation in workforce participation by Indigenous people is very much a result of a complex set of factors which some achieve with significant success and others have a more limited result.

The above is very much a two way street with some employers leading the way with many employees open to opportunities and both able to achieve great results.

The recurring theme of many people who presented before the Committee was the overwhelming impact of welfare policies as a deterrent to sustainable employment. The need for Government policies to strike a better balance between the incentives for work and the incentives to be distracted by welfare is vital.

Our inquiry attempted to seek out the committed employers and employees and understand their views and what motivated them to achieve and these experiences are documented from that perspective. Their views are the basis of current progress and I thank them for their willingness to share with the Parliament their experiences in the hope that policy makers will better understand the value that employers and employees found for their general and economic well-being.

I acknowledge and thank my fellow Committee Members, all staff for their patience and tolerance and all members of the Australian community who participated in our inquiry to offer not only a better employment outcome for more Australians but to further unlock the economic future for Indigenous people.

Mr Barry Wakelin MP
Chairman



Membership of the Committee

Chairman Mr Barry Wakelin MP

Deputy Chair The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP

Members Ms Annette Ellis MP

Mr Peter Garrett MP

Mr Andrew Laming MP (from 28 February 2006)

Mr Andrew Robb MP (until 28 February 2006)

The Hon Peter Slipper MP

The Hon Warren Snowdon MP

Dr Andrew Southcott MP

The Hon Wilson Tuckey MP

The Hon Danna Vale MP

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Terms of reference

That the Committee inquire into positive factors and examples amongst Indigenous communities and individuals, which have improved employment outcomes in both the public and private sectors; and

1. recommend to the government ways this can inform future policy development; and
2. assess what significant factors have contributed to those positive outcomes identified, including what contribution practical reconciliation has made.



List of abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
AEC	Aboriginal Education Council
AES	Aboriginal Employment Strategy
AFL	Australian Football League
ALPA	Arnhemland Progress Association
ALTA-1	Altering Lives One at a Time Program
ANZ	Australian and New Zealand Banking Group
APS	Australian Public Service
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
BAC	Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
BCC	Brisbane City Council
BUC	Breaking the Unemployment Cycle
CAAMA	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
CAEPR	Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
CDEP	Community Development and Employment Projects
CDRHC	Cairns and District Regional Housing Corporation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer

COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FaCS	Department of Family and Community Services
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HOP	Home Ownership Program
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
ICC	Indigenous Coordination Centre
IEC	Indigenous Employment Centre
IEP	Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships
IHANT	Indigenous Housing Authority Northern Territory
ILC	Indigenous Land Corporation
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
IPP	Indigenous Pastoral Program
JYP	Jobs for Young People
KBN	Koori Business Network
LDC	Larrakia Development Corporation
MATES	Mentoring Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme
MCA	Minerals Council of Australia
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NGO	Non-government organisation
NLC	Northern Land Council

NORFORCE	North West Mobile Force
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Service
OAM	Order of Australia
OIPC	Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
PM&C	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SACOME	South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy
SRA	Shared Responsibility Agreement
STEP	Structured Training and Employment Programme
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TIC	Tasmanian Investment Corporation
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WELL	Workplace English Language and Literacy Program
YES	Youth Employment Scheme



List of recommendations

Construction and maintenance programs

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Minister propose that the corporate governance procedures and the sound business principles under which the current Board of the Cairns and District Regional Housing Corporation are operating (noting the average of 70 per cent local Indigenous labour component in their maintenance and building programs) be considered as a model practice for other Indigenous housing and tenancy corporations (paragraph 3.13).

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that all Federal Government construction contracts in regional areas give due recognition to aspirational imperatives for Indigenous employment outcomes (paragraph 3.22).

Tender requirements

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Federal Government amend government service delivery tender requirements and contracting processes to recognise and encourage Indigenous involvement (paragraph 3.23).

Indigenous employment by small businesses

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Federal Government ensure that small businesses employing Indigenous people receive comparable support to that received by the large business sector (paragraph 3.63).

Micro-finance

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the relevant Government departments that administer programs providing micro-finance and small business assistance to Indigenous people, actively promote such programs and facilitate better access to that support (paragraph 3.85)

Funding for mentors

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Federal Government provide adequate resources for mentoring in addition to the funding provided for training and employment of Indigenous Australians (paragraph 4.39).

Education

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that given the importance of education to future employment possibilities, the Government consider requests from Indigenous communities in relation to their preferred options for stronger incentives to encourage school attendance (paragraph 5.32).

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Federal Government evaluate and fund a range of options to improve educational outcomes including but not limited to, Indigenous teaching aides, tutors and individualised learning plans (paragraph 5.41).

National Indigenous Cadet Scheme

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Government:

- review the National Indigenous Cadet Scheme to identify the most productive avenues for its expansion;
- actively promote cadetships to Indigenous students at the matriculation level as a means of continuing their education; and
- provide public service rotational opportunities for Indigenous cadets in Indigenous organisations and in the private sector (paragraph 5.89).

Work experience

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination develop a model which allows Indigenous employees of non-government organisations to experience work within the public sector (paragraph 5.93).

Public servants in regional and remote areas

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the terms and conditions offered to all Government employees in communities not disadvantage local employees compared to those recruited from elsewhere (paragraph 6.24).

Private sector Indigenous employment

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the best practice models within industries like the mining industry be understood, promoted and encouraged by Government as one of the best models to achieve greater Indigenous participation in the workforce (paragraph 7.128).

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that the Government promote the Memorandum of Understanding of the Minerals Council of Australia and the Indigenous Land Corporation models as best practice which could be adopted by other sectors (paragraph 7.130).

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that the Government disseminate innovative strategies with respect to Indigenous employment within and between public and private sectors and the implementation of best practice within the public service where appropriate (paragraph 7.131).

Introduction

- 1.1 Labour force participation rates for Indigenous people still remain well below the levels for non-Indigenous Australians. There have, however, been some improvements in Indigenous employment rates and in the diversification of the types of careers being pursued by Indigenous Australians.
- 1.2 The Committee undertook an inquiry into positive examples of Indigenous employment to highlight some of the outcomes and identify the factors that have contributed to these successes. The Committee believes that this will provide an insight into opportunities to address many of the long standing issues which have led to Indigenous under-participation in the employment journey.

Referral to the Committee

- 1.3 On 14 March 2005, the then Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Amanda Vanstone, referred to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs the following terms of reference for an inquiry into Indigenous employment:

Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

That the Committee inquire into positive factors and examples amongst Indigenous communities and individuals, which have improved employment outcomes in both the public and private sectors, and

- (1) recommend to the government ways this can inform future policy development; and
- (2) assess what significant factors have contributed to those positive outcomes identified, including what contribution practical reconciliation has made.¹

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.4 The Committee advertised and sought submissions in March 2005. Additionally the Chairman wrote to the relevant Federal Ministers, all Members of Parliament, State Premiers, Chief Ministers, Aboriginal corporations, organisations and individuals seeking submissions to the inquiry.
- 1.5 The Committee advertised the inquiry several times in *The Australian* and wrote to media outlets throughout Australia. The inquiry has been reported on *Skynews* on a number of occasions.
- 1.6 One hundred and twenty four submissions and 13 supplementary submissions were received in response to the invitations to comment on the terms of reference. A list of submissions received by the Committee is at Appendix A. A list of other documents of relevance to the inquiry that were formally received by the Committee as exhibits is at Appendix B.
- 1.7 The Committee took evidence at public hearings and private briefings from 23 May 2005 until May 2007 (listed in Appendix C) in:
 - Adelaide (SA)
 - Brisbane, Cairns, Weipa and Thursday Island (QLD)
 - Canberra (ACT)
 - Darwin, Alice Springs and Maningrida (NT)
 - Kalgoorlie, Perth, Kununurra and Broome (WA)
 - Melbourne (VIC)
 - Sydney and Bega (NSW).

1 The Minister's referral was made pursuant to House Standing Order 215b.

Indigenous successes

- 1.8 The Committee received numerous success stories of individuals, Indigenous employment programs, and the establishment of small businesses and enterprises. This Chapter showcases a small sample of these to illustrate the diversity and magnitude of the achievements.

Definition of successful employment outcomes

- 1.9 The concept of employment was for some straight forward; ‘a job is a job which enables a person to maintain themselves and their family’.² There was also a wide range of other interpretations. Therefore, the Committee’s approach to what constituted a successful employment outcome was to accept a broad concept that would accommodate most definitions used by the authors of submissions and to focus on the positive outcomes and underlying factors that resulted in these successes. While sustainable employment is the optimal outcome, the Committee accepts advances in relation to training, work readiness or in employment as positive outcomes. The Committee is mindful, however, that the optimal prosperous future for Indigenous Australians lies in employment links with mainstream labour markets.

Definition of successful Indigenous organisations and enterprises

- 1.10 In relation to Indigenous organisations, Dr Patrick Sullivan, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, believed that the definition of Indigenous success is the same as everyone else’s:

They want efficient organisations that deliver the services that they set out to deliver; they want them to do it in a fair and balanced manner, and they want their processes to be transparent. They want the outcomes that the rest of us expect: safe communities, things that, as we all know, are sorely lacking in many parts of Australia. So it is not that difficult, I think, to determine what is successful on that basis.³

- 1.11 Dr Dennis Foley defined success based on the banks’ classification of a successful small business in entrepreneurship as ‘being in business for

2 Mr Anthony Cutcliffe, Director, The Eureka Project Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 7.

3 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 2.

12 months or more and still showing a profit'.⁴ A successful Indigenous business is also:

... not defined by the level of funding or profit gained through the business but in how they can assist in sharing the wealth amongst community, clan or family group members or through the provision of employment provided to its members.⁵

Practical reconciliation

1.12 Practical reconciliation was a term that became part of the Australian Government's policy in early 2000.⁶ The Prime Minister described practical reconciliation in the following terms:

National reconciliation calls for more than recognition of the damaging impact on people's lives of the mistaken practices of the past. It also calls for clear focus on the future. It calls for practical policy-making that effectively addresses current indigenous disadvantage particularly in areas such as employment, health, education and housing.⁷

1.13 Dr Boyd Hunter saw practical reconciliation as 'an achievement of, or aspiration towards positive outcomes for Indigenous people relative to other Australians'.⁸

Reconciliation must deliver benefits to all sectors of the community within a framework of Social Justice and Aboriginal Economic Development.⁹

1.14 Mr William Tilmouth described the process of practical reconciliation to the Committee:

You open the doors for us; we will walk through them with gusto.¹⁰

4 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 11.

5 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 8.

6 For example: Prime Minister the Hon John Howard MP, at the launch of the National Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, 29 March 2000, <http://www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/2000/address2903.htm>, p. 1, accessed 9 October 2006.

7 Prime Minister John Howard, cited in A Pratt, *Practising Reconciliation? The politics of Reconciliation in the Australian Parliament, 1991-2000*, 2005, p. 131.

8 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 13.

9 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 4.

- 1.15 For the purposes of the current inquiry 'practical reconciliation' has been defined as the achievement of improved outcomes measured by international benchmarks by practical measures rather than symbolic gestures. Specifically, it aims to bridge the divide, between Indigenous and other Australians, in the areas of health, employment, education, housing, law and justice. Participation in the mainstream economy is based on the belief in the value of economic independence derived from a reasonable education and an awareness of the skills needed to participate.

The other process by which you measure the interaction and the reconciliation is by putting in place strategies that are the same as are available to other Australians. So, making sure that Indigenous people have access to a whole range of employment services, whether they be through the Job Network, Indigenous employment programs, the personal support program or other programs.¹¹

Overview

- 1.16 In many regions the Indigenous population is growing more rapidly than the total population and will therefore provide a higher proportion of the potential workforce of the future.¹² It is important that Indigenous employment opportunities increase at a rate comparable to the increase in the number of Indigenous workers available, particularly at this time because of the skills shortages in many areas.

Socio-economic status

- 1.17 While the focus of this inquiry is on positive examples of Indigenous employment, the interconnectedness with housing, health and education

10 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 43.

11 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, pp. 10-11.

12 For example, see Barwon Darling Alliance, *Submission No. 57*, p. 2; Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Inc, *Submission No. 101*, pp. 5-6; Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 29; Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 81; Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 21; Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 34; Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 1.

requires at least a brief comment to provide the context in which the conclusions in this report are reached.

- 1.18 In listening to the concerns in communities, housing, unemployment and education often feature and these are all social determinants of health.¹³ Indigenous people remain disadvantaged across a range of areas of social concern compared to non-Indigenous Australians although there has been some progress in the key areas of employment, education, health and housing.¹⁴
- 1.19 The level of employment of Aboriginal people compared to the wider population is a key social indicator of the economic health and social wellbeing of the communities.¹⁵ In summary, indicators of Indigenous economic and business development show that Indigenous Australians are three times more likely to be unemployed; self-employment levels and home ownership are one third that of non-Indigenous Australians; the median weekly income is less than 60 per cent that of non-Indigenous; and students are half as likely to complete year 12.¹⁶
- 1.20 Much of the evidence emphasised the interdependencies of a whole range of factors that impact on the potential success of employment initiatives.¹⁷ Action taken to improve Indigenous employment outcomes needs to recognise and address the interrelated factors that can act as barriers to Indigenous employment.¹⁸

13 Mr Jonathon Link, Community Liaison and Development Officer, Mental Health Program, Royal Flying Doctor Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 52.

14 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005*, pp. xx, 3. Available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au>. See also Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, *Social Justice Report 2005*, Report No. 3/2005, p. 10. Available at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/Social_Justice/sjreport05/index.html; New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 7.

15 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 80.

16 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, pp. 5-6.

17 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, pp. 2-3; Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 7; Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, *Submission No. 101*, p. 4; Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2; Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Submission No. 109*, p. 2; Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 40.

18 For example, Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manger, Human Resources, Voyages Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 8; The Allen Consulting Group, Report to the Business Council of Australia, *Indigenous Communities and Australian Businesses – From little things big things grow*, October 2001, p. 103. This report is available at:

Unemployment is a direct impediment to economic participation, independence, health and educational outcomes ...

Unemployment is closely linked to alcohol/drug abuse and the likelihood of interaction with the criminal justice system.¹⁹

Welfare dependence

*Welfare dependency is an enemy to Indigenous advancement.*²⁰

- 1.21 The need to address welfare dependency was a persistent theme throughout the inquiry.²¹ Ali-Curang Council Association Inc referred to the welfare mentality in that the 'government will always give us money no matter what **so why work!**'.²²
- 1.22 There needs to be a real incentive to encourage people to move from welfare dependency to full time employment. People will need to benefit from entering employment or a business.²³ In addition to the peer pressure that will act against young Aboriginal people participating in the workforce, these people may have limited knowledge of what the job involves and what vocations are available:
- ... there is often a negative and/or hostile outlook towards anything non-Aboriginal, that makes it highly unlikely that children will be positive towards employment, or will understand what needs to happen to get into a job and then keep it.²⁴
- 1.23 Mr Warren Mundine described the concept of employment as alien to the culture of those families that have experienced intergenerational unemployment:²⁵

We need to look at activities that create sustainable employment in the long-term and in the short-term as well. Sometimes there is nothing wrong with short-term employment, working for a couple

www.bca.com.au/upload/64489_AllenConsultGroup.pdf. See also Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 2.

19 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 6.

20 Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 5.

21 For example, see Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 35.

22 Ali-Curang Council Association, *Submission No. 9*, p. 1.

23 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 11.

24 Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 37*, p. 1.

25 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 30.

of months or two years and then moving on to another employment situation. A lot of people do that quite successfully. This is seen in a number of industries, especially in mining. We need to focus on the activities that get people into sustainable jobs, rather than actually looking at jobs.²⁶

- 1.24 The Government has introduced a number of welfare reforms and will look at further reforms to welfare payments which will lead to employment for Indigenous people and an improvement in their wellbeing.²⁷ The current approach of the Australian Government is based on the proposition that 'the best form of family income comes from a job rather than a welfare payment' and that people on income support who have the capacity to work should be required to seek work to the level of their capacity.²⁸ One of the key objectives is the reduction of welfare dependence and an increase in private sector employment participation as this will take advantage of the growing economy.²⁹

Workforce trends

Workforce participation

- 1.25 Nationally there are a number of skills shortages and Australia's population is ageing which means that the situation will exacerbate while in many areas the Aboriginal population is younger and growing. There has been some progress in labour force participation rates, however, the rate of participation by Indigenous Australia still remains lower than that for non-Indigenous Australians.³⁰
- 1.26 In 2004-2005, the labour force participation rate for Indigenous people was three quarters of that for non-Indigenous Australians (58.5 per cent compared to 78.1 per cent).³¹

26 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 30.

27 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 2.

28 The Hon John Howard, Prime Minister, 3 May 2005, Menzies Lecture, *Australian Families: Prosperity, Choice and Fairness*, p. 11.

29 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 30.

30 Employment rates are a proportion of the labour force and include those who are employed and those who are unemployed and looking for work. They also include CDEP participants unless otherwise stated.

31 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.5, p. 3.39. Figures adjusted for age difference.

Table 1.1 Labour force participation rates (percentage) 1971 – 2001³²

Year	Indigenous Australians	Non-Indigenous Australians
1971	45.6	58.7
1976	49.5	61.4
1981	47.3	61.3
1986	48.3	63.1
1991	53.5	62.9
1996	52.7	61.9
2001	52.1	62.8
2005 ³³	54.0	73.3

Full-time and part-time participation

1.27 The Productivity Commission found that in 2004-2005 Indigenous people in the labour force were more likely to be employed part-time (35.4 per cent compared to 27.7 per cent for non-Indigenous) and less likely to be employed full-time than non-Indigenous people (53.6 per cent compared to 68.5 per cent).³⁴ The Productivity Commission also found that for Indigenous people 'full time employment decreased with remoteness, while part time employment increased with remoteness' and that participation in Community Development and Employment Projects (CDEP) was a 'significant proportion of Indigenous employment in remote and very remote areas, accounting for 63.5 per cent of Indigenous employment in the public sector and 47.6 per cent of Indigenous employment in the private sector'.³⁵

32 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, Appendix A, p. 32. DEWR defined participation rate as the proportion of the population who are employed or unemployed – age groups can vary but usually this relates to persons aged 15 and over.

33 In August 2005, DEWR referred to 54 per cent workforce participation rate for Indigenous people, (15 to 64 years of age) compared to 73.3 per cent for the non-Indigenous population.

34 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.3. Figures adjusted for age difference.

35 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.3.

Public and private sector participation

1.28 Indigenous people were more likely to be employed in the public sector than non-Indigenous people (33.1 per cent of the labour force compared to 16.5 per cent after adjusting for age difference).³⁶ In the private sector non-Indigenous people were 78.5 per cent and Indigenous people were 54.8 per cent of the labour force (after adjusting for age differences).³⁷ Further private sector employment for Indigenous people (including CDEP participation) decreased while public sector employment increased with remoteness.³⁸

Regional and remote

1.29 In urban areas Indigenous people can access the local labour markets and mainstream opportunities. In some areas of regional and remote Australia, however, labour markets and employment infrastructure are virtually non-existent. In very remote areas in 2004-2005, 35.6 per cent of Indigenous people in the labour force were participating in CDEP.³⁹

1.30 The Department added that there has been some progress in Indigenous Job Network placements in regional areas where the unemployment rates have been higher historically:

Table 1.2 Indigenous Job Network Placements

Fiscal Year	Metropolitan	Regional	Remote	Total
2004-05	12,800	23,000	3,200	39,000
2005-Apr06	11,800	22,000	3,000	36,800

Source DEWR Administrative data, Supplementary Submission No. 108a, p. 3.
(Data is 10 months to end of April 2006)

36 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.14.

37 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.14.

38 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, pp. 11.14-11.15.

39 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.5, p. 3.50.

Unemployment

- 1.31 In 2001, Indigenous unemployment was 20 per cent while that of the Australian population was 7.3 per cent.⁴⁰ The unemployment rate for Indigenous people fell from 22.9 per cent in 2002 to 15.4 per cent in 2004-2005.⁴¹ Unemployment data for the Australian population for the same period in 2004-2005 was 5.2 per cent.⁴² The Productivity Commission reported the unemployment rate for Indigenous people in 2004-2005 as 12.9 per cent compared to 4.4 per cent for non-Indigenous Australians after adjusting for age differences.⁴³
- 1.32 The Productivity Commission found that the long-term unemployment rate was five times higher than that for non-Indigenous people (4.7 per cent of the labour force compared to 0.9 per cent after taking into account different age structures).⁴⁴ Mr Bob Harvey reported, however, that there were encouraging signs in a reduction in long-term unemployment and the uptake of non-CDEP employment.⁴⁵
- 1.33 There were a number of improvements since 1996 identified in the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey:
- Encouraging signs in the reduction of long-term Indigenous unemployment;
 - Very high perceptions of job security among employed Indigenous Australians. Around 88 per cent of employed Indigenous Australians expected to be in the same job in 12 months;
 - A significant proportion of employment growth occurred outside of Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP). Non-CDEP employment accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the increase in total employment for Indigenous employment between 1994 and 2002; and

40 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Supplementary Submission No. 108e*, p. 4.

41 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 1; DEWR, *Supplementary Submission 108c*, p. 1; *Supplementary Submission No. 108e*, p. 4.

42 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Supplementary Submission No. 108e*, p. 4.

43 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.5, p. 3.39.

44 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.5, p. 3.52.

45 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 1.

- The proportion of Indigenous Australians who rely on government pensions and benefits decreased from 55 per cent to 50 per cent in the eight years to 2002.⁴⁶

1.34 The Government's current approach has an emphasis on local jobs for local people and is based on increasing the links with education and vocational training and the further development of industry strategies.⁴⁷ The Indigenous Economic Development Strategy was launched in November 2005, and has two main approaches; an employment toolkit and an economic development toolkit.⁴⁸ There are strategies and activities around work, asset and wealth management and industry strategies including minerals, pastoral, forestry, child care, hospitality, construction and tourism.⁴⁹ The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations advised that there was a continuing increase in numbers of Indigenous job seekers finding work:

Job Network placed over 47 900 Indigenous job seekers in work in the 12 months to end January 2007, an 11 per cent increase in work in the 12 months and a new annual record. In the 12 months to end of January 2007, more than 13 300 long term (13 week) jobs were recorded for Indigenous job seekers, an increase in seven per cent on the previous 12 month period and a new annual record.⁵⁰

Scope of the report

- 1.35 The report focuses on positive examples of Indigenous employment. While the discussion in the report does deal with some negative aspects, this is in the context of providing insight into avenues of improved practice. This report does not rehash these issues which have been extensively covered in other reports and the media.
- 1.36 Approaches to increasing employment options for Indigenous people are many and varied but there is commonality in the successful examples. Chapter 2 refers to some of these successes. Chapter 2 also looks at the range of employment opportunities Indigenous communities are deriving from their land interests, particularly in rural and remote areas. The

46 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 1.

47 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 4.

48 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 2.

49 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, pp. 1-2.

50 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108d*, p. 2.

mining industry is highlighted for its current and future role as a large employer of Indigenous people. The significant contributions of the pastoral sector, construction industry and heritage management, to employment outcomes, are outlined. The successes of the public sector in Indigenous employment are also included in this chapter.

- 1.37 Economic independence relates to opportunities and this is discussed in Chapter 3. Access to capital for entrepreneurs and sustainable businesses was a key issue along with money management, skills and mentoring.
- 1.38 Leadership is another key factor and there has been considerable progress which is outlined in Chapter 4. Mentoring has been shown to be instrumental in many of the success stories and is acknowledged as pivotal to future successes.
- 1.39 Education and training are key factors for future success and are addressed in Chapter 5. There are a number of successful examples but a great deal of work is needed to ensure that more Indigenous people have the opportunity to develop sufficient skills that will provide them with the skill level which can offer economic independence enjoyed by most non-Indigenous Australians.
- 1.40 There are a number of impediments to potentially successful programs which are referred to in Chapter 6. Education and training are of course pivotal to successful outcomes and any future achievements. Literacy and numeracy issues are paramount and therefore school retention and adult education are important. A number of impediments in relation to social factors are also briefly mentioned in Chapter 6.
- 1.41 Chapter 7 looks to the future. This Chapter briefly comments on the whole of community and the role of the whole-of-government approach to service delivery and the various views on the extent to which this has been successful. There has been significant progress in some areas but there remains a long way to go. This inquiry has clearly shown that more of the same will not work and the future does offer great hope.

*They are lining up and they want to work. That is contrary to what a lot of people locally believe, especially the big employers. They think that our mob just do not want to work; that they have been on the dole and CDEP for too long. These projects are proving that that is wrong because they are definitely lining up.*¹

The positives

2.1 The key motivation for Indigenous employment was described as:

... it is having a job. It is being able to go to work, being part of a team and a community, being independent, getting those wages every week and having that money that they did not have before so that they can buy for the family and provide for the family.²

2.2 The sustainability of Indigenous employment was attributed to an interest in the type of work and financial benefits which enables them to support families and have a lifestyle of their choice.³

A steady job remains the best means of overcoming disadvantage in our society. People in work are financially better off, they acquire skills and experience and they are more closely connected with the communities.⁴

1 Mr John Berto, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Northern Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 44.

2 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 9.

3 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 23; Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, pp. 23-24.

4 The Hon John Howard, Prime Minister, 3 May 2005, Menzies Lecture, *Australian Families: Prosperity, Choice and Fairness*, p. 12.

Successful Indigenous Employment programs

Private sector employment

- 2.3 The private sector is and will continue to be the driver of future opportunities for Indigenous employment due to the significant skills shortages in many industries. The minerals industry for example is facing severe skills shortages particularly in engineering, construction and operational trades during the current expansion phase.⁵
- 2.4 There are also Indigenous employment programs designed to develop projects with industry such as the Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment program.⁶ In the banking industry for example, the National Australia Bank and Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited have a number of initiatives for increasing Indigenous employment and see this as part of their corporate responsibility to the community of Australia.⁷
- 2.5 Self-employment is another growth area. Records show that Indigenous people have about 4.8 per cent business activity compared to non-Indigenous self-employed levels of 16 per cent.⁸ Dr Dennis Foley believes that there is far in excess of this number.⁹ Small business owners would not be required to register their Indigenous background, so this figure cannot be determined.

Opportunities from the land

- 2.6 Utilising Indigenous land interests for the economic gain of Indigenous communities has been the subject of considerable public debate recently. This impetus has underpinned changes to the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 (Commonwealth)* and aspects of the Native Title Reform process. While the issues surrounding native title and land rights are complex, and an exhaustive discussion exceeds the scope of the
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5 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 1.

6 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 4.

7 Mr Craig Buller, Regional Manager, Engagement and Culture, National Australia Bank, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 42-44, 46-47; Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited, *Submission No. 71*, pp. 1-2.

8 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 3.

9 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, p. 10.

Committee's inquiry, this chapter explores positive examples of employment opportunities for Indigenous communities derived from their land interests.

Minerals industry

2.7 In the minerals industry, 60 per cent of their operations have neighbouring Indigenous communities.¹⁰ The mining industry has a vested interest in Indigenous land and communities; many resources are located on Indigenous land interests and companies need workers.

If skills are one of the capacity constraints then that, of course, will moderate our capacity to take advantage of the opportunities on the back of the supercycle driven by the industrialisation and urbanisation of developing economies, particularly in Asia. We see a significant opportunity which exists in developing a skilled Indigenous workforce that can capitalise on the employment and business opportunities in those regions ...¹¹

2.8 For many remote communities where the job market is weakest, the mining industry is the largest private sector employer,¹² a trend which seems set to continue. The Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation submitted that:

There is no doubt that there have been two significant developments in Western Australia in the past ten years for Aboriginal people – the Native Title Act and the resources boom.¹³

2.9 The Minerals Council of Australia (MCA) told the Committee:

We provide a diverse range of employment opportunities across the professions, skills and services. We are currently the largest employer of Indigenous Australians in Australia, with around five per cent of our workforce being Indigenous Australians. As the provider of the only significant mainstream economic activity in most of the rural and regional Indigenous communities, we recognise that not only are we in a good position but that we can

10 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

11 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

12 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

13 Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 98*, p. 3.

actually do more to increase the positive benefits to Indigenous communities from our activities.¹⁴

2.10 In June 2005 the MCA and the Australian Government signed a five year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) designed to increase Indigenous participation in mining.¹⁵ The MCA has undertaken to increase employment and economic outcomes for Indigenous communities, while the Government is tasked with improving service delivery.

2.11 In February 2006, mineral companies had entered into over 350 agreements with Indigenous groups across 200 minerals operations.¹⁶ Numerous types of agreements, such as native title, heritage and land use agreements, have been reached. Many of these agreements have included employment and training provisions.¹⁷

2.12 The Committee was told that native title legislation has provided the strategic framework for employment opportunities:

Real opportunities exist for Indigenous employment through the native title future act process. As such, it considers that employment and training are outcomes that should be at the heart of future act negotiations with mining companies and other proponents ... Additionally, agreements with mining companies often have the result of wealth flowing, through traditional owners, to the rural and regional community at large.¹⁸

2.13 The Committee received some positive and promising evidence on the jobs that were being leveraged from exploration, mining and other developments by Indigenous communities, despite concerns about the efficacy of agreements to deliver benefits.¹⁹ The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) was very positive about the processes that had been developed in South Australia to expedite exploration Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA)s across the state:

14 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

15 The Minerals Council of Australia, MOU between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Minerals Council of Australia, *Exhibit No. 146*, pp. 1-3.

16 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 3.

17 Professor Marcia Langton, *Submission No. 66*, pp. 2-5.

18 Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 98*, p. 2.

19 For example O'Faircheallaigh C, 'Indigenous Participation in Environmental Management of Mining Projects: the role of negotiated agreements', *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 14 (4), November 2005, pp. 629-647.

They are demonstrably more effective than litigation, particularly in building future relationships.²⁰

Rio Tinto Ltd

- 2.14 Since 1996, the Rio Tinto Group has signed seven mine and 60 exploration agreements with Indigenous groups resulting in an estimated \$400 million being invested into communities.²¹ Rio Tinto currently has 700 Indigenous employees which equates to 7 per cent of their work force.²²
- 2.15 The Committee views Rio Tinto's Argyle Diamond Mine's Indigenous Employment Strategy as a 'best practice model'. The company focuses on recruiting locally, and has set high targets for Indigenous employment and retention. Since 2000 Aboriginal employment has gone from less than five per cent to 23 per cent. Targets have been reset and it is hoped that by 2010, 40 per cent of the workforce will be Aboriginal. Argyle attributes its success to two strategies:
- A four day hiring and selection process which is culturally appropriate but still provides a robust assessment of candidates' employability; and
 - Training programs to skill-up Indigenous people, so that they can assist with the development of their communities. In 2003 Argyle entered into a contract with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to employ 150 trainees, which has resulted in 73 apprentices and trainees. Additionally, the mine's procurement contracts require contractors to employ local Indigenous people.²³
- 2.16 Through a Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA), the Australian Government and the involved Indigenous communities are also working to improve employment outcomes from the Argyle Diamond Mine. An education and training fund has been sponsored jointly by the Australian Government and the Gelganyem Trust, which draws on royalties received through the Argyle Diamond ILUA. The support provided by the trust will include funding for tertiary scholarships, educational travel, traineeships and boarding fees.²⁴

20 South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Submission No. 89*, p. 1.

21 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 6.

22 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, pp. 8-9.

23 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, pp. 9, 23.

24 Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Supplementary Submission No. 73a*, Attachment B; Agreements Database, Gelganyem 'Education and Training' Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA) (2005), <http://www.atns.net.au/biogs/A002885b.htm>, (accessed 5 September 2006).

The Northern Land Council

- 2.17 The Northern Land Council's (NLC) 'Employment and Training Service' provides another good example of how employment opportunities can be leveraged through ILUAs.²⁵ In 2000, the NLC negotiated an ILUA with Adrail which created 50 Indigenous employment places. By 2002 the NLC had placed 150 people in employment. To date, the NLC has signed four ILUAs with developers (all of which have employment provisions) and they are negotiating numerous others.
- 2.18 The NLC work to a set of 'guiding principles' which ensures that developers commit to the provision of real jobs, and treat the NLC and Indigenous employees as an equal partner.²⁶ The key factors include the provision of comprehensive information, mentoring programs and support from management. Jobs are offered first to traditional owners, then to Aboriginal groups affected by a development and finally to other Aboriginal people.²⁷

Larrakia Development Corporation

- 2.19 In 2001 the Larrakia Development Corporation (LDC) negotiated with the Northern Territory Government to forgo their native title claim over Rosebery, Bellamack and Archer, in return for having first option to buy the land for residential sub-division.²⁸ Subsequently, the LDC has successfully developed the land and repaid the \$1.2 million borrowed. Mr Gregory Constantine, from the LDC, told the Committee:

The benefit of that is that we have been employing Larrakia through a number of different subcontractors and our civil contractors. We currently have eight Larrakia and other Indigenous people employed on-site. As a result of that, we have created over 70 other jobs in other industries through our direct contracts. Through Wickham Point we struck a deal with Bechtel and Konica Philips. They currently have 101 or 102 Larrakia and other non-Larrakia working on-site out there.²⁹

25 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, pp. 2-7.

26 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 3.

27 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 3.

28 Mr Gregory Constantine, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Development Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 71.

29 Mr Gregory Constantine, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Development Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 71.

- 2.20 Currently, the LDC is involved in the development of other land parcels over which they have relinquished native title.³⁰

Indigenous Land Corporation

- 2.21 The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) is a Commonwealth statutory authority. The ILC assists with the acquisition and management of land with the purpose of providing economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to Indigenous people.³¹ In their submission, the ILC highlighted their land acquisitions, pastoral program and the corporation's employment record, as furthering Indigenous employment.³²
- 2.22 The ILC has a stringent application process for land acquisition. Applicants must define their reason for acquiring the land and demonstrate their 'commitment and capacity to achieve their aspirations'.³³ The ILC retains the title of purchased land and it is leased by applicants.
- 2.23 The ILC's primary land management initiative is the Indigenous Pastoral Program (IPP). The IPP was established in 2003 with the signing of an MOU between the Northern Territory Government, the ILC, and the Northern and Central Land Councils.³⁴ The ILC submitted that at the time, the organisation was the nineteenth largest cattle producer in Australia, running approximately 38 000 head of cattle.³⁵

Managing cultural and natural heritage

- 2.24 Cultural and natural heritage management is a growing area of employment for Indigenous people. Jobs undertaken in this area include:
- participation in heritage clearance work to comply with state and Federal heritage legislation;
 - employment resulting from the joint management of national parks; and

30 Mr Gregory Constantine, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Development Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 71.

31 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*, p. 1.

32 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*, pp. 1-4.

33 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*, p. 1.

34 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63a*, p. 2.

35 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*, p. 3.

- working to manage the natural and cultural assets on Indigenous sea and land interests and in other remote areas.³⁶
- 2.25 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided the Committee with examples of bushcare and coastal monitoring projects.³⁷ The Committee noted the forestry program on the Tiwi Islands and the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation Marine Rangers.³⁸ Positive aspects of these projects have the potential to be replicated in other areas.

Construction on Indigenous land

2.26 Through the inclusion of Indigenous employment quotas in procurement guidelines, state governments are using their purchasing power to increase Indigenous participation in the construction industry. The evidence received by the Committee is outlined below. The associated training needs are discussed in Chapter 5 of this report.

2.27 The New South Wales Government told the Committee that construction provided an important opportunity for private sector employment.³⁹ To this end the New South Wales Government has developed Aboriginal housing and construction guidelines:⁴⁰

The government construction contracts must employ Aboriginal workers and engage Aboriginal contractors when the building is for Aboriginal community use or located in a region where there is a high Aboriginal population.⁴¹

2.28 In the case of Aboriginal housing a 'single select tender process' is used to encourage Aboriginal contractors to undertake the work:

Aboriginal builders submit a tender, including a price. The tender, the builder's capacity and financial credentials are reviewed using the same criteria applied to mainstream builders. The tender price may also be compared to mainstream builders for comparable

36 Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council, *Submission No. 91*, pp. 1-2; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 1-3 and *Supplementary Submission 100a*, pp. 1-22; ACT Government, *Submission No. 60*, pp. 5-6; Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 1-4.

37 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Supplementary Submission No. 100a*, pp. 1-22.

38 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Supplementary Submission No. 100a*, pp. 1-2.

39 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 82-83.

40 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, pp. 16-17.

41 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 83.

work in the same locality. However, it is recognised that a higher tender price reflects the greater difficulties Aboriginal builders face in commencing and operating their enterprises, including meeting training needs. So, if the price is no greater than 10% of mainstream prices the tender is accepted, the builder is engaged for a trial period.⁴²

2.29 The Queensland Government requires 20 per cent local Indigenous employment on government funded capital works undertaken in Indigenous communities.⁴³

2.30 The Northern Territory Government, in partnership with the Commonwealth, have funded the Indigenous Housing Authority of the Northern Territory (IHANT). Mr Dennis Bree told the Committee:

What IHANT did with the support of the two governments was to guarantee a four- or five-year building program ... In the past, the excuse has always been, 'We can't train people through to apprenticeships because we only have a contract that'll last 12 months or 18 months.' So we have broken through that policy barrier. We are now expanding it to all Northern Territory government procurement in the bush, so that all procurement in the bush will be linked to longer term programs and Indigenous employment, either through traditional contracting methods or by contracting directly with communities.⁴⁴

2.31 In Central Australia, IHANT contracts Tangentyere Constructions to train building apprentices and oversee the construction of homes by apprentices. Approximately 70 per cent of the housing construction is undertaken by apprentices. Tangentyere Constructions employ qualified builder trainers and many apprentices are involved through the Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) or access CDEP top up.⁴⁵ Upon completion of apprenticeships, Indigenous builders can provide maintenance services in their communities or form mobile building teams to pursue employment opportunities elsewhere.⁴⁶

From the lessons drawn from our experiences we propose comprehensive employment generation through an import

42 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 17.

43 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

44 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 7.

45 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, pp. 4-5.

46 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 18.

substitution model such as the successful central remote model for housing construction. This needs to be implemented across all areas of service provision, including roads and civil construction; stores; community services such as child care and aged care; essential services; financial services such as banking; administration, education and health.⁴⁷

- 2.32 The Committee acknowledges that engaging Indigenous people in the construction industry has the dual function of providing employment and assisting communities to become self sufficient. Thus, in turn the Committee supports state and territory governments' initiatives to actively encourage Indigenous involvement in the construction of houses and infrastructure on Indigenous land interests, and hopes that the lessons learnt can be transposed to other areas of service delivery.

Examples of successful organisations, enterprises and programs

- 2.33 The *Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation* runs the Aged Care Program within the Residential Care facility at Coober Pedy in outback South Australia which includes a bush camp for traditional elders. All members of the Aboriginal Community Board are Aboriginal Elders who set the values and priorities for the service.⁴⁸ The recruitment and retention rates for staff are high because the work is highly valued by the community and the 'sense of team is positive'.⁴⁹
- 2.34 Gavin and Alan Flick run a tourist art and craft store at Darling Harbour. When they first decided to go into business, they built up \$8,000 in working capital by creating rock art and selling it door-to-door. That capital provided the seed funding for a shop at The Rocks, and the business grew from there.⁵⁰
- 2.35 Vicki Docherty has built a successful business producing toy bears in New South Wales. Having originally established *Chester Bear Cottage*, run from her home in Newcastle, Vicki went on to establish a retail outlet called

47 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 28.

48 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 2.

49 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 3.

50 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 13.

Golly Gosh. In 2004, she expanded the business by opening another retail outlet in a Newcastle shopping mall.⁵¹

- 2.36 The *Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)* was established in 1980 to promote Aboriginal culture, language, dance and music 'while generating economic benefits such as training and employment of Aboriginal people in order for them to progress into the mainstream employment market'.⁵² CAAMA comprises Radio Broadcasting, Remote Aboriginal Communities Broadcasting Service, CAAMA Music, CAAMA Technical Services, CAAMA Shops, CAAMA Productions and *Imparja Televisions Pty Ltd*.⁵³
- 2.37 *Narana Creations* is an Aboriginal cultural education tourism centre in Grovedale, Victoria. Products sold include Indigenous art and craft, bush foods, and cultural education programs. *Narana Creations* has been named best Indigenous operation in Victoria for three consecutive years and is continuing to grow, with increasing numbers of visitors to the centre, cultural education programs provided to local and overseas students, and the establishment of an Indigenous café.⁵⁴
- 2.38 Joint ventures provide an opportunity to involve the private sector in economic development opportunities. The Tasmanian Investment Corporation (TIC) was formed in 1992. Through a joint venture vehicle with Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), TIC purchased the Burnie Shopping Complex, a 50 per cent interest in the Marine Culture Unit Trust that operates two oyster producing leases, and a 50 per cent interest in Gordon River Cruises. TIC has been able to repay its commercial loans from IBA and take full equity positions in each of the businesses. It has since sold the Burnie Shopping Complex to acquire more investments for its members.⁵⁵
- 2.39 Indigenous community members with relevant skills are well placed to win contracts for the delivery of community services in remote areas.⁵⁶ In New South Wales, an Indigenous woman developed a successful business, Red Earth Hair Studio in Lightning Ridge, with the assistance of the

51 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 20.

52 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 1.

53 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, pp. 1-2.

54 *Narana Creations*, *Submission No. 114*.

55 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 14.

56 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 29.

- Indigenous Self Employment Program Trial, conducted under the auspices of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.⁵⁷
- 2.40 Koori Business Network (KBN) has been another success story. During the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, KBN had almost 200 Indigenous business people go through their doors, the majority of whom were in the arts area.⁵⁸ Art is important because of the link with culture and the potential to link this with cabinet making and other trades has seen the standard of art rising as the Indigenous art community mixes more.⁵⁹
- 2.41 The Indigenous Stock Exchange is also an excellent innovation for supporting the development of Indigenous businesses. It is an online forum where Indigenous businesses of all sizes can advertise ideas and proposals for viewing by potential sponsors, investors and mentors.⁶⁰
- 2.42 Another excellent example of a successful Indigenous enterprise is Carey Mining, a wholly-owned Aboriginal company that has been operating for over 10 years, and has employed hundreds of Aboriginal people. It is a contracting company that offers mining and other services. The company has assisted other Indigenous people with starting up.⁶¹
- 2.43 Ngarda Civil and Mining also has 130 Aboriginal people earning significant salaries out of a staff of 160 people.⁶² Employees are now being poached by other companies.
- 2.44 Yarnteen received a government grant a decade ago to set up a small grain business in a country town. The business has subsequently repaid the grant and expanded to become a major regional grain handler, which is Indigenous owned and managed.⁶³
- 2.45 Murrin Bridge Wines is Australia's first Aboriginal community-owned vineyard, begun nine years ago at Murrin Bridge near Lake Cargelligo. The label is performing well in the domestic market following a bronze

57 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 20.

58 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, p. 2.

59 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, pp. 7-8.

60 Indigenous Stock Exchange, <www.isx.org.au> (accessed 24 February 2006).

61 Mr Daniel Tuckey, Carey Mining, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 42.

62 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 25.

63 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 3; Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 19.

medal win at the Wagga Wine Show 2005 and successful release of Murrin Bridge Chardonnay and Shiraz.⁶⁴

- 2.46 Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships (IEP) also provided a range of examples of successful Indigenous enterprises, including a bus shuttle service between two communities, and businesses providing services in earthmoving, brick making, timber harvesting, native bee honey collecting, a houseboat, and a number of different tourism enterprises.⁶⁵
- 2.47 Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES) is a company operated and managed by Aboriginal people which works with business to find employment for Aboriginal people.⁶⁶ Aboriginal guards employed by Woolworths in Moree are seen by the community as protecting Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the Moree community. Ms Cathy Duncan believes that this is successful because it is returning 'the warriors' back to a position of protector of all in the community.⁶⁷
- 2.48 Cairns and District Regional Housing Corporation (CDHRC) achieve a 70 per cent Indigenous labour component on average for their programs.⁶⁸ CDHRC sees the creation of employment opportunities through money spent on housing.⁶⁹ Where possible they employ local people to undertake maintenance and repair work.⁷⁰
- ...we are a best practice business whose board of directors just so happens to be Indigenous and whose customers just so happen to be Indigenous.⁷¹
- 2.49 Department of Defence through NORFORCE employs 270 Indigenous soldiers. Soldiers are from rural and remote communities and NORFORCE is based on the Army Reserve model.⁷² NORFORCE's role is to provide reconnaissance and surveillance. The Aboriginal community

64 'Real Aussie bush wine the dream for Murrin', *Area News*, Griffith NSW, 9 January 2006, p. 8.

65 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 31.

66 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 2.

67 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 11.

68 Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 11.

69 Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 11.

70 Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 16.

71 Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 17.

72 Lieutenant Colonel Richard Parker, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 September 2006, p. 1.

- assistance project run at Borooloola has resulted in McArthur River Mining employing young people who were trained in that project.⁷³
- 2.50 In New South Wales, Aboriginal small business operators are in construction, retail, property and business services, manufacturing and agriculture, forestry and fishing industries.⁷⁴ There are a number of programs operated by the NSW Department of State and Regional Development.⁷⁵
- 2.51 The Euraba Paper Company is a successful story which started out as a group of women from Toomelah Mission wanting to start an enterprise, and has evolved into a business making paper for stationery, art, cards and certificates that employs 10 people and exports internationally.⁷⁶ Other successful enterprises include Yamagurra in Brewarrina.⁷⁷
- 2.52 A college in Gordonvale provides a travelling hair care service to remote communities in the Cape. The service has had a positive effect in these communities and is now recruiting young people to obtain certification and take their skills back to their communities to set up businesses there.⁷⁸
- 2.53 Amanbidji Station is a project to restore Indigenous land to a pastoral productive venture. The program was developed through the combined efforts of land councils, primary industry group, the Indigenous Land Corporation and employment and training to provide persistent, long term support.⁷⁹
- 2.54 The Arnhemland Progress Association has five member communities and a Board of Directors comprising of Indigenous representatives from the communities, employs 200 Indigenous people, 140 staff have certificate level qualifications. The stores have an annual turn-over of \$30 million with \$4 million returned to the communities in the form of wages, store

73 Lieutenant Colonel Richard Parker, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 September 2006, pp. 11-12.

74 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 18.

75 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 19.

76 Ms Jody Broun, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 89.

77 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 20.

78 Mr Johnathan Link, Royal Flying Doctors Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 53.

79 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 4.

improvements and benevolent programs.⁸⁰ A store committee for each community determines how the profits are spent in their community.⁸¹

- 2.55 Indigenous entrepreneurs have developed successful aquaculture, agriculture, tourism and arts industries.⁸² The Caring for Country program operated by the Northern Land Council provides services to the quarantine service and to parks and wildlife, developing a wild food collection, growing of traditional foods, providing turtles for aquariums and other activities that are economically productive.⁸³ There are about 500 people involved but there is a potential for three to four times that number.⁸⁴
- 2.56 *RW and ML Hookey Contracting* was established in 1998 with 3 employees and one truck. The company now has 25 employees and over 40 pieces of equipment and contracts include Century Mines.⁸⁵
- 2.57 *Guurbi Tours*, in Hope Vale, is a successful tourist enterprise developed by Mr Wilfred (Willie) Gordon. The tour uses rock art to encourage tourists to reflect on their own identity and sense of belonging. The tour has had some very positive feedback and a large operator to Cape York changed its itinerary specifically to include *Guurbi Tours*.⁸⁶

Public sector

Australian Public Service

- 2.58 The Australian Public Service Commission has developed the *APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees*, which has five parts.⁸⁷ Fifty seven per cent of APS Indigenous

80 Mr Alastair King, General Manager, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, pp. 52-53; Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Submission No. 24*.

81 Reverend Dr Djinyini Goondarra, Chairman, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 57.

82 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 29.

83 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 3.

84 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 6.

85 RW and ML Hookey Contracting, www.hookeycontracting-mtisa.com.au/about.html, accessed 2 April 2007.

86 Judy Bennett & Wilfred Gordon, 'Social Capital and the Indigenous Entrepreneur' (2005/2006) *Australian Prospect*, Summer, pp. 17-18.

87 Ms Lynne Tacy, Deputy Commissioner, Australian Public Service Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 May 2006, p. 1.

employees are in capital cities, 9 per cent in metropolitan areas, 22 per cent in rural and 13 per cent in remote areas.⁸⁸

- 2.59 The Committee received a number of submissions from Australian Government Departments showcasing their successful Indigenous employment programs. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has an *Indigenous Recruitment and Career Development Strategy 2004-2007*. In May 2005, DFAT had 35 Indigenous employees and has established an Indigenous Task Force to provide a forum to discuss issues with senior management. DFAT recruits through general recruitment, the National Indigenous Cadetship Program, Graduate Trainee Program, Corporate and Financial Management Trainee and has three identified Indigenous positions.⁸⁹
- 2.60 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry employs 23 Indigenous officers in the Northern Australian Quarantine Strategy to protect Australia from the entry of exotic pests, diseases and weeds.⁹⁰
- 2.61 Indigenous employees in the Department of Education, Science and Training constitute 9.8 per cent of the total staffing.⁹¹ DEST has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS.⁹² The *Yarrangi Plan* is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment and Career Development Plan which provides a broad framework for recruitment and career progression and support for Indigenous employees.⁹³

Australian Capital Territory

- 2.62 The higher level of participation in the ACT reflects better engagement and skills than is the case nationally. For example 19.7 per cent of people over the age of 15 have a degree.⁹⁴ Indigenous incomes in the ACT are comparable to those of non-Indigenous people nationally but lag behind non-Indigenous people in the ACT.⁹⁵

88 Ms Ngaire Hosking, Group Manager, Evaluation, Australian Public Service Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 May 2006, p. 5.

89 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Submission No. 86*, pp. 1-2.

90 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Submission No. 100*, p. 1.

91 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 17.

92 Ms Ngaire Hosking, Group Manager, Evaluation, Australian Public Service Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 May 2006, p. 6.

93 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 17.

94 Australian Capital Territory Government, *Submission No. 60*, pp. 1-2.

95 Australian Capital Territory Government, *Submission No. 60*, p. 1.

- 2.63 The ACT public service has as a priority the improvement of employment opportunities to enhance the skills and experience of Indigenous people and set an example for industry.⁹⁶ The government is committed to establishing an Indigenous Business Support Officer within Business ACT to facilitate Indigenous business access to mainstream programs, providing seminars and networking opportunities for Indigenous businesses and the inclusion of cultural awareness training for relevant staff.⁹⁷

Northern Territory

- 2.64 The Northern Territory Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development was established as a high level coordinating body comprising representatives from the Northern Territory Government, the Australian Government, Indigenous organisations and the private sector. The Task Force has developed the Northern Territory Indigenous Economic Development Strategy.⁹⁸
- 2.65 Six per cent of the Northern Territory public sector identify as Indigenous, however, 28 per cent of the population is Indigenous.⁹⁹ This represents a 40 per cent increase since 2002 when the Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy was introduced.¹⁰⁰ Other initiatives in the Northern Territory include a public sector Indigenous employment toolkit, the Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program, the Lookrukin Indigenous Women's Leadership Development program and the Indigenous Employment Forums.¹⁰¹

It cannot be emphasised enough that a critical part of the approach has been the strong and clear message to agencies that Indigenous employment must be mainstream. Simply tacking it on as an add-on to core business is not going to work. History shows that.¹⁰²

96 Australian Capital Territory Government, *Submission No. 60*, p. 4.

97 Australian Capital Territory Government, *Submission No. 60*, pp. 3-4.

98 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 1.

99 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 19.

100 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 19.

101 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 20.

102 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 20.

- 2.66 The Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS) *Indigenous Employment & Career Development Strategy 2002-2006* requires bi-annual progress reports to Cabinet from agencies.¹⁰³ The Commissioner reports on cultural diversity, recruitment and retention, career development and management and leadership and the information on Equal Employment Opportunity data is collected on Census days for agencies.¹⁰⁴ These reports have been a significant factor in the increase in the number of Indigenous employment policies and programs across the NTPS.¹⁰⁵
- 2.67 Other initiatives include the Indigenous Policy Capacity Building Program, secondment and job exchange programs, forums for CEOs and Indigenous employees, Indigenous media advertising, appropriate selection practices and the ongoing promotion and marketing of Indigenous employment initiatives.¹⁰⁶

Queensland

- 2.68 Partnerships Queensland is a strategic policy framework for Indigenous matters. The policy objectives are strong families, strong culture, safe place, healthy living and skilled and prosperous people and communities.¹⁰⁷ This brings together a business approach 'based on partnerships, community engagement, improved governance, better performance, more accountable service providers and shared responsibility'.¹⁰⁸ The Queensland Government is in partnerships with industry, employer groups, unions and Indigenous communities to build private and community sector commitment to employing Indigenous people.¹⁰⁹ One such opportunity is land use agreement developments.¹¹⁰

103 Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, *Submission No. 33*, p. 1.

104 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 20; Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, *Submission No. 33*, p. 3.

105 Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, *Submission No. 33*, p. 1.

106 Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, *Submission No. 33*, p. 3

107 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 1; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 3.

108 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 1; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 3.

109 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 15.

110 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 15.

- 2.69 The key elements in relation to the skilled and prosperous people and communities are leadership and capacity building, education and training, employment and the economy.¹¹¹ The Queensland government has assigned champions from the CEO level to particular Indigenous communities.¹¹²
- 2.70 Under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle (BUC) program, 8247 Indigenous people (which is 61.9 per cent of those assisted), were still in employment twelve months later.¹¹³ By combining the BUC program with CDEP people are able to undertake a 12 month traineeship rather than two days per week.¹¹⁴ The Indigenous Employment and Training Support Program provides culturally appropriate support and the completion rates for Indigenous apprentices and trainees are nearly normal completion rates.¹¹⁵ The BUC program includes the Indigenous Employment and Training Managers Program and the Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Projects.¹¹⁶

In 1986 Indigenous unemployment was 34 and non-Indigenous unemployment was 11 per cent. In 2001 Indigenous unemployment had dropped to 20 per cent, a drop of 14 per cent. In 2001 non-Indigenous unemployment had dropped to 8.2 per cent, so that had only dropped three per cent.¹¹⁷

New South Wales

- 2.71 The *Two Ways Together* has a coordinating role in priority areas such as economic development, culture, heritage, justice and education in the whole-of-government actions.¹¹⁸ Cluster groups have been established. The Economic Development cluster group includes federal and state

111 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 1.

112 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 6.

113 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 4; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

114 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 6.

115 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 4.

116 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

117 Mr Kelvin Tytherleigh, Manager, Organisational Development and Governance Unit, Caboolture Shire Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 35.

118 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 81.

agencies and peak Aboriginal bodies and focuses on employment, enterprise development, asset utilisation and training and skills development.¹¹⁹ The employment priority actions include Aboriginal participation in self-employment and public and private sector employment.¹²⁰

- 2.72 There are also Government strategies to increase Indigenous employment in the private sector.¹²¹ Government construction contracts in Aboriginal communities or in regions where there is a high Aboriginal population are required to employ Aboriginal workers and engage Aboriginal contractors through the *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines*.¹²² Other contracts can also have the guidelines applied.¹²³ The *New Procurement Opportunities for Aboriginal Enterprises Pilot Program* links State Government procurement with Aboriginal enterprises.¹²⁴
- 2.73 The Aboriginal Employment Strategy in New South Wales has a two per cent Aboriginal employment target and recognises that Aboriginal employment in the public sector will improve service delivery to Aboriginal people and communities.¹²⁵ Strategies to achieve this include Aboriginal identified positions and targeting of mainstream programs.¹²⁶ This target can be exceeded by agencies depending on the client base and the needs of the clients and the location of the office.¹²⁷ The Indigenous Australian Engineering Summer School, the Aboriginal Employment in Practice Support Strategy, Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program and the Aboriginal Cadetship Program link tertiary education to the

119 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 81.

120 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 81.

121 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 8.

122 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 83.

123 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 83.

124 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 8.

125 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 82; New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 4.

126 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 82.

127 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 82.

public sector.¹²⁸ The partnerships arrangements contribute to the success of these strategies.¹²⁹

South Australia

- 2.74 The South Australian Government have a *Doing it right* policy framework to ensure that Indigenous South Australians have the 'same opportunities to share in the social and economic advantages of living in the state'.¹³⁰ The *South Australia Works* strategy has priority areas in Regions at Work and Indigenous Works relating to Indigenous employment.¹³¹ These initiatives include Tauondi College, Aboriginal Apprenticeship Program, Indigenous Enrolled Nurses Program, Yatala tourism West Coast building, Environmental Health Worker Training TAFE SA/school based training and employment, public sector employment, Kuka Kanyini Land Management Program, native foods project and arts based training.¹³²
- 2.75 The South Australian Government has 120 full time apprenticeships and traineeships and is looking at 90 per cent retention rate.¹³³ The program is across urban and regional areas, and includes the private sector. The Government provides pre-employment training, career guidance, mentors and ongoing support officers.¹³⁴
- 2.76 The South Australian Government saw commonality in a number of factors contributing to successful indigenous employment outcomes:
- One-on-one case management for participants and their employers;
 - Effective mentoring;
 - Regular follow up visits;
 - Commitment and perseverance;
 - Knowledge of Indigenous culture and potential impacts on employment;

128 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 82.

129 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 82.

130 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 1.

131 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 1.

132 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, pp. 1-6.

133 Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 3.

134 Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 3.

- Finding the right participant/employer match;
- Focussing on quality not quantity;
- Accessibility and flexibility;
- Ability to build a level of trust;
- Training programs able to be delivered locally;
- Ability to forge good links, working relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders in the region including Indigenous community members, CDEPs, job network providers, Indigenous support organisations and industry.¹³⁵

Tasmania

- 2.77 Indigenous Tasmanians are disadvantaged compared to the non-Indigenous population on a number of indicators but performs well compared to other jurisdictions in relation to education, labour force participation and employment.¹³⁶
- 2.78 Labour force participation by Indigenous people in Tasmania is approximately 55 per cent and is the second highest in Australia and has improved substantially over the period 1994 to 2002.¹³⁷ Indigenous long-term unemployment as a percentage of Indigenous people is the highest in Australia.¹³⁸ Non-Indigenous people are 1.5 times as likely to be self employed than Indigenous people in Tasmania.¹³⁹
- 2.79 The Tasmanian Government is negotiating Local Government Partnership Agreements with individual and regional groupings of local councils across the State which includes promoting links between local government and the Aboriginal community.¹⁴⁰ Strategies can then be developed to address the key issues that affect the Indigenous people in the municipality.¹⁴¹
- 2.80 Partnership agreements promote links between local councils and Aboriginal communities and cover:
- Measures to enhance economic development and employment opportunities for Indigenous people;
 - Strategies to improve the level of participation of Indigenous people in Local Government;

135 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 7.

136 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 1.

137 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 2.

138 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 2.

139 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 2.

140 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 3.

141 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 3.

- Promoting understanding of Indigenous issues in the wider community;
 - Sustaining the reconciliation process by encouraging public support and participation; and
 - Taking joint action to reduce social disadvantage in the Aboriginal community.¹⁴²
- 2.81 Employment initiatives in Tasmania include Partnership in Jobs, State Government Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Aboriginal Employment Policy Officers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fixed Term Employment Register, Aboriginal Tourism Development Plan and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Indigenous Employment Initiative.¹⁴³

Victoria

- 2.82 *The Challenges in Addressing Disadvantage in Victoria, Report on progress Identifying Future Directions and A Fairer Victoria, Creating Opportunity and Addressing Disadvantage* links skills acquisition to employment and investment opportunities and the capacity to participate in community life.¹⁴⁴ A partnership approach is being used to build individual and community capacity which increase their choice and control over opportunities in life.¹⁴⁵
- 2.83 *The Jobs for Victoria* targets a number of disadvantaged groups including Indigenous people and aims to get young Victorians into sustainable jobs.¹⁴⁶ As part of the *Jobs for Young People program*, (JYP) wage subsidies are provided to local councils offering apprenticeships and traineeships. This is to assist communities to meet future skills and employment needs and to support the growth of industries and jobs.¹⁴⁷ Other programs include the *Community Jobs Program*, the *Regional Jobs Package 2005* and *Ladders to Success*.¹⁴⁸
- 2.84 There has been an increase in Indigenous employment related activities throughout the public sector and the Indigenous Employment Strategy, *Wur-cum barra*, has been extended to include statutory authorities and positions in community organisations.¹⁴⁹ The Youth Employment Scheme

142 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 3.

143 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, pp. 6-8.

144 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 3.

145 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 3.

146 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 9.

147 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 9.

148 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, pp. 11-12.

149 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 4.

(YES) provides wage subsidies to State Government departments to provide apprenticeships and traineeships.¹⁵⁰ An Indigenous Employment Coordinator has been appointed to increase the participation in and completion of the JYP and YES programs.¹⁵¹

- 2.85 Innovative partnership programs between departments and the Indigenous community are building on positive outcomes.¹⁵² These include Parks Victoria and Department of Justice. These programs are based on capacity building and pathways, recruitment, career development, changing workplace culture and Indigenous community organisations.¹⁵³

Western Australia

- 2.86 One example of the Western Australian approach is the *listening looking learning: An Aboriginal Tourism Strategy for Western Australia 2006- 2010* to ensure sustainable Aboriginal participation in the tourism industry and provide Aboriginal people with ongoing opportunities to add cultural and commercial value to the WA tourism industry, for mutual benefit.¹⁵⁴
- 2.87 The Statement of Commitment was agreed between the Western Australian Government and the Aboriginal people of Western Australia which is pertinent to the *Indigenous Employment in the WA Public Sector – Valuing the Difference*.¹⁵⁵ In 2001, the public sector in Western Australia had an employment rate for Indigenous people of 16.1 per cent while in private industry the rate was 36.2 per cent and 25.5 per cent were on CDEP.¹⁵⁶ Government administration and defence provided significant employment opportunities in most regions.¹⁵⁷
- 2.88 The MATES program is a successful example within the Department of Environment and Conservation which aims to achieve 10-15 per cent Aboriginal employees across the State.¹⁵⁸

150 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 10.

151 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 10.

152 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 4.

153 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, pp. 4-6.

154 Tourism Western Australia, *listening looking learning An Aboriginal Tourism Strategy for Western Australia 2006-2010*, September 2006, p. 2.

155 Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Western Australia, *Indigenous Employment in the WA Public Sector – Valuing the Difference*, November 2002, Forward.

156 2005 WA Report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage*, p. 217.

157 2005 WA Report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage*, p. 218.

158 Minister Mark McGowan, *Naturebase*, 13 November 2006, p. 1, <http://www.naturebase.net/content/view/2516/770/>, accessed on 4 May 2007.

Local Government policies

- 2.89 A number of local government councils have or are in the process of developing reconciliation plans appropriate to their situation.¹⁵⁹ The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder has a Reconciliation Committee of Council, an Indigenous Framework Agreement, and a set of Indigenous Consultation Protocols for the city.¹⁶⁰ Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder believes that local government has a greater capacity to deliver, particularly outside the metropolitan areas.¹⁶¹
- 2.90 The Brisbane City Council (BCC) believes in bringing together policies such as the *Living in Brisbane 2010* and the *Great Employer-Clever Workforce* policies and promotes a workplace culture that values and respects diversity.¹⁶² BCC's Indigenous Employment Program includes support (Indigenous cultural awareness) and mentoring programs and Indigenous reference groups.¹⁶³ Council is seen as an employer of choice in the Indigenous community with the percentage of Indigenous people working at the Council more than doubling since 2000-2001.¹⁶⁴ Ms Sheryl Sandy added that people now understand that there is a business case for equity and diversity in better policy, better service delivery, and better customer service.¹⁶⁵
- 2.91 Also in Queensland, the Caboolture Shire Council stressed the importance of getting the organisational culture right and using an aspirational model.¹⁶⁶ The Torres Strait Shire Council has achieved a 95 per cent Indigenous employment level and is one of the biggest employers of Indigenous people in the region.¹⁶⁷
- 2.92 In New South Wales, the Gosford City Council has an Aboriginal Development Officer whose tasks include the development of an Aboriginal Employment Strategy.¹⁶⁸ Blacktown City Council have

159 For example City of Stonnington, *Submission No. 39*, p. 1.

160 City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Submission No. 43*, p. 1.

161 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 6.

162 Mr Les Collins, Indigenous Employment Strategist, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 18.

163 Brisbane City Council, *Submission No. 74*, pp. 2-7.

164 Brisbane City Council, *Submission No. 74*, p. 7.

165 Ms Sheryl Sandy, Equity and Diversity Specialist, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 19.

166 Mr Kelvin Tytherleigh, Manager, Organisational Development and Governance Unit, Caboolture Shire Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 36.

167 Mayor Pedro Stephen, Torres Strait Shire Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 May 2007, p. 2.

168 Gosford City Council, *Submission No. 75*, p. 1.

- participated in the Local Government Aboriginal Employment Strategy and a partnership with the AFL. The Indigenous trainees are supervised by the Indigenous Community Development officer and work on projects that directly impact on the well-being of the Indigenous community.¹⁶⁹
- 2.93 In Victoria, the City of Port Phillip has an extensive strategy to employ Indigenous people and has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indigenous community which is the basis for policy and planning development.¹⁷⁰ The Aboriginal Liaison Officer facilitates the Aboriginal Advisory Committee which seeks input on matters that impact of the Indigenous community.¹⁷¹ The City of Melbourne has an Indigenous Social and Economic Framework and an Indigenous Culture and Heritage Framework.¹⁷² Whitehorse City Council is working on a second Indigenous garden which provides employment opportunities and links with Toor-Rong CDEP and Swinburne Technical and Further Education College.¹⁷³
- 2.94 In South Australia, Adelaide City Council has a Council Reconciliation Committee and has up to 17 Aboriginal trainees across all Council Business Units.¹⁷⁴ The Human Resources Business Unit has an Aboriginal employee who provides mentoring to the trainees and this has proved to be important in the retention of Indigenous trainees.¹⁷⁵
- 2.95 Many councils have approached this through the provision of traineeships and/or cadetships.¹⁷⁶ However, now some local governments are becoming professionally focused with the outsourcing of cleaning, and also parks and gardens. They are the entry level areas of employment for Indigenous young men.¹⁷⁷

169 Blacktown City Council, *Submission No. 44*, pp. 1-2.

170 City of Port Philip, *Submission No. 47*, pp. 2-12.

171 City of Port Philip, *Submission No. 47*, p. 2.

172 Ms Colleen Lazenby, Manager, Community Safety and Well Being, City of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 50.

173 Ms Helen Killmier, Manager, Community Development, White Horse City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 50-51.

174 Adelaide City Council, *Submission No. 65*, p. 1.

175 Adelaide City Council, *Submission No. 65*, p. 2.

176 For example, Shire of Campaspe, *Submission No. 46*, p. 1; Blacktown City Council, *Submission No. 44*, p. 1; Shire of Plantegenet, *Submission No. 18*, p. 1; Lismore City Council, *Submission No. 19*, p. 1; Armidale Dumaresq, *Submission No. 21*, p. 1; Caboolture Shire Council, *Submission No. 27*, p. 1; City of Melbourne, *Submission No. 29*, p. 1; The Council of the City of Shoalhaven, *Submission No. 79*, p. 1.

177 Mr Mikael Smith, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Multicultural Policy and Programs, City of Port Phillip Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 59.

Lessons for the future

Indigenous specific employment

- 2.96 There are a number of core success factors in increasing Indigenous employment opportunities. The Northern Land Council has found that a jobs agreement, senior management support and partnerships are key factors.¹⁷⁸ Another important aspect is the potential to move to mainstream positions because that is where the opportunities are, the management positions and higher wages.¹⁷⁹
- 2.97 There are Indigenous employment opportunities on major projects through Indigenous land use agreements which outline the employment and training outcomes.¹⁸⁰ Of the 560 agreements on the Agreements, Treaties and Negotiated Settlements Database, 108 contain employment and training provisions reflecting the greater importance placed on job creation in the decade commencing 1995.¹⁸¹

Community Development Employment Program

- 2.98 In regional areas, the mainstream economy is often underdeveloped in townships and non-existent on many outstations.¹⁸² In some areas, CDEP has provided employment opportunities. CDEP participation in the 'total remote areas' was 63.5 per cent of Indigenous employment in the public sector and 47.6 per cent of Indigenous employment in the private sector.¹⁸³
- 2.99 The New South Wales Government referred to CDEP as having a significant role in enabling Aboriginal communities to direct scarce resources to the needs of the community.¹⁸⁴ In Maningrida, CDEP participants provide most services, assisting with the delivery of health, housing, education and construction of infrastructure, community store, arts centre, café and service station.¹⁸⁵ In 2004-05:

178 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 6.

179 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 61.

180 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, pp. 2, 5.

181 Professor Marcia Langton, *Submission No. 66*, p. 2.

182 Professor Jon Altmann, *Submission No. 88*, p. 2.

183 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.15. Total remote comprises remote and very remote areas.

184 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 4.

185 Professor Jon Altmann, *Submission No. 88*, p. 4.

CDEP participation comprised a significant proportion of Indigenous employment in remote and very remote areas, accounting for 64 per cent of Indigenous employment in the public sector and 48 per cent of Indigenous employment in the private sector.¹⁸⁶

- 2.100 The Indigenous Land Corporation, however, saw CDEP as having limited employment outcomes and actually as an impediment to Indigenous employment.¹⁸⁷ The Torres Strait Regional Authority also expressed concern that there are superannuation implications for those who have been on CDEP for long periods.¹⁸⁸ Policies are being designed to improve the skills of Indigenous people and to use CDEP as a stepping stone to employment.¹⁸⁹ Host agreements, wage subsidies and the STEP program are being used to encourage people to leave CDEP and move to full time employment.¹⁹⁰ Work is also being done on VET linkages and to increase participation, training and employment including work within the petrol-sniffing strategy.¹⁹¹

Recruitment approaches

- 2.101 Mr Larry Kickett also highlighted the cost saving in recruiting locally.¹⁹² Consideration needs to be given to the costs associated with recruiting someone from interstate or internationally, particularly in remote areas where there is a high turnover of staff. Indigenous people returning to the local area provide role models for others and there are substantial benefits to the employer as well as the employee. Appropriate recruitment processes can enhance the potential for the success of this approach.
- 2.102 There were a number of suggestions to increase the effectiveness of Indigenous recruitment approaches. The use of Indigenous media outlets, local newspapers; ads on notice boards in waiting rooms; school visits by

186 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Overview, p. 57.

187 Mr David Galvin, General Manager, Indigenous Land Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 48.

188 Mr Wayne See Kee, General Manager, Torres Strait Regional Authority, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 May 2007, p. 20.

189 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 13.

190 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 13.

191 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 2.

192 Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 46.

Indigenous staff to recruit young people for apprenticeships and traineeships; Indigenous staff telling others that this was a good place to work; a 'relationship thing' where the cultural relations staff make the opportunities known in the communities; word of mouth; local Indigenous organisations; job descriptions in plain English with input from the Traditional Owners; applications that do not require a computer; advertising posters at all the popular 'hang out joints'; emails to local Aboriginal organisations, families and individuals and personally through families and friends were all used.¹⁹³

- 2.103 Employers need to ensure that the recruitment process is not more complex than necessary and that the skills and abilities needed accurately reflect the actual needs of the job.¹⁹⁴ The panel should always include an Aboriginal person and interviews may be conducted outside in the open and the most important aspect is their interest in and commitment to the position.¹⁹⁵

Career development and progression

- 2.104 Indigenous people are now taking up employment in a broader cross-section of jobs.¹⁹⁶ This has not always been the case. The New South Wales Government commented that:

The current generation of professional Aboriginal people are most likely to be one of the first members of their family to have held a degree or other qualification, or to have possessed a position of prominence in the mainstream workforce. In that respect, recognising Aboriginal people (through career pathways and as role models) who contribute their expertise to policy development and program management is important.¹⁹⁷

- 2.105 The Productivity Commission also reported a higher representation of Indigenous Australians in the lower skilled occupations such as

193 See Ms Lyndal O'Neill, Manager, People Services, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 25; Mr Les Collins, Indigenous Employment Strategist, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, pp. 25-26; Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 37; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 43; Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 1-2.

194 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 43-44.

195 Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 2.

196 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 8.

197 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 30.

elementary clerical, sales and service workers and labourers than non-Indigenous employees (25.6 per cent compared to 16.1 per cent after adjusting for age differences).¹⁹⁸ There were also a significantly lower proportion of Indigenous people than non-Indigenous people in the occupational group requiring the highest skills levels (18.6 compared to 29.3 per cent after adjusting for age differences).¹⁹⁹

Career progression

2.106 Some submissions noted that Aboriginal employees in the workplace are often over-represented in low level and intermediate level positions, due to a lack of education and training opportunities.²⁰⁰ Commissioner John Kirwan discussed this issue in the context of movement into the professions:

When you look at the figures, what we have not done well – at the risk of sounding emotional, but I use this comment in other forums – is deal with the fact that they are still in job ghettos. If you look at the classification profile, basically it is Aboriginal people in Aboriginal jobs: in policy jobs, as health workers or in education. What we are yet to be successful at, albeit that it will take time, is the movement into the professions.²⁰¹

2.107 Increasing the number of Indigenous people holding higher level positions in the public and private sectors may also have an important flow-on effect in increasing Indigenous employment levels. The point has been made that although not all Indigenous people wish to climb the management ladder, those who do should be given the opportunity.²⁰²

2.108 There are already some initiatives seeking to address the issue of progression. The New South Wales Government noted that the Indigenous Cadetship Program is intended to increase Aboriginal representation in professional occupations and mainstream positions within government departments, thereby facilitating opportunities for progression into managerial positions.²⁰³

198 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p 11.17.

199 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.1, p. 11.17.

200 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 6.

201 Commissioner John Kirwan, Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, Northern Territory, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 23.

202 Queensland Indigenous Local Government Association, *Submission No. 81*, p. 1.

203 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 14.

- 2.109 Ms Lisa Giacomelli, Manager of Community Development at Blacktown City Council, noted that for Council's Indigenous trainees, an Indigenous supervisor was a key part of their success, as they felt that there was someone in the organisation they could relate to culturally, and it provided a friendly and supportive environment.²⁰⁴
- 2.110 Funding provided through the Community Broadcasting Foundation is aimed at addressing a shortage of suitably trained Indigenous broadcasters and administrators to fill senior salaried positions in Indigenous broadcasting. The funding is aimed particularly at station management skills, as well as basic broadcasting.²⁰⁵ Other organisations also have the expressed goal of improving the range of positions held by Indigenous people, including those that require professional qualifications.²⁰⁶
- 2.111 The Queensland Government in 2001 established the Wal-Meta Unit to achieve targets of 2.4 per cent Indigenous employees across the public sector by the end of 2002 and 2.4 per cent Indigenous representation at all salary levels in the public sector by the end of 2010. The Wal-Meta Unit's role is to assist in achieving these targets by increasing training and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public sector employees and breaking down existing employment barriers by providing cross cultural awareness training to government agencies.²⁰⁷ Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director of Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, stated:
- It is not only recruiting Indigenous people to the Australian public sector but providing them with career development opportunities so that they can advance to the highest level of jobs within the public sector.²⁰⁸
- 2.112 It was recommended by the Queensland Government that Indigenous recruitment within the Australian public sector could be enhanced by establishing targets across the public service at all levels. The provision of targets for Indigenous employment at all salary levels could assist in advancing the careers of Indigenous public sector employees. This will

204 Ms Lisa Giacomelli, Manager, Community Development, Blacktown City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 28.

205 Mr Rohan Buettel, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 33.

206 Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Inc, *Submission No. 101*, p. 2.

207 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 12.

208 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 16.

also help to create a larger pool of mentors for Indigenous people entering the public sector.

Job retention

- 2.113 The mining industry and a number of other private sector employers are having significant successes in this area. At Mission Australia Northern Territory, 70 per cent of the staff are Indigenous and they have a turnover rate of 2.5 per cent per annum.²⁰⁹
- 2.114 Australia Post has also had considerable success in this area. In Australia Post 1.7 per cent of the workforce are Indigenous Australians across all business streams and 27 per cent of full-time employees are above base grade level.²¹⁰ The strategy implemented by Australia Post includes appropriate induction programs, suitable workplaces, mentoring, networking with other Indigenous employees, flexible work options, development programs, cross-cultural awareness training and access to the Indigenous Employment Consultants.²¹¹
- 2.115 The Committee also heard that Indigenous employment success is the result of a layered approach which includes clearly defined and explained staff selection criteria; individually tailored training courses; effective mentoring; employment at the end of the training; use of CDEP; comfortable supportive workplace; financial opportunity for staff; clear expectations adhered to; defined structure to work within; understanding of social environment; counselling; responsibility and respect for all staff; mutual obligation reward; accountability; sustainability; and clear succession planning.²¹²
- 2.116 Role clarification in terms of governance and the individual's responsibilities was seen as an important factor in successful Indigenous employment.²¹³ Employees are treated equally and interaction and supervision are based on mutual respect.²¹⁴

209 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 43, 45.

210 Australia Post, *Submission No. 96*, p. 1.

211 Australia Post, *Submission No. 96*, p. 4.

212 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 6.

213 City of Marion, *Submission No. 28*, p. 2; see also Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 3.

214 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 5; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 45-46; Mr Craig Buller, Regional Manager, Engagement and Culture, National Australia Bank, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 42.

2.117 Sustainability of employment remains an important aspect.

Table 2.1 Sustainability of Job Network placements

	Placements	13 Weeks	26 Weeks
March 2005-06 ²¹⁵	43,900	9,400	7,000
July 2006 – March 2007 ²¹⁶	37,813	10,315	5,702

2.118 There is a lag time in getting longer term outcomes for the increasing number of people participating in the workforce.²¹⁷

Concluding comments

2.119 Everyone is now aware of Indigenous employment potential and there are a greater number of positions being offered.²¹⁸ This is also reflected in young people being more aware of the opportunities available for them and more are staying at school.²¹⁹

2.120 The skills shortages across Australia have provided a significant incentive to private companies to actively pursue Indigenous employees. The Committee sees much of the potential to increase Indigenous employment opportunities being in the private sector as they address these skills shortages.

2.121 The Committee acknowledges that the employment opportunities that can be leveraged from land are contingent on the location and nature of that land. As the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision stated:

215 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 8.

216 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Supplementary Submission 108e*, p. 5.

217 Ms Joanne Caldwell, Group Manager, Intensive Support Unit, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 9.

218 Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 37.

219 Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 37.

Opportunities to profit from mining, agriculture and tourism depend, respectively, on the presence of certain minerals, rainfall and soil fertility, and places and activities that appeal to tourists.²²⁰

- 2.122 The Committee believes that these positive examples and the others not mentioned in this report have set the stage for a brighter future in terms of Indigenous employment opportunities. Much has been achieved and much has been learnt. Australia's corporate leaders have shown the way and others will surely follow over the next few decades.

220 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005*, <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2005/overview/index.html>, accessed 25 September 2006.

Economic independence

- 3.1 Economic independence through employment offers the opportunity of owning a property and building one's own wealth for the next generation. This was clearly articulated by Mr Ernest Brimm who proudly described the achievements of Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park as representing:

... the new spirit of freedom that is hopefully growing in the Aboriginal community at large - freedom from dependence on government handouts; freedom from a century of oppression; freedom from the cycle of poverty. We are proud of what we have accomplished.¹

Opportunities

... opportunities matter. If there are no opportunities, there will be no progress for our people. I am not talking about employment opportunities. That should be a given. I am talking about business opportunities.²

- 3.2 Indigenous people need opportunities; they are not asking for money. Having the opportunity is what is important. Ms Jody Broun suggested that governments need to consider incentives that encourage enterprises to employ Aboriginal people.³ The Director General of the New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs listed the lack of opportunities

1 Mr Ernest Brimm, Cultural Officer, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 5.

2 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 50.

3 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 87.

along with racism as the two impediments to positive employment outcomes for Aboriginal people.⁴

Affirmative action

3.3 Mr Daniel Tucker of Carey Mining Pty Ltd, strongly believes that the best strategy to increase Aboriginal employment is to assist Aboriginal companies.⁵ Given opportunities, Aboriginal people would get involved in businesses.⁶ Mr John Corboy, a successful businessman, described the situation as:

Personally, I am not enormously into reconciliation; I am enormously into affirmative action. I think, beyond any doubt, there is an undeniable case that the Aboriginal members of our community do need to have the playing field levelled.⁷

3.4 Mr Tucker suggested affirmative action led by Government and believes that industry will follow.⁸ Affirmative action should be at three levels: the corporation, the subcontractors and employees. Carey Mining added that:

If people are letting those contracts, they could stipulate that whoever wins the contract must look at engaging Aboriginal subcontractors as part of the process.⁹

3.5 Regulating Indigenous employment opportunities in remote locations as part of mining license conditions was suggested by the Bloodwood Tree Association Inc. The example was given of Erkat Diamond Mine in Northern Canada which has over 30 per cent Indigenous employment.¹⁰

3.6 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association also suggested the inclusion of criteria for Indigenous organisations to employ and train Indigenous people and collaborate with organisations which have experience in the provision of training services.¹¹

4 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 86.

5 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 42.

6 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 43.

7 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

8 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 42.

9 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 43.

10 Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Submission No. 34*, p. 3.

11 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 6.

- 3.7 Affirmative action could take a number of forms, including a percentage of contracts being set aside for Aboriginal people to participate in. If work is to be sub-contracted, the successful tenderer could be required to engage Aboriginal sub-contractors.¹² Another option is that the company performing the work could engage Aboriginal employees reflective of the percentage of Indigenous population in the area.
- 3.8 One way of overcoming this inflexibility is to incorporate opportunities for Indigenous businesses in tendering processes. It was suggested that:
- The Federal Government develop contract procurement and construction guidelines that promote and encourage Aboriginal contractors in the private sector for Government contracts.¹³
- 3.9 For example, in New South Wales, the *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines* commit the government to facilitate the achievement of positive Aboriginal participation outcomes on government construction projects. Projects that have a significant impact on Aboriginal communities include Aboriginal employment and training and the use of Aboriginal enterprises.¹⁴ There is an acceptance that Aboriginal builders face greater difficulties in commencing and operating enterprises, which may lead to higher tender prices.¹⁵
- 3.10 The NSW Government would like to see the Federal Government require agencies to include minimum targets in their Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan and report annually.¹⁶ The New South Wales Government suggested:
- ... all Government agencies establish minimum Aboriginal employment targets that reflect the Aboriginal population, that is 2% or greater. Agencies providing a direct service to Aboriginal people should be encouraged to employ staff numbers that more accurately reflect the percentage of their Aboriginal client base.¹⁷
- 3.11 The Queensland Government urged the Committee to support the introduction of targets for Indigenous employment particularly in housing and construction when funding major infrastructure in Indigenous

12 Mr Daniel Tucker, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 43.

13 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 5.

14 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 83.

15 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, pp. 16-17.

16 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 5.

17 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 5.

communities.¹⁸ The Queensland Government recommended that the Australian Government require 20 per cent Indigenous employment on all civil and building construction projects in designated Indigenous communities (valued at \$100 000 or more) funded by government.¹⁹

- 3.12 The Cairns and District Regional Corporation has a 70 per cent local Indigenous labour component in their maintenance and building program.²⁰ The Committee is pleased to note this success which clearly indicates that this can be achieved.

Recommendation 1

- 3.13 **The Committee recommends that the Minister propose that the corporate governance procedures and the sound business principles under which the current Board of the Cairns and District Regional Housing Corporation are operating (noting the average of 70 per cent local Indigenous labour component in their maintenance and building programs) be considered as a model practice for other Indigenous housing and tenancy corporations.**
- 3.14 The Queensland Government called for targets to be set in the Commonwealth Indigenous Public Sector Employment program.²¹ The Saima Torres Strait Islander Corporation urged the employment of Indigenous officers in all government agencies who assist Indigenous people.²²
- 3.15 Others were more cautious. Mr Peter Yuile, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, suggested that there needed to be prior knowledge of the regional situations and adequate management support to sustain the Indigenous employees before setting targets. He also emphasised that it is not a case of one size fits all.²³

18 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 16.

19 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 11.

20 Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 15.

21 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 16; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 13.

22 Saima Torres Strait Islander Corporation, *Submission No. 83*, p. 2.

23 Mr Peter Yuile, Executive Director, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 9.

- 3.16 The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations commented that the procurement guidelines already recognise Indigenous employment for general projects over \$5 million and over \$6 million for construction projects.²⁴ The Department argued that they are having greater success by working with industry and contractors and assisting them to employ Indigenous people rather than imposing targets.²⁵
- 3.17 There were some examples of progress. The City of Melbourne is reviewing their contract specification documents in terms of what are the social commitments of the companies that would allow them to score higher for work contracts.²⁶ The Great Southern Development Commission supports select tendering for Indigenous employment through public works projects.²⁷

Indigenous employment targets

- 3.18 Australia Post employs 583 Indigenous Australians which represents 1.7 per cent of the workforce and 27 per cent of these positions are above the base grade level.²⁸ Within Australia Post, achievement against an Indigenous employment target is incorporated into Performance Management Agreements and recruitment is managed by Indigenous Employment Consultants.²⁹ The setting of targets ensures that managers continue to build their employment base and do not rest on their laurels.³⁰
- 3.19 The percentages of Indigenous employees in some mining operations are also impressive, for example:
- Comalco, Weipa, 17.5 per cent of the workforce with a target of 35 per cent by 2010;
 - Comalco, Gladstone, 6.5 per cent of the workforce;
 - Pilbara Iron, 3.8 per cent of the workforce with a target of 15 per cent;

24 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 14; Ms Jody Hamilton, Assistant Secretary, Business and Policy Development Branch, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 14.

25 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 14.

26 Ms Colleen Lazenby, Manager, Community Safety and Well Being, City of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 60.

27 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 2.

28 Australia Post, *Submission No. 96*, p. 1.

29 Australia Post, *Submission No.96*, p. 3.

30 Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 17.

- Argyle Diamonds, 23 per cent of the workforce were local Indigenous people in May 2005³¹ with plans to increase this to 40 per cent by 2010;³²
 - BHP Billiton Iron Ore have an Indigenous Employment Strategy with a 12 per cent Indigenous employment target for the company and contractors by 2010;³³ and
 - Groote Island Mining Company has approximately 20 per cent of its permanent workforce from Indigenous descent.³⁴
 - The National Tertiary Education Union also believes that the inclusion of employment targets has ensured that universities address their current employment practices and conditions.³⁵ This includes increasing Indigenous employment levels and retention rates and ensuring culturally appropriate conditions of employment.³⁶
- 3.20 The Tangentyere Council believes that all government contracts should be required to consider Indigenous employment and have a training component which reflects the Indigenous population levels in the community and that such contract provisions should be enforceable.³⁷
- 3.21 Mr Daniel Tucker made the point that there are already government funding programs but these cannot be used without opportunities:
- If the opportunities are there to match those programs, you will find more people accessing programs, taking up opportunities, getting involved with business, and getting involved in the real economy. Employment and training will then follow, and everything else will follow – education will follow and the standard of living of Aboriginal people will start lifting. So it all comes back to opportunities.³⁸

31 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, pp. 9, 23.

32 *Rio Tinto Indigenous Employment in Australia*, Rio Tinto Ltd, 2007, p. 10.

33 Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Submission No. 34*, p. 1.

34 <http://sustainability.bhpbilliton.com/2005/repository/socioEconomic/ourPerformance/employeeRelations.asp#IndigEmp#IndigEmp> (accessed at 23 May 2007).

35 National Tertiary Education Union, *Submission No. 76*, p. 7.

36 National Tertiary Education Union, *Submission No. 76*, p. 7.

37 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 14. Tangentyere Council, *Supplementary Submission No. 69a*, p. 2.

38 Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 50.

Recommendation 2

- 3.22 **The Committee recommends that all Federal Government construction contracts in regional areas give due recognition to aspirational imperatives for Indigenous employment outcomes.**

Recommendation 3

- 3.23 **The Committee recommends that the Federal Government amend government service delivery tender requirements and contracting processes to recognise and encourage Indigenous involvement.**

- 3.24 The Tangentyere Council commented that:

In respect of contract preference, the inclusion of Indigenous employment requirements in government and non-government contracts are an important step in generating employment opportunities, but this is only effective where such contract provisions are enforceable. From the lessons drawn from our experiences we propose comprehensive employment generation through an import substitution model such as the successful central remote model for housing construction. This needs to be implemented across all areas of service provision ...³⁹

- 3.25 Tangentyere Council added that in addition to creating employment opportunities for Indigenous people this will also assist people to move to mainstream employment opportunities.⁴⁰ The establishment of goals, targets and performance indicators for employment programs will ensure that the outcomes will align with community values and assist in building community capacity.⁴¹ Support for individuals to participate in training and employment should also benefit communities, clans and families.⁴²

39 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 28.

40 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 28.

41 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 17.

42 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Department of Employment and Training, Queensland, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 17.

Regional economic opportunities

- 3.26 Tangentyere Council called for a regionally based quantitative assessment of labour supply and current and potential demand to inform the development of an appropriate mix of resources for employment, training and enterprise development.⁴³ Programs should be operated on a regional level to achieve economies of scale; they should have Indigenous control and access to professional expertise.⁴⁴ Indigenous Business Australia is also working on regional specific economic data to inform business and industry initiatives.⁴⁵
- 3.27 Regional circumstances dictate business opportunities and some industries are more suitable in terms of Indigenous interests and skill sets.⁴⁶ The Indigenous Business Development Programme and the Home Ownership Program is designed to enable a more holistic approach to the economic development of Indigenous people.⁴⁷ The Equity and Investments Programme is designed to bring industry and Indigenous communities together in joint venture ownership and management of businesses for opportunities that are economically sustainable.⁴⁸
- 3.28 Indigenous Business Australia is undertaking some regional economic intelligence pilots to identify business opportunities in the Kimberley and Townsville areas.⁴⁹ A microfinance pilot being conducted by IBA has been successful but depends on a hands-on approach which is costly.⁵⁰ The New South Wales Government provides free assessment and advice on growth opportunities and the Badyari Ngalaya supports partnerships between Aboriginal enterprises and Australian business leaders.⁵¹

We are actually getting inundated with requests from state and territory governments to talk to the economic agencies.

Traditionally, we have met some in the past, but the doors have opened up a lot more now. I am not sure whether that is a reflection of the fact that we have access to more capital, but I

43 Tangentyere Council, *Supplementary Submission No. 69a*, p. 3.

44 Tangentyere Council, *Supplementary Submission No. 69a*, p. 3.

45 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 22.

46 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 22.

47 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 8.

48 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, pp. 10-11.

49 Ms Michaela Woods, Executive Policy Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 31.

50 Mr Ivan Parrett, Assistant General Manager, Business Finance, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 27.

51 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 85.

think they genuinely see opportunities within their states and territories.⁵²

- 3.29 There are opportunities available which have not been pursued. In Shepparton there is an unemployment level of less than 5 per cent and the shortage of skilled labour means that companies have plant equipment sitting idle while the local Indigenous community has high unemployment levels.⁵³ Another opportunity suggested by the Great Southern Development Commission was for infrastructure development and contracting services in the joint management arrangements in national parks and high conservation areas which could provide long-term sustainable employment opportunities.⁵⁴
- 3.30 The opportunities for Indigenous employment in regional and remote areas are principally in mining and infrastructure development on Aboriginal land, management of national parks, reserves and Aboriginal land, mainstream services and Aboriginal enterprise development.⁵⁵ Land management projects also enable the families of the traditional owners to be actively engaged on their land.⁵⁶
- 3.31 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry employs Indigenous officers in the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy to protect Australia from entry of exotic pests, disease and weeds.⁵⁷ Aquaculture also provides employment and training opportunities as well as supplementing food production.⁵⁸ The National Indigenous Forestry Strategy, the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Landcare Program also provide training and employment opportunities.⁵⁹
- 3.32 Also young people in some regional areas aspire to working in the pastoral industry as their fathers and grandfathers did.⁶⁰ There is the

52 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 32.

53 Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 75.

54 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 2.

55 Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 45.

56 Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 51.

57 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Submission No. 100*, p. 1.

58 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Submission No. 100*, p. 1.

59 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 2-3.

60 Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 55.

capacity to increase pastoral production on this land and there are already a number of well-run Indigenous owned and operated cattle enterprises.⁶¹

- 3.33 Key factors in achieving Indigenous employment outcomes include identification of the aspirations of the Indigenous groups, the viability and sustainability of proposed enterprises, developing capacity and assessing commitment of prospective employees and effective collaboration with all stakeholders.⁶²

Lessons for the future

- 3.34 Mr Willie Gordon, who developed *Guurbi Tours*, relates the story of his own initiation into the entrepreneurial world:

I couldn't start my business because I didn't know how to. The only thing that I knew was how to be involved in a workshop and planning and making strategies. Apart from lack of knowledge, there were other blockages: lack of support, lack of funds, and the viability question. And fear was stopping me. Business is about making decisions and taking responsibility, but in Hope Vale decisions were always made by somebody else.⁶³

- 3.35 Mr Michael Winer believes that building strong Indigenous institutions has been one of the great success factors in Cape York and it works with health, education, business development or employment:

They face north into their people and that turns a situation of having hundreds of field officers running around and endless meetings and things into a situation where it is the Indigenous organisations that take the responsibility for sorting out the political, cultural and law issues. That is where everyone, particularly government, gets tangled up.⁶⁴

- 3.36 Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships (IEP) works on business, economic and land management issues and believes in building the capacity of

61 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Supplementary Submission No. 63a*, p. 1.

62 Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*, p. 3.

63 Judy Bennett & Wilfred Gordon, 'Social Capital and the Indigenous Entrepreneur' (2005/2006) *Australian Prospect*, Summer, p. 5.

64 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 32.

Indigenous organisations and institutions to provide services to Indigenous people.⁶⁵ IEP's platform of engagement involves:

... putting high-level expertise behind Indigenous ideas and programs, whether that be in employment, economic development or business development, and quite often into the social programs as well, because we find that one cannot operate without the other. You need a strong health program, a strong youth and child program, a strong leadership program and strong family programs if you are to get strong employment and economic development outcomes.⁶⁶

- 3.37 While the Committee acknowledges the importance and success of initiatives such as the National CDEP and IEC Achievement Awards, Jobs Careers Future Awards and Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Awards, the Committee believes that formal recognition of the achievements by the Parliament is appropriate to reflect the significance of the employment and entrepreneurial outcomes which Indigenous individuals and communities have achieved.

Good business

- 3.38 Pilbara Iron believes that there is a business case for employing Indigenous people.⁶⁷ There are benefits to business being able to employ within local communities in terms of retaining Aboriginal employees.⁶⁸ This means that there are people earning good money which has a multiplier effect. Previously mining companies employed expatriate non-Aboriginal staff who did not invest their long-term assets locally and therefore did not contribute to regional development.⁶⁹
- 3.39 The Australian and New Zealand Bank, Commonwealth Bank and National Australia Bank all have Indigenous employment initiatives.⁷⁰

65 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 28.

66 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 29.

67 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 19.

68 South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Supplementary Submission No. 89a*, p. 2.

69 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 37.

70 National Australia Bank Ltd, *Submission No. 45*, p. 1; Mr Thomas Eckersley, Area Manager, Retail, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 4; Mr Michael Vasta, Manager, Public Policy, Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 5.

The key aim of the National's initiative is to develop and implement long term systemic and cultural change to create employment pathways and maximise the employment prospects of Indigenous Australians within the organisation.⁷¹

3.40 It is good business to employ Indigenous people:

... because people want to bank where their own people are. I actually took my business from one bank ... to the ANZ because of Bruce's commitment to our people. We shop at Woolworths because of their commitment to our people. We have money. Whether it is the welfare dollar or whatever, we have wealth with our money. We have to buy food.⁷²

3.41 The Indigenous Employment Strategy Framework for Industry provides a commitment by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to increase employment for Indigenous people in the private sector. The development of the strategy has resulted in many association members exploring ways to address current skills shortages through the employment of Indigenous people.⁷³

... increased economic independence through partnerships with industry, especially in rural and remote communities, lies in indigenous communities being able to effectively negotiate with the minerals and resources sectors as well as being able to access venture seed capital and contractual commitments. Addressing these issues at the national level would greatly assist the self-determination of many indigenous communities.⁷⁴

3.42 The Queensland Government suggested the Commonwealth Government develop and implement strategies to market Indigenous employment to employer groups and unions and provide incentives to industries which have the best prospects of employing Indigenous people.⁷⁵ For example, Mission Australia suggested that tourists coming to Australia wish to see traditional Aboriginal faces but how many Indigenous people from

71 National Australia Bank Ltd, *Submission No. 45*, p. 2.

72 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 14.

73 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 4.

74 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 7.

75 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, pp. 16-17.

remote areas do corporate partners within the Indigenous employment program employ?⁷⁶

Entrepreneurship and sustainable business

- 3.43 An effective way to increase the level of self employment for Indigenous Australian can be through their participation in small enterprises.⁷⁷ It was argued that without sustainable businesses, there can not be sustainable employment.⁷⁸
- 3.44 Indigenous entrepreneurial activity has been ongoing for thousands of years,⁷⁹ and continues in modern-day Australia, in both urban and rural areas. Nonetheless, 'within mainstream Australia there is possibly no mental construct of successful urban Indigenous entrepreneurs, and Australians have been seduced into believing that "blackfellas are all outback"'.⁸⁰
- 3.45 An entrepreneur is '... someone who breaks the status quo, can create an enterprise with very limited capital ... and can move forward into an area in society where they would not have been before.'⁸¹ Entrepreneurship is about action: it is 'the ability to create and build something from practically nothing. It is initiating, doing, achieving, and building an enterprise or organization rather than just watching, analysing or describing one'.⁸²
- 3.46 On the importance of entrepreneurship and small business to Indigenous progress, Dr Foley added that:

It enables a certain part of Aboriginal Australia to move forward and be in control of what they are doing. They become a part of a wider society. They still maintain their Indigenousness. They do not lose their Aboriginality – that is for sure. They can still control it, but it is far easier to control your cultural beliefs when you have

76 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 63.

77 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 3.

78 Mr Andrew West, Manager, Kaurua Business and Heritage Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 80.

79 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 2.

80 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 1.

81 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 7.

82 Timmons, 1994, p. 1, cited in Judy Bennett & Wilfred Gordon, 'Social Capital and the Indigenous Entrepreneur' (2005/2006) *Australian Prospect*, Summer, p. 2.

control of your financial resources. When you do not have control of your financial resources, you do not really have control of your life.⁸³

3.47 The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research listed the factors common to successful Indigenous business as:

1. *Positivity*: a positive attitude that is the driving force in the pursuit of business success;
2. *Image*: an aim to project a positive image of their business which includes the use of a non-Indigenous accountant to indicate legitimacy (accountability) in their business counteracting negative social stereotypes against Indigenous business people;
3. *Education and Industry experience*: there is a strong relationship between education, industry knowledge-experience and business success;
4. *Networking*: a strong development of networking channels of business contacts;
5. *Family*: a common shared positive relationship between family and business, and
6. *Discrimination*: a common level of public and institutional discrimination that affects the day-to-day activity of the business.⁸⁴

3.48 Dr Foley has identified an attitude of positivity as being common amongst successful Indigenous entrepreneurs which he described as 'possibly the most outstanding personal attribute':

Positivity is this attitude that you cannot fail and that you will achieve. Those positive people are prepared to put things on the line, to make calculated judgments and to go past the status quo of the normal circle of comfort. That is so with most entrepreneurs but more so in this case because it actually bypasses some cultural influences as well. I think the most outstanding thing is that drive to succeed.⁸⁵

83 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 8.

84 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 2. Discrimination is not a positive factor but 'appears to be an integral part of the Indigenous experience in contemporary Australian society' and was common to successful Indigenous businesses and needed to be dealt with.

85 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, pp. 8-9.

3.49 Dr Foley added:

‘We must succeed; there is no alternative.’ The Indigenous businesspeople saw they could not fail. That was very important to them. They also felt it gave them control of their lives – they finally had choices in their life; they were no longer the employee, they were the employer.⁸⁶

Small business opportunities

3.50 Mr Warren Mundine believes that small business development needs to be encouraged in the communities to enable community members to learn about managing a business.⁸⁷ The Productivity Commission found that those who are self employed are in the ‘trade and lower skilled occupations such as plant and machinery operators and labourers’.⁸⁸ Mr Mundine would like to see more Indigenous people move into the trades and the local carpenter or maintenance person should be encouraged to become self-employed and reap the benefits from this.⁸⁹

Profit is not a bad word – it has been in Aboriginal communities for many years in regards to enterprises. We have to sell that as a good word. We have to also make the Indigenous people in those communities shareholders. I deliberately use the word ‘shareholders’ rather than being ‘members’ of some of these enterprises, because in the sense of shareholders you actually get a benefit. If that enterprise is working, you get a benefit from it; if it is not working, then you get the failings of that enterprise. This creates a cultural shift in people’s minds in that whether it does or does not work, it reflects back on themselves. We need to have that instilled in people to get things moving along.⁹⁰

3.51 Indigenous people have a competitive advantage in arts and tourism industries and the public and private sectors should be encouraged to invest in these areas.⁹¹

86 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, pp. 3-4.

87 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 31.

88 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 11.2, p. 11.18.

89 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 31.

90 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 32.

91 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 2.

Tourism potential

- 3.52 Tourism is the largest employer in Australia with 5.2 million international visitors arriving in 2004.⁹² It is a \$73 billion industry employing half a million Australians.⁹³ There are already untapped opportunities for Indigenous enterprise, particularly in the tourism industry. Some 80 per cent of visitors to Australia say that they would like to participate in an Indigenous tourism experience⁹⁴ while 15 per cent currently avail themselves of an Indigenous experience while visiting.⁹⁵ Almost 50 per cent of Australians are also interested in having a more immersive Indigenous experience.⁹⁶ Cultural pursuits can also have practical market value.⁹⁷ In traditional fields such as art and tourism, Indigenous people can maintain an attachment to the traditional culture.⁹⁸ Exit surveys for international tourists have found that they would have liked to have seen more Indigenous culture.⁹⁹
- 3.53 There are people now wanting to get into the tourist industry who have never been a tourist or worked in tourism or in some cases never worked a regular job.¹⁰⁰ These people need work experience before they need to develop a business plan.¹⁰¹ Tourism is very competitive and Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park is visited by less than 10 per cent of the visitors to the Cairns region.¹⁰² People working on tour desks are paid by

92 Mr Brad Parnes, Director, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 67.

93 Mr Brad Parnes, Director, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 67.

94 Mrs Judy Freeman, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 4.

95 Mr Philip Noonan, Department of Industry Tourism and Resources, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 46.

96 Mr Philip Noonan, Head of Tourism Division, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 45.

97 See Ms Lynn Bean, Acting Deputy Secretary, Arts and Sport, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 32; Ms Sally Bassier, General Manager, Indigenous Arts and Training, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 37; Mr Philip Noonan, Head of Tourism Division, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, pp. 46-47; Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, p. 13.

98 See Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, p. 13.

99 Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, p. 14.

100 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 30.

101 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 30.

102 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 4.

commission and there are 300-400 activities in the area.¹⁰³ IBA is helping to address this shortfall by participating in investments such as Kakadu, Kings Canyon, Fitzroy Crossing, Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort, Lake Mungo and Tjapukai Aboriginal Park and using these facilities to provide tourism training for Aboriginal people.¹⁰⁴

Indigenous art and craft

In some communities, particularly in regional or remote localities, art production stands as the only source of externally generated income. The income generation capacity of artists has significant flow on benefits to individuals, the artists' extended family and their community as it results in increased purchasing power, increased self esteem, the creation of positive community profiles and enhanced cultural transmission.¹⁰⁵

3.54 Mr Mikael Smith gave the example of TAFE graduates in arts and craft even though this usually does not pay well and saw:

... the biggest growth area in Aboriginal employment in small business and in people undertaking roles where they are not held back by the constraints of governments and big corporate organisations and are free to manufacture, produce and do whatever they want to. I think there can be a level of support provided by the Commonwealth and state governments and even local governments to assist in that process ... there can be opportunities in local government to facilitate some outcomes through corporate gifts, art collections and all sorts of things.¹⁰⁶

3.55 The Indigenous visual arts industry is an excellent example of successful Indigenous enterprise, with an estimated minimum value of \$100 million per annum.¹⁰⁷ There is, however, a need to protect the rights of the Indigenous artists and the integrity of the art.¹⁰⁸ The Committee notes with concern evidence suggesting that opportunities for Indigenous enterprise

103 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 4.

104 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 30.

105 Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Submission No. 42*, p. 2.

106 Mr Mikael Smith, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Multicultural Policy and Programs, City of Port Phillip Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 52.

107 Professor Jon Altman, 'Economic Development and Participation for Remote Indigenous Communities: Best Practice, Evidence Barriers and Innovative Solutions in the Hybrid Economy', Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Exhibit 54*, p. 3.

108 The Rainbow Serpent, *Submission No. 10*, p. 1.

in the areas of art and craft are being adversely affected by an influx of cheap, unauthentic products onto the market.¹⁰⁹ The Rainbow Serpent Pty Limited described the Aboriginal craft industry as being in crisis because of the proliferation of unauthentic products which are appearing in Aboriginal craft stores.¹¹⁰ This has resulted in the closure of a number of stores and artists are leaving the industry because their market is shrinking.¹¹¹ It is noted that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is working with the Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts, Austrade, the Australia Council and other peak bodies in relation to this issue.¹¹²

3.56 Culture and language programs contribute to the operational funding of some community centres and this provides employment opportunities for Indigenous people in a range of roles including:

... language experts, teachers, sound recordists, archivists, interpreters, heritage and cultural officers, administrators and office staff. Through language and cultural centres, Indigenous people are afforded recognition of their cultural knowledge and gain proficiency in the use of information and communications technology, administration, teaching, governance and management. Employment in such centres provides a strong community focus for Indigenous employees, and can be instrumental in building community cohesion and self-respect.¹¹³

3.57 A study by Dr Boyd Hunter has shown that most of the Indigenous small business growth has been in enterprises that do not employ other people and therefore policies encouraging Indigenous self-employment may not have a substantial impact on overall employment outcomes.¹¹⁴ The Committee believes, however, that there are other less direct benefits in terms of the multiplier effect of income and as role models for others.

109 Ms Caroline Friend, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 70-71, 78; Sue Williams, 'Should a fake didgeridoo?', *Financial Review*, 29 July 2005, *Exhibit 115*, p. 3.

110 Ms Caroline Friend, Director, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 68.

111 Ms Caroline Friend, Director, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 70; Mr Brad Parnes, Director, Rainbow Serpent Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 70.

112 Ms Karen Mundine, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 42; Ms Lynn Bean and Ms Sally Bassar, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, pp. 34-35, 37-38.

113 Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Submission No. 42*, p. 1.

114 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 3 citing Dr Boyd Hunter (2004) *Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market* ABS cat No. 2052.0, ABS Canberra.

Successful Indigenous businesses were described as having a ‘snowball effect’, where families that have established successful businesses are starting to mentor other community members about business development and building a business knowledge base in their communities.¹¹⁵

Business development

3.58 Historically there has been a high failure rate in business development so support is now being provided.¹¹⁶ Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Manguri Employment Services, described the challenge in moving from a grant funded organisation to a business model.¹¹⁷

Indigenous people need to learn about business. Most of us want to do it. Most of us have the will and the desire to do it. But we have never operated out of a business model. As much as we want to do it, failure becomes almost inevitable if you really do not know that well what you are going into. Education around that sort of thing is really important. That whole thing about pushing enterprise is critical.¹¹⁸

3.59 The Queensland Government suggested the development of alliances and partnerships with industry and the banking and financial sectors to support Indigenous small business development.¹¹⁹ Entrepreneurial support was seen by the South Australian Government as one of the areas where it is difficult to ‘get a coalition effort’ and there is a need to bring together state and federal support and assistance efforts.¹²⁰ In New South Wales enterprise development is:

115 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 30.

116 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 24.

117 Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 1.

118 Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 11; see also pp. 1-2.

119 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 17.

120 Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, pp. 9-10.

... a key priority for Aboriginal people and New South Wales is taking a holistic partnership based approach with all three tiers of government, the private sector and Aboriginal organisations.¹²¹

- 3.60 Sound ideas with good governance lead to success in business investment.¹²² The Indigenous Business Development Programme aims to provide Indigenous people with market intelligence, skill development and alternative funding products to increase their independence from governments and to 'improve their capacity to make life choices'.¹²³
- 3.61 The Victorian Government complements the Commonwealth funding for Indigenous Business Development through the Koori Business Network (KBN) and provides business training, networking and support services and assistance in finding new markets.¹²⁴ A strategy links key Victorian Government economic development agencies with Indigenous entrepreneurs and business owners 'to ensure that they are provided with comprehensive business support services which allows for growth and sustainability of Indigenous participation'.¹²⁵ Additional funding has been provided to enable the KBN to focus on business opportunities relating to Indigenous land ownership, ecotourism and cultural activities.¹²⁶ During the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, KBN had almost 200 Indigenous business people go through their doors.¹²⁷
- 3.62 Rio Tinto Ltd referred to the Corporate Leaders Program and questioned whether small businesses should not get the same level of support to engage an Aboriginal person for the first time.¹²⁸ The Committee believes that small business also has an important role to play in improving indigenous employment outcomes in the future.

Recommendation 4

- 3.63 The Committee recommends that the Federal Government ensure that small businesses employing Indigenous people receive comparable support to that received by the large business sector.**

121 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 85.

122 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 3.

123 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 18.

124 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, pp. 7-8.

125 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 8.

126 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, p. 8.

127 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, p. 2.

128 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 38.

Business mentoring

3.64 This 'fire in the belly', or entrepreneurial spirit, can be developed and enhanced by a mentor, who provides advice and support to the entrepreneur in a culturally appropriate way.¹²⁹ Mr Willie Gordon described the role played by his friend Judy Bennett in the development of his business:

... Judy focussed on me. She believed in me, and encouraged my ideas. She gave me direction, showing me how to move forward to achieve my goals, and she got involved, actually doing the job with me step by step. And she gave me an energy. If you want sustainability you need energy from somewhere and somebody. In business you need to be inspired.

But Judy didn't solve my problems for me. This is really important, as I am the only one that can decide what I should or will do. Instead, she gave me options and information, and acted as a sounding-board whilst I worked out the best solution for me. This empowered me to make my own decisions based on our cultural values.¹³⁰

3.65 The assistance of a mentor is an excellent means of delivering training in business and management skills on a one-to-one basis. Business mentoring is already provided as an aspect of a number of government programs.¹³¹ First Australians Business is a national one-to-one mentoring program for Indigenous business people, with mentors providing advice on business ideas and goals, funding submissions, marketing, developing a business plan, budgeting, time management, networking and product knowledge.¹³²

3.66 The Business Ready Program, through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, involves the appointment of 10 successful

129 Nyirrangu Muay Wurrnga'ada Association, *Submission No. 48*, p. 12; Ms Joanne Lane, Consultant, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 22.

130 Judy Bennett & Wilfred Gordon, 'Social Capital and the Indigenous Entrepreneur' (2005/2006) *Australian Prospect*, Summer, p. 8.

131 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 18; Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 21; New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 19.

132 First Australians Business, <www.firstaustralians.org.au/mentor_front.htm> (viewed 24 February 2006).

business people who each mentor 10 Indigenous businesses.¹³³ The Emerging Indigenous Entrepreneurs Strategy is to link private sector mentors to community members wanting to start a business. It is also hoped that Indigenous Tourism Australia will play an important role in connecting the demand for Indigenous tourism experiences to a sustainable supply within communities.¹³⁴

The nature of the business

- 3.67 Like any business, an Indigenous enterprise must have certain qualities in order to succeed: it must have good product, excellent staff, and have a sound economic basis. *Narana Creations* described a number of factors as contributing to the success of its enterprise, including creative planning, excellent staff, unique cultural products, and professional attention to customer service and detail.¹³⁵ A number of witnesses pointed to the importance of supporting only those Indigenous business ventures that are economically viable.¹³⁶
- 3.68 The Arnhemland Progress Association is a financially independent Indigenous organisation that derives its income from the successful operation of 13 community retail stores. All staff, with the exception of the management team, are Indigenous. The organisation credits its success to a number of factors, including:
- The Chair and Board of Directors are Indigenous people from member communities, so members of the community see the organisation as being run by their own people;
 - Store management are specifically employed to work with and train Aboriginal staff, and must be committed to that goal; and
 - The organisation is culturally sensitive and understands the importance of family and cultural obligations.¹³⁷
- 3.69 The presence of Indigenous staff is integral to the success of Indigenous enterprises, particularly where a significant percentage of the business's

133 Mr Philip Noonan, Head of Tourism Division, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, pp. 45, 48.

134 Mr Philip Noonan, Head of Tourism, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 49.

135 *Narana Creations*, *Submission No. 114*, p. 3.

136 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 11; Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 31; Mr Tom Phillips, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 65.

137 The Arnhemland Progress Association, *Submission No. 24*, p. 1.

clients are Indigenous. The Tangentyere Job Shop stated that having primarily Indigenous staff produced strengths including cultural understanding and communication skills, the ability to work with people who have been through hard times, local knowledge and limited turnover.¹³⁸

- 3.70 In the Cape York context, strong Indigenous institutions taking responsibility for sorting out political, cultural and legal issues were seen as a key strength. As Mr Michael Winer of Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships said, 'It is the Aboriginal people who know whether a particular tourism site is on a person's land or someone else's land and what permission processes are needed. It is about putting our confidence and support behind the leadership'.¹³⁹

Access to capital

- 3.71 A recurring theme that emerged from evidence presented to the Committee was the need for access to capital in order for Indigenous businesses to succeed. There is a lack of trust between financial organisations and Indigenous people and communities and the lack of capital is an issue for Indigenous people wishing to establish a business.¹⁴⁰ This can be an insurmountable hurdle for many.
- 3.72 It is almost impossible for Indigenous people to gain finance and some resort to using credit cards as their initial capital.¹⁴¹ You need to have 'bricks and mortar' to get finance.¹⁴² A relatively low level of home ownership among Indigenous Australians is a significant impediment to providing equity for business finance.¹⁴³
- 3.73 Problems faced by Indigenous women in accessing finance have been particularly acute. Lack of access to adequate funding appears to be a significant factor that affects the ability of Indigenous women in rural areas to operate businesses.¹⁴⁴

138 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 7.

139 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 32.

140 Mr Joseph Elu, Co-Chair, Indigenous Community Volunteers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2006, p. 8.

141 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, pp. 11-12.

142 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 12.

143 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 6; Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 44.

144 Ms Siobhan McDonnell, *The Grameen Bank micro-credit model: lessons for Australian indigenous economic policy*, CAEPR, No. 178/1999, Exhibit 37, pp. 4-5.

3.74 Successful Indigenous businesses have generally had to find innovative ways to overcome a lack of access to capital.¹⁴⁵ Some enterprises have been able to source financial support from alternative sources. For example, the Tangentyere Job Shop, a not-for-profit enterprise that operates a Job Network service, receives financial support from Tangentyere Council.¹⁴⁶ Other Aboriginal businesses have sourced funding from mining royalties and the sale of property.¹⁴⁷

3.75 The Northern Land Council explained that the lack of capital made enterprise development very difficult:

It means we must either rely on others to generate the demand for our labour or use our position as land owners to leverage that demand, and that is essentially what we do.¹⁴⁸

3.76 Access to land is also an important criterion for success in some Indigenous enterprises. The Nyirragu Muay Wurrga'ada Association pointed to the need for autonomous family ownership and control of land as a base for building enterprise opportunities to allow families to break away from welfare dependency.¹⁴⁹ Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall also stressed the importance of having a mortgageable asset before approaching banks for finance to enable an enterprise to be established.¹⁵⁰ Mr Warren Mundine believes that:

A more radical approach is needed whereby we move away from communal land ownership and non-profit community based businesses and take up home ownership, economic land development and private, profit making businesses.¹⁵¹

145 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 16; Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning and Development Officer, Cairns City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 16.

146 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 7.

147 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 39.

148 Mr John Berto, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Northern Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 36.

149 Nyirragu Muay Wurrga'ada Association, *Submission No. 48*, p. 11.

150 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 44.

151 Mr Warren Mundine, 'Australia's Aboriginal debate: Improving the lives of Australia's Aboriginals is an important challenge, with no easy answers', *BBC News*, www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4270669.stm (accessed 7 May 2007), quote from 6 December 2006, p. 1.

- 3.77 The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) provides land management and land acquisition programs for Indigenous people. The ILC assists applicants to develop viable and sustainable businesses.¹⁵²
- 3.78 The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) gave evidence that much more could be done with regard to development of commercial enterprises if business funding was tailored to meet the unique scenarios encountered in Indigenous communities. The BAC called for funding bodies to accept greater risk in relation to Indigenous businesses, and to relax requirements for security on loans.¹⁵³ The Queensland Indigenous Local Governments Association also called for business development funding in Indigenous and remote areas.¹⁵⁴

Microcredit

- 3.79 Financial assistance from traditional lending sources or the government was not available to most of the successful Indigenous businesses studied by Dr Dennis Foley.¹⁵⁵ Micro-credit can be a means of obtaining small loans, which increase in size as earlier loans are repaid.¹⁵⁶ The Grameen Bank model used in developing countries defines micro-credit as ‘the extension of small loans to entrepreneurs too poor to qualify for commercial lending’.¹⁵⁷ Microcredit enables people to engage in self-employment projects that generate income. There is a need in Australia for microfinance as start up and working capital for Indigenous enterprises.¹⁵⁸
- 3.80 Mr Michael Winer from Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, sees the availability of microcredit as very beneficial.¹⁵⁹ Mr Winer added, however, that success will be when Indigenous people can go through the normal channels because they have such a good business case.¹⁶⁰

152 See Indigenous Land Corporation, *Submission No. 63*.

153 Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 20*, p. 2.

154 Queensland Indigenous Local Governments Association, *Submission No. 81*, p. 3.

155 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 1.

156 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 39, Dr Dennis Foley, *Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: a Case Study Analysis*, PhD Thesis, p. 276.

157 Ms Siobhan McDonnell, *The Grameen Bank micro-credit model: lessons for Australian indigenous economic policy*, CAEPR, No. 178/1999, *Exhibit 37*, p. 1.

158 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 3.

159 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 39.

160 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 39.

- 3.81 Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) provides microfinance with starting amounts about \$2500:
- Unlike a business development or lending product, where it is all based on a commercially viable assessment, microfinance is about holding people's hands and working through all the issues with them and getting to a point of trust before you lend them money. The loans are very small, but they can gradually increase from thereon. Hopefully they can move into mainstream finance over a period of time.¹⁶¹
- 3.82 The First Australians for Business program has had some success but is not available in all regions and local mentors and training are needed for ongoing success.¹⁶² Rio Tinto has other strategies including direct job placement, joint venture operations and internal business incubators.¹⁶³
- 3.83 The South Australian Young Indigenous Entrepreneur Program has a range of activities and a focus on potential micro-financing projects that will enable Indigenous people to manage their own businesses.¹⁶⁴ The South Australian Government is also considering in the apprenticeship program, a fifth and sixth year to cover setting up their own business and becoming a subcontractor.¹⁶⁵
- 3.84 IBA and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations have a number of initiatives for helping to provide Indigenous entrepreneurs with access to start-up capital as well as market intelligence, skill development services (mentoring and marketing advice) and alternative funding products.¹⁶⁶ Although these programs appear to have had some success, there is a need to make these programs more accessible, and for government to seek out Indigenous entrepreneurs who may benefit from small business loans or the provision of micro-finance. The Committee

161 Mr Ivan Parrett, Assistant General Manager, Business Finance, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, pp. 27, 29.

162 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 19.

163 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 19.

164 Dr James Fowler, Deputy Chief Executive, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 7.

165 Mr David Rathman, Executive Director, Aboriginal Education, Employment Strategies Unit, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 8.

166 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 18.; Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 4; Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 21.

believes that IBA and DEWR should be encouraged to further seek out appropriate recipients of small business assistance and micro-finance.

Recommendation 5

3.85 The Committee recommends that the relevant government departments that administer programs providing micro-finance and small business assistance to Indigenous people, actively promote such programs and facilitate better access to that support.

Education and business skills

3.86 Dr Foley's findings include:

- when in business one must adapt to the mainstream business culture;
- there is a correlation between success and formal or technical education;
- networking skills are essential for success and this is linked to the connections made during the education process;
- the reinvestment of funds into the business for growth capital and human capital;
- co-cultural theory and ethnic theory may be relevant to population concentrations/geographic focus; and
- non-indigenous spouses may facilitate access to external capital, business finance, family capital, business human capital, higher education and business experience.¹⁶⁷

3.87 Indigenous people have their own ideas, motivation and passion, but they often need to be provided with the right information to bring their ideas to fruition.¹⁶⁸

In addition, cultural values and communal decision-making do not necessarily fit with commercial decision-making and

167 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, *Exhibit 42*, p. 5.

168 'Our Place, Basket making at Jabiru Mahbilil Festival', Volume 4 Edition 2, Theme: General Principles to do with Indigenous Business in remote regions, *Exhibit 62*.

management responsibilities necessary to support and sustain successful small business development.¹⁶⁹

- 3.88 Education is particularly important in providing entrepreneurs with business and people skills.¹⁷⁰ A study conducted by Dr Dennis Foley found that of the people involved in 50 successful Indigenous businesses, approximately 52 per cent had tertiary qualifications, 20 per cent had trade qualifications and 88 per cent had Year 12 qualifications.¹⁷¹ The need to improve educational opportunities and achievements for Indigenous people is dealt with more fully in Chapter 6. Dr Foley made the point in relation to education that:

This may not provide direct skills for business success however it would appear that it does provide exposure to life skills for business success and the skills necessary for the analysis or opportunity recognition.¹⁷²

- 3.89 In the case of Indigenous entrepreneurs, Dr Foley added that it is exciting that the second generation is receiving an education.¹⁷³ For children to receive an education, it is a case of educating the Indigenous parents and there must be an acceptance that they also have a responsibility.¹⁷⁴
- 3.90 The advice of good consultants and effective creative partnerships were seen to be instrumental in the development of a successful enterprise.¹⁷⁵ Some of the people who gave evidence pointed to the need for training in financial planning and management,¹⁷⁶ as well as advice on marketing, training, monitoring and facilitation of access to other public and private sector services.¹⁷⁷ The Tangentyere Job Shop partly attributed its success to

169 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

170 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 4; Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 11.

171 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 10.

172 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, p. 5, *Exhibit 42*.

173 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 6.

174 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 10.

175 Narana Creations, *Submission No. 114*, p. 1.

176 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 7, Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 11; Mr Patrick Low, Chief Executive Officer, Cairns Regional Community Development and Employment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 4.

177 Qld Indigenous Local Government Association, *Submission No. 81*, p. 3.

- excellent business advice received from accounting firm Deloitte in the dynamics of running a successful business.¹⁷⁸
- 3.91 A lack of knowledge and business skills can be disempowering for Aboriginal communities. This is the case when it comes to reporting or addressing situations of corruption or inappropriate management, maintaining control of community corporations, or having a basic level of knowledge to know the difference between good and bad advice.¹⁷⁹
- 3.92 The Committee was informed of a range of government programs available for the purposes of providing business advice and passing on business skills. For example, in New South Wales, these include the Aboriginal Business Review, the Aboriginal Business Growth Program, Aboriginal Business Link Program, and the Budyari Ngalaya First People's Business Partnerships Program, supporting partnerships between Australian businesses and Aboriginal people.¹⁸⁰ In Victoria, the Koori Business Network promotes Indigenous entrepreneurs through the provision of services aimed at business training, assistance in finding new markets and business networking and business support services.¹⁸¹ Measures for improving business opportunities for Indigenous people in the ACT are set out in the *Economic White Paper for the Australian Capital Territory*.¹⁸²
- 3.93 The Committee is aware that there is still a lack of access to effective business training and mentoring programs, and long-term management and directorial education programs, available for many Indigenous people.¹⁸³ There is also evidence of a lack of whole-of-government coordination in the delivery of services to potential Indigenous entrepreneurs.¹⁸⁴

178 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 7.

179 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, pp. 32-33, 56.

180 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 19; Ms Jody Broun, Department of Aboriginal Affairs NSW, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 85.

181 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 94*, pp. 7-8.

182 ACT Government, *Submission No. 60*, pp. 3-4.

183 For example, see Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 19; Ms Joanne Lane, Consultant, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 22; Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, p. 34.

184 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, p. 51.

3.94 There is also a need for advice and education in respect of non-Indigenous business practices. Because a majority of customers, creditors and debtors of a business will usually be non-Indigenous, it was suggested that successful Indigenous business people must align themselves with the dominant culture.¹⁸⁵ An example of this was provided by Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing at Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Centre:

The minute that you allow the funerals and the community obligations to close down the business – even for a moment – that business is finished because it would be running along community policy and directives, not commercial policy.¹⁸⁶

3.95 The Committee is also cognisant of the findings of research into Indigenous business undertaken by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research on behalf of the Australian Government, and state and territory governments. The key findings were:

- support for learning in Indigenous business must be sensitive to location;
- learning is most effective when tied to earning and conducted *through* commercial Indigenous business; and
- businesses operated primarily for social and community benefits are not ideal training grounds for Indigenous entrepreneurs.¹⁸⁷

3.96 Small business programs developed in non-Indigenous contexts may not be appropriate in an Indigenous community context. There may be a number of challenges facing Indigenous Australians attempting to establish economic development opportunities in regional areas.¹⁸⁸ Management and decision-making structures must be appropriate to Indigenous business ventures:

... the development and delivery of economic and Indigenous business development initiatives that recognise commercial factors, but also reflect Indigenous economic, social, cultural and legal realities remain a priority for IBA.¹⁸⁹

185 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 4.

186 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director, Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 16.

187 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, p. 6.

188 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 5.

189 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 5.

- 3.97 There is a need for education and training that is delivered face-to-face, is hands-on, culturally appropriate, and is delivered by trainers who are either Indigenous or experienced with Indigenous learners.¹⁹⁰
- 3.98 Dr Dennis Foley's research identified a need for Indigenous business incubators with links to established mainstream businesses and Indigenous business operators, and associated with vocational and other educational centres. This could be achieved by examining and adapting established business incubator programs in mainstream Australia.¹⁹¹
- 3.99 The Committee believes that there is a need for an effective whole-of-government approach to the delivery of education and skills in relation to Indigenous enterprise. The Committee believes that the federal government should consider how Indigenous Coordination Centres can better play a role in the delivery of services to Indigenous entrepreneurs, based on existing research regarding the needs of Indigenous people in this area. The Committee acknowledges that the role of the business mentors may be instrumental in providing enhanced services in this area.

Family or kinships

- 3.100 One of the issues successful Indigenous entrepreneurs dealt with was the attempts by extended families to obtain money or produce.¹⁹²

... if as an Aboriginal entrepreneur you fail to distinguish between the business and your family obligations, there is a 100 per cent failure rate. If you can disassociate it, you have as good a chance as anybody else of surviving as a business and contributing to the community.¹⁹³

- 3.101 This capital is necessary for reinvestment in the business.¹⁹⁴ Dr Dennis Foley stated:

One of the problems you have when you are Indigenous and in business – such as retail – is that all of a sudden you have relatives

190 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, pp. 61-64, 73.

191 Dr Dennis Foley, *Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: a Case Study Analysis*, PhD Thesis, p. 283.

192 For example see Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, pp. 39-40.

193 Ms Stephanie Walker, Native Title Officer, South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 30.

194 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 5.

coming out of the woodwork. Successful entrepreneurs knew how to say no, because the money had to go back into stock, and they quickly educated people about this.¹⁹⁵

- 3.102 Dr Foley listed the major motivators as a hatred of poverty; a strong desire to provide for children; a positivity to succeed; providing choices in the participants lives; and that it is seen as a form of self determination and participants have more control of their lives.¹⁹⁶ Dr Foley found that a dominant motivator was to provide for the nuclear family and for the wider family, however, successful entrepreneurs 'knew when and how to say no to wider family or other Indigenous people'.¹⁹⁷ Family obligations can therefore be treated as a motivator rather than an impediment.
- 3.103 This was an issue also confronted by Willie Gordon, and resolved by him developing a solution that was compatible with his values, from options provided to him by his mentor.¹⁹⁸
- 3.104 Once an appropriate solution to managing family and kinship obligations has been reached, a successful Indigenous enterprise has the potential not only to achieve economic independence for the entrepreneur herself or himself, but also to create flow-on effects in terms of the welfare and employment prospects of other family and community members.¹⁹⁹
- 3.105 Indigenous Business Australia's commercial programs focus more on families and individuals while other government programs tend to focus on communities or larger organisations.²⁰⁰ Mr Ron Weatherall commented on the different models of Indigenous enterprise development and the identification of best practice in clan or family group approaches.²⁰¹

195 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 4.

196 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, *Exhibit 42*, p. 4.

197 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, *Exhibit 42*, p. 5; Dr Dennis Foley, *Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: a Case Study Analysis*, PhD Thesis, p. 268.

198 Judy Bennett & Wilfred Gordon, 'Social Capital and the Indigenous Entrepreneur' (2005/2006) *Australian Prospect*, Summer, p. 9.

199 Dr Dennis Foley, *Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: a Case Study Analysis*, PhD Thesis, pp. 253-257.

200 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 24.

201 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 10.

Greater and greater individualism is evident also as communities urbanise. Therefore, there should be less emphasis on community based businesses and more emphasis on businesses run by individuals, in which wider family members will often be the only employees.²⁰²

3.106 Mr Michael Winer commented that:

The businesses that were constructed in the communities were generally council run. They were generally managed by non-Indigenous people and they generally operated on a communist social model of enterprise, so you have to deconstruct that. That is really tough. You have to back the solo little individuals in the community who then become the catalysts for further business development. We are seeing in some of these early communities a few businesses that have been going for two or three years. A range of other family members are saying, 'We want to talk about business; we want to look at business.'²⁰³

Discrimination

3.107 The Committee was informed that discrimination from both customers and suppliers is commonplace in affecting Indigenous entrepreneurs.²⁰⁴ Dr Foley described entrepreneurship as '... an essential step in the eradication of ignorance that breeds contempt and perpetuates racial stereotyping'.²⁰⁵

Entrepreneurship is actually seen as a way of circumventing discrimination. If you cannot get past discrimination in your entrepreneurship then you are fairly stuffed. It is my opinion that discrimination is particularly difficult to address in legislation, so I am not really advocating that. It requires fundamental change to the behaviour of the people doing the discriminating.²⁰⁶

202 Mr Andrew West, Manager, Kurna Business and Heritage Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 81.

203 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 30.

204 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, pp. 5-6; Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 2.

205 Dr Dennis Foley, *Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: a Case Study Analysis*, PhD Thesis, pp. 283.

206 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 14.

Concluding comments

3.108 The Committee was impressed with the extent and range of Indigenous businesses now succeeding. The Committee believes that this will encourage others to follow this path.

3.109 Mrs Cathy Duncan commented that:

It is not about opulence and wealth, because a lot of Indigenous people are not materialistic. They are not looking for that. I think they are just looking to be treated as equal within their community and be called a citizen. I think that is what AES tries to achieve, so that we become quality citizens and take away the black and white altogether.²⁰⁷

3.110 There have recently been good practice examples and research that will provide governments with the opportunity to learn from these successes and to stream-line whole-of-government assistance in a more efficient and effective manner. Partnerships between various levels of government, existing businesses and Indigenous entrepreneurs have provided many successful examples to inform future government policies and funding allocations.

207 Mrs Cathy Duncan, *Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Transcript of Evidence, 7 November 2003, Inquiry into Capacity Building in Indigenous communities*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, p. 1388.

Leading by example

Self-determination of Indigenous people

How do we work together to provide improved opportunities for Indigenous employment across Australia?

When we ask ourselves this question we must first consider the need to do things with Aboriginal people not to or for Aboriginal people.

Words such as "ownership" and "empowerment" will only resonate truly if they are backed by policy that is inclusive of Indigenous Australians from the outset.¹

- 4.1 Evidence received by the Committee indicates that successful policy initiatives must engage Indigenous people and their communities. Programs accepted or understood by the communities are more likely to succeed.
- 4.2 The involvement of respected Elders and Aboriginal community members is the key to success.² The Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation runs the aged care program within a residential care facility at Coober Pedy in South Australia. The organisation is managed by a board comprising Aboriginal Elders who set values

1 Paper by Anthony Kelly, AFL Northern Territory, *Exhibit 107*, p. 1.

2 Jason Solomon, *Submission No. 116*, p. 1.

and priorities and make decisions about the service and this is one of the reasons for the program's success.³

- 4.3 The Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation in Western Australia expressed support for the working group model utilised in the negotiation of shared responsibility agreements and regional partnership agreements. They stated, 'Working groups have the potential to take a leadership role in strategic planning for their communities and the success of this model means that governments do not have to re-invent the wheel when it comes to engaging with Aboriginal communities.'⁴
- 4.4 As well as engaging Aboriginal people, it is important that employment and training programs are delivered in ways that permit them to eventually become providers of these programs in their own communities.⁵ In this way, these initiatives deliver not only the employment and training they are intended to provide, but also opportunities for the development of leadership skills within Indigenous communities. This is important in combating a lack of expectation and aspiration among Indigenous community members to roles of community leadership that have in some cases been produced by a history of non-Indigenous management of assets.⁶

Role models

- 4.5 A number of submissions noted the important function that role models play in Aboriginal communities.⁷ The New South Wales Government noted that the current generation of professional Aboriginal people are likely to be one of the first members of their family to have earned a degree or other qualification, and it is important that they are recognised as role models.⁸

3 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 2.

4 Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 98*, p. 3.

5 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 8.

6 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, p. 31.

7 For example see Ms Lesley Podesta, First Assistant Secretary, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 17; Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 2.

8 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 30.

It is like a speedboat: they are pulling the skiers through, who are their brothers, their sisters or their cousins. They are the real role models for the new kids coming through. That is why we are doing it.⁹

4.6 Role models can be a means of providing inspiration to Indigenous youth by providing them with an example as to how they can succeed and what they can aspire to.¹⁰ Indigenous people who have succeeded in gaining employment as rangers and who participate in community land management programs are perceived as important role models in their communities, and provide an understanding of how the progression from school into these jobs occurs.¹¹

4.7 The importance of having successful Indigenous role models in communities was also discussed by Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association:

When young kids in town see an Aboriginal person working, even if it is in a bank, they will say, 'I can do that if Aboriginal people can do those sorts of things.' When I was young, I saw Sally Axton working at a bank and I thought, 'This is the first time I've seen an Aboriginal person working in a bank.' For me, that was a huge thing.¹²

4.8 When young people see a local Aboriginal person working they say that if they can do it, I can do it too.¹³

4.9 Young people can be role models for others in the community. Through their participation in activities such as the Rumbalara Football and Netball Inc, young people have been able to be in a public environment and to share and show their culture and put their identity in a public place.¹⁴

9 Mr Bruce McQualter, Regional Manager, NSW North West, ANZ Regional and Rural Banking, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 3.

10 Mayor Fran Kilgariff, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, pp. 18-19.

11 Ms Tina Bain, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 53; Mr David Alexander, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 58.

12 Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 9.

13 Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, pp. 9-10.

14 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

We need young Aboriginal kids on the shop floor and in the tea rooms sharing the experience in a healthy way, so it is not just about having a job and then gritting your teeth, bearing down and putting up with all the crap that goes on around racist attitudes, so that you can sustain a job.¹⁵

- 4.10 Mr Vincent Forrester made the point that nothing gives young people more pride than earning an award wage.¹⁶ In remote areas, apprentices have become role models and have been a source of community pride which is important in increasing participation in education.¹⁷ One of the attractions of the community ranger programs is the uniform and the badge and the role models that others can aspire to.¹⁸

We used Alice Springs people. Once we got one person in there, and the others saw him in his garb and his big steel capped boots, that impressed them. They thought, 'We want a job too.' You would be surprised how many people have come and said, 'We want a job there' – especially with the colossal pay they get to go home with.¹⁹

- 4.11 People returning to the local area provide role models for others and this can assist in bringing the community up to speed.²⁰ The minerals industry also draws people from urban areas:

The other point is that people are often drawn to urban areas because they see no employment opportunities in the communities in which they live ... As an employer in rural and regional Australia, we see direct benefit to being able to attract some of those people who have moved to urban Australia from those regions back into the communities,

15 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

16 Mr Vincent Forrester, Guide, Alice Springs Desert Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 67.

17 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 28; Tangentyere Council, *Supplementary Submission No. 69a*, p. 3.

18 Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 58.

19 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 25.

20 Mr David Ross, Project Manager, Northern Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 44.

where they can be more attached to their families and society.²¹

- 4.12 The Committee received evidence that very little is taught about Indigenous people or culture generally in schools and universities.²² The Committee was told that the wider public needs to be educated about successful Indigenous people to ensure that they are utilised as role models for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.²³
- 4.13 The Committee recognises the importance of highlighting success stories and the difference that positive role models can have on the lives on young Indigenous people. Initiatives such as Crocfest have an important role to play in encouraging awareness and cultural pride in Aboriginal young people.²⁴ However, seeking to enhance visibility must be balanced with the cultural and personal preferences of Indigenous individuals.²⁵
- 4.14 Corrugation Road is performing this important function through their television program *Beyond their Limits*. This is the longest running television program produced in the history of Imparja television and features interviews with young and old Indigenous people, role models such as sports men and women with public profiles, who have overcome barriers and limitations in order to succeed. Issues such as drugs and alcohol, family and community are important themes of the shows.²⁶ Mr Paul Deeming, CEO of Corrugation Road summed up their philosophy:

We are all about good stories, positive stories, and developing wellbeing and self-esteem and pride in the communities.²⁷

People in the community need to know the good things that are happening.²⁸

21 Ms Melanie Stutsel, Director, Environmental and Social Policy, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 17.

22 Dr Christina Cregan, *Submission No. 11*, p. 1.

23 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 10.

24 See <http://www.crocfestivals.org.au/>.

25 Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning and Development Officer, Cairns City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 20.

26 Mr Paul Deeming, *Exhibit No. 20*.

27 Mr Paul Deeming, Chief Executive Officer, Corrugation Road, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 62.

28 Mr Paul Deeming, Chief Executive Officer, Corrugation Road, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 69.

Importance of sport

There are two key things that encourage people to be part of community: one is sport ... The second one is employment. If you are employed you are part of a community.²⁹

- 4.15 Role models in sport are important because boys see they can succeed.³⁰ Sport can be an important vehicle for getting Indigenous youth involved in the community and building self-confidence.³¹

...engaging kids in football had a big impact on their behaviour and conduct during the day and how they felt about themselves.³²

- 4.16 Sporting role models are held in very high regard, particularly by Aboriginal youth.³³ Mr William Muir, Vice President of the Aboriginal Education Council in New South Wales, told the Committee:

... each year I visit all of our secondary scholarship holders throughout the state. One of the questions I asked the students this time was to name an Indigenous person who has succeeded, who has achieved. Over 90 per cent of the responses from these students at secondary school level were sporting heroes.³⁴

- 4.17 Sporting role models are used to good effect by the Clontarf Foundation, which runs football academies geared towards retaining young Indigenous men to Grade 12 and then placing them in employment. Role models are an important part of the success of the program, which has significantly increased the number of young Indigenous men staying at school in areas where the program operates. A high profile sporting person is usually affiliated with the program, to attract students in the first place. Staff from the program provide positive models for the way that adults interact – men with

29 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

30 Mayor Fran Kilgariff, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 19.

31 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, pp. 72-3.

32 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 80.

33 Mayor Fran Kilgariff, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 19. See also Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council (New South Wales) Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 18.

34 Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council NSW, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 18.

men, men with women, and women with women. Participants in the program run coaching clinics with younger Indigenous students and, once they complete Grade 12, join an alumnus and return to attend employment forums to attract other Indigenous boys into jobs.³⁵

4.18 In other words, the work being done by the Clontarf Foundation, has:

... used the boys' love of football and the respect of anyone in it to get their attention and to progressively build through that and leverage self-esteem.³⁶

4.19 As well as building self-esteem, the Clontarf Foundation has found that these programs can be used strategically to enhance opportunities.

Where it has been most effective is where we have been able to set up partnerships with TAFE and with the school. We have been able to encourage the school and TAFE to come up with programs that link into the footy. They will do TAFE units in sports and recreation and that will involve coaching clinics and doing coaching accreditation and umpiring accreditation so there is that link into footy. That is a really strong one.³⁷

Self-esteem

*As you build self-esteem, you build pride. Aboriginal people just want to be respected; they just want to be respected. And, as we build that respect, you will get peer pressure rolling onto the back end of the community.*³⁸

4.20 Employment is an important source of self-esteem for Indigenous individuals and communities. The importance of role models in building self-esteem has significance for the growth of Indigenous businesses. A lack of self-esteem can inhibit aspiring Indigenous

35 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, pp. 70, 73, 83.

36 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 4.

37 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, pp. 77-78.

38 Mr Richard Estens, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2003, *Inquiry into Capacity Building in Indigenous communities*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, pp. 1388-1389.

entrepreneurs following through on their ideas.³⁹ Therefore many Indigenous Australians with poor employment outcomes are missing a crucial component for building confidence and self-esteem.

- 4.21 Mr Paul Briggs of the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club, expressed the view that respect and being valued is often missing from the equation:

Aspiring young Aboriginal kids in Shepparton do not feel respected or valued, and those are generational issues. They do not feel valued or respected in the educational sector, out on the streets or in the employment sector. They are very much fringe dwellers when it comes to social and economic participation.⁴⁰

- 4.22 Mission Australia has found when dealing with clients that 'unless you feel vaguely good about yourself, you will not get out of bed for anything'.⁴¹ This is an issue that needs to be addressed. Indigenous people need help to gain the confidence and self-esteem to see that they do have options.⁴² Mr Brierty supports the view that self esteem and feeling good about yourself leads to respect for others but self respect comes first.⁴³

Valuing people and culture

- 4.23 Evidence to the Committee clearly reflects the need for Indigenous people to feel valued if they are to pursue opportunities and achieve positive employment outcomes.⁴⁴ The Committee notes that an important part of positive self-esteem for Indigenous people is having their culture recognised and valued. There is also the importance and economic value of traditional and ceremonial leadership in communities that need to be considered.⁴⁵

39 Ms Kate Flamsteed and Mr Barry Golding, *Learning through Indigenous business: the role of vocational education and training in Indigenous enterprise and community development*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2005, p. 41.

40 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc., *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

41 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 64-65.

42 Mr Ray Hansen, Chairperson and Founder, Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 61.

43 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2004, p. 84.

44 Mrs Sandra Rogers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 64.

45 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 4.

4.24 The Chairperson on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation has found:

... that you have to work on making Indigenous people feel good about themselves. I try to let them see that they are living in a tourism town and international tourists are interested in them and their culture. When someone is asking something about you, it makes you feel good.⁴⁶

4.25 Sports club President, Mr Paul Briggs observed that:

This also is underpinned by the value of Aboriginal identity in a place like Victoria and the culture in mainstream society of generational symptoms of data that describe Indigenous peoples as either disadvantaged or a deficit. This also underpins the self-esteem of young people and their willingness and ability to engage with the broader community and to engage in work or educational opportunities that present themselves in the Goulburn Valley.⁴⁷

4.26 It has been suggested that having a strong sense of culture provides a foundation for success in other areas.⁴⁸ Mission Australia informed the Committee that:

Many of our programs begin by working on self-esteem and on Indigenous background and culture, because that is a positive. We know cultural identity is a positive for resilience right across everything we do. Clients start to get their lives together and then employment comes. Unless you have a sense of who you are, a sense that life is possible and a sense of self-efficacy and think, 'Yes, I can achieve'.⁴⁹

4.27 Ms Sandra Rogers considers an important part of the process to building self-esteem is in acknowledging the contribution that Aboriginal people have made to building Australia.⁵⁰ Ms Rogers

46 Ms Bernice Kelly, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation, Queensland, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, pp. 20-21.

47 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc., *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2.

48 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 43.

49 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 65.

50 Mrs Sandra Rogers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 64.

added that 'people need to be valued. I do not think that Aboriginal people feel valued'.⁵¹

- 4.28 Manguri Employment Services try to send the message to their Indigenous job seekers that:

They might not have a job, they might not have this, but as Indigenous people what they have to offer back to the community has no price on it.⁵²

- 4.29 Mr Hugh Woodbury believes that people working in parks and wildlife are important role models for young Indigenous people because they are working on the land and looking after the culture.⁵³ Ms Kylie Bloomfield told the Committee that:

I always wanted to be a ranger. This is one of the biggest role modelling places in town. When kids see you down the street, they're singing out 'ranger' this, 'ranger' that – especially when you go to the schools.⁵⁴

- 4.30 Raising Indigenous visibility is important.⁵⁵ Ms Cathy Duncan from Aboriginal Employment Strategy, made the point that:

For any grandma who has been through the process of Aboriginal affairs in this country, seeing their grandchild standing at the front counter of any bank or in any job is always going to bring a community along because they have always wanted a place for their children.⁵⁶

- 4.31 As more Indigenous people join the corporate sector, they are potentially role models for young Indigenous people. It is important, however, that successful individuals put themselves forward as role models.⁵⁷

... but you need to have examples from that community. You need to see people who actually came from there, lived that

51 Mrs Sandra Rogers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 63.

52 Mrs Cheryl Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 11.

53 Mr Hugh Woodbury, T1 Ranger, Parks and Wildlife Service, Northern Territory, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 69.

54 Ms Kylie Bloomfield, Guide, Alice Springs Desert Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 69.

55 For example see Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

56 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 14.

57 Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, p. 9.

life and were able to break that cycle. We need to bring them back and do a lot more role modelling to show people that they can achieve things. Frankly, there are a lot of people out there who do not see any future. They do not see education as a way of breaking out of poverty or breaking out of the situation that they are in. They just do not see a future for themselves. That is a problem we have in a lot of these rural communities.⁵⁸

- 4.32 Mr Paul Briggs acknowledged that cultural enhancement and celebration within the community was one of the things they had started looking at under the COAG process to address issues of value and respect.⁵⁹ However, he feels that:

There is a lot of work that has to be done on building confidence, because generational confidence has been dented. We need to build confidence in the long term and support civic leaders, industry leaders, Aboriginal leaders and others to work on a solution.⁶⁰

Mentors

- 4.33 Mentoring relationships are an important factor in the success of Indigenous employment and training programs.⁶¹ For many Indigenous people, entry into the workforce can be overwhelming, and the presence of a mentor can help to make this difficult transition

58 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 37.

59 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

60 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 10.

61 Adelaide City Council, *Submission No. 65*, p. 2; Jason Solomon, *Submission No. 116*, p. 1; Mr Harold Howard, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 54; Ms Sheryl Sandy, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 23; Ms Simone Haynes, Voyagers Hotel and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 4; Mr Anthony Dann, Chairperson, Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 24; Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 4; Mr Trevor Stutley, Human Resources Manager, Administration, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 16; Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Submission No. 34*, p. 3; Dubbo City Council, *Submission No. 56*, pp. 1-2.

easier.⁶² People living in Indigenous communities may not have the same networks to mentor them when they commence employment and this can impact on their confidence.⁶³

4.34 Many witnesses referred to mentoring as essential to success for many individuals and a recurring theme of the more successful employment outcomes was mentoring support. Mentoring is referred to throughout this report (for example Chapter 3 – business mentoring, Chapter 6 employment and trainee mentoring).

4.35 People who usually mentor Indigenous people are not usually successful business people.⁶⁴

Six out of 10 Aboriginal people are on a government benefit and our clientele is the top three out of that six, not the bottom welfare mob. If you have a third of Aboriginal people moving through society okay, at AES we get the next third going with them through the commercial world. We are then giving the Aboriginal communities a mandate to take on the back end of the community – as you build self-esteem and pride you generate peer pressure. That is the game plan.⁶⁵

4.36 Mentoring has an important part to play in providing support for both Indigenous employees and non-Indigenous employers.⁶⁶ Mentoring needs to be structured and ongoing and provide support for both the mentor and mentees.⁶⁷ Even in situations where the mentor is also Indigenous, the differences in traditional cultures from

62 Mrs Kerri Colegate, Site Coordinator, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 2.

63 Mr Simon Hawkins, Executive Director, Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 32.

64 Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Director, Operations, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 13.

65 Mr Richard Estens, Chairman, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 13.

66 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 15; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 46; Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 9.

67 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 44; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 45.

one area to another tribal group means that appropriate mentoring needs to be in a cultural context.⁶⁸

- 4.37 The Queensland Government is having significant success by providing mentoring support as this can address low self esteem and low educational achievement.⁶⁹ Alice Springs Desert Park capitalise on the things that the recruits are already good at and have expectations of their staff to build self-esteem through mentoring.⁷⁰
- 4.38 The Committee believes that the provision of funding for training and employment for Indigenous people must include adequate resources for mentoring to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Recommendation 6

- 4.39 **The Committee recommends that the Federal Government provide adequate resources for mentoring in addition to the funding provided for training and employment of Indigenous Australians.**
- 4.40 dEadly mOb is an organisation that aims to create online opportunities for Indigenous young people, who actively interact with and upload to the organisation's website. The organisation connects young people to strong role models through its mentoring program, involving mentors from a range of jobs who are able to tell their stories and provide career advice.⁷¹
- 4.41 Ms Lane made the point that there is a web site for mentors on dEadly mOb but there are a number of people in organisations who are not listed on the site.⁷² The Committee appreciates that mentoring others can add a significant burden to the individuals involved but this appears to provide the best opportunities for others.

68 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 46-47.

69 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 4.

70 Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 2.

71 dEadly mOb, <www.deadlymob.org> (viewed 24 February 2006).

72 Ms Joanne Lane, Consultant, Imparja Television and Human Resources Officers, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 23.

- 4.42 Support can assist in working through the differences between ‘whitefella’ bureaucratic requirements and Aboriginal culture.⁷³ Mentoring is part of the training process and everyone identifies with that.⁷⁴

The magic that makes this work: it is sort of like the game of football, Aussie Rules, where you are allowed to shepherd. The school based trainee is holding the ball and the parents, the AES, the mentors, the school and the bank manager and employees are basically shepherding the child from all the influences that are hitting normal 15, 16 or 17-year-olds. Especially when their mates learn that they work in a bank – the worst of all evils – it is up to that partnership to protect that child. That is the magic of it; the mentoring is the unique thing that I have not seen in any other situation like this.⁷⁵

- 4.43 Mentoring is not rocket science and is common in private industry and in large corporations.⁷⁶ Mentoring, support and encouragement are critical.⁷⁷

Nobody for a long while will be able to remove the difficulty and the hard work. It is going to be hard work regardless, because money does not fix those things. I think that has been proved over many years.⁷⁸

- 4.44 Mrs Kathleen Boyne commented that money is the short term reward and if it is not in the heart then it is not sustainable:

I think sometimes that encouragement is more sustainable than money.⁷⁹

- 4.45 Mentoring takes a number of forms. Mentoring can link the cultural difference between Aboriginal lives and the culture in the

73 City of Marion, *Submission No. 28*, p. 1.

74 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 16.

75 Mr Bruce McQualter, Regional Manager, NSW North West. ANZ Regional and Rural Banking, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 6.

76 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 35.

77 Mr Leigh Cleghorn, Manager, Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 62.

78 Mr Leigh Cleghorn, Manager, Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 62.

79 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 10.

workplace.⁸⁰ The Brisbane City Council *Indigenous Career Development and Mentoring Program*, for example, includes cultural awareness training for mentors, individual career development programs for mentees and training in roles and responsibilities for both mentors and mentees.⁸¹

- 4.46 Footprints Forward, an Alice Springs initiative, mentors Indigenous youth through the transition into employment, education and training. The job also involves liaising with employers about the problems mentees face and helping them through their orientation.⁸² Ms Marilyn Smith explained:

So many young people just do not know how to go about things. They are too ashamed to ask so they will just sit down and think, 'Oh well, it will happen one day,' and in the end they just do nothing all day apart from watching TV or whatever. Or perhaps they are working and they do not know what to do ... Just having somebody there to support them has been good.⁸³

- 4.47 It is important that mentoring relationships are developed properly, facilitated by appropriate cultural awareness training and support for mentors as well as mentees. There must be a clear understanding of the cultural context of mentoring, such as what constitutes women's business or men's business, the differences between skin groups, and the 'fear factor' that may arise where a traditional Indigenous person is in a mentoring relationship with a non-traditional Indigenous person.⁸⁴

- 4.48 Mission Australia believes that mentoring should be mainstream:

Aboriginal people are acutely alert to the 'shame' factor and not wanting to be considered different or less capable than others. Every one needs and can benefit from a mentor or a network of support and there is no shame involved. In fact,

80 Mr Andrew West, Manager, Kaurua Business and Heritage Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 80.

81 Brisbane City Council, *Submission No. 74*, pp. 4-5.

82 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, pp. 3-4.

83 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, pp. 14-15.

84 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 44-47.

smart people look for mentors and supporters in every aspect of their lives.⁸⁵

Current leadership initiatives

Community and private initiatives

4.49 There are a number of exciting leadership initiatives currently underway in communities around Australia. For example, the AFL encourages leadership through its Kickstart program, which involves children from Indigenous communities learning football skills.⁸⁶ The AFL Kickstart program is about building leadership skills and not about the best footballers.⁸⁷ The skills learnt in communication and working with others can be transferred to life experiences.⁸⁸

... it was not just about playing AFL, how much money you earned or anything like that, which are the general questions that you get from kids; it was more along the lines of lifestyle choices, getting an education, employment after football and recognising that they are a very small percentage of the AFL population and there are thousands of other people out there who would have liked to have played AFL at the highest level but could not. Now they have to get on with day-to-day business like getting a job, going to work, going to school.⁸⁹

4.50 The Committee is also aware of a number of leadership and youth development programs being developed by the Cape York Institute. These include:

- Higher Expectations (in partnership with the Macquarie Bank Foundation), to enable Cape York students to attend select Queensland boarding schools;
- The Youth Talent Development Program, which aims to nurture highly educated and skilled Indigenous role models aged 17-30 from Cape York by providing them with the long term support to maximise their achievements in education, employment and

85 Mission Australia, *Submission No. 90*, p. 6.

86 Mr Brenton Toy, Project and Training Development Officer, AFL Northern Territory Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, pp. 68-69.

87 Mr Brenton Toy, Project and Training Development Officer, AFL Northern Territory Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 64.

88 Mr Brenton Toy, Project and Training Development Officer, AFL Northern Territory Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 64.

89 Mr Brenton Toy, Project and Training Development Officer, AFL Northern Territory Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 65.

leadership, including leadership training and professional mentoring; and

- The Leadership Development project, which is engaged in the development of a collegiate of Cape York Indigenous leaders and potential leaders who share common goals of family, community, and regional transformation, and who are prepared to commit themselves to personal and professional growth to achieve this end.⁹⁰

4.51 All of the Aboriginal organisations in the Darwin area reserve places on their governing boards or committees for representatives from the Larrakia people.⁹¹

... there are key components of Indigenous people who are starting to realise and rationalise the benefits of working together and looking towards offering something for their children.⁹²

4.52 Mr Warren Mundine described himself as optimistic:

I am an optimist and we are living in exciting times. The leadership is changing: we have a younger, more articulate, more educated leadership coming forward. A good example of that is the number of Aboriginals now standing for parliament and getting elected. We have just seen the preselection in Western Australia of a 31-year-old constitutional lawyer, Ben Wyatt. Twenty years ago who would have thought of an Aboriginal doing that?⁹³

Corporate leadership

4.53 Leadership from corporations is a key aspect of the future for Indigenous employment. The Committee supports the approach of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy in working with a range of corporations in increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous people. Mr Dick Estens commented that:

90 Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, <<http://www.cyi.org.au/default.aspx>> (accessed at 8 February 2006).

91 Mr Kelvin Costello, Coordinator, Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, pp. 73, 75.

92 Mr Kelvin Costello, Coordinator, Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 74.

93 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 40.

... generally corporate Australia are really important to us because as we move forward with the whole company, if you take corporate Australia out of the main street, you've probably got 60 or 70% of jobs coz your other jobs are left to small family businesses generally.⁹⁴

- 4.54 The mining industry has some sound models which have been developed over 25 to 30 years of experience and corporate knowledge. Newmont Australia Ltd identified the two key aspects that move mining companies to Indigenous employment:
- There is a business case that leads to involvement with communities, in Indigenous activities, and reconciliation programs; and
 - The social license which reflects respect for the environment, safety and communities in which mining operations operate and live.⁹⁵
- 4.55 In relation to other corporate bodies, Mr Jack Pearson commented that:
- There is a lot of goodwill in the private sector and a lot of desire for corporates to get involved. One hurdle the corporates have to get over is themselves. They need to understand the Indigenous policies and framework – not that they have to be full bottle about it – particularly with respect to employing Indigenous people in their organisations. There could be some crosspollination of people.⁹⁶
- 4.56 The Committee believes that there is a real need for corporate leadership to increase Indigenous employment and an opportunity to significantly increase employment levels while addressing the skills shortages currently facing Australia. Evidence to the Committee presented a clear view that corporates believe it is too hard and can readily trot out a series of excuses about why it cannot be done. The Committee believes that this will change as the number of successes increases.
- 4.57 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry conceded that private enterprises are under no real obligation to take on Indigenous

94 Mr Richard Estens, *Imagine the Future by Learning from the Past – Aboriginal Employment Strategy: Working together*, Speech to the 2005 Communities in Control Conference convened by Our Community and Centacare Catholic Family Services, June 2005, p. 11.

95 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 33.

96 Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, p. 4.

employees and there is a low percentage who do.⁹⁷ The reason businesses do not pursue this approach:

It is expertise. They do not want to go in blindly. I think that is basically it. They do not have the expertise to access communities. They do not know how to talk to communities. They do not know how to set up a strategy. For a recruitment strategy, for instance, the process is to find the right publications to put an advertisement in and that sort of thing. I think that has been their main barrier – the expertise in how they go about it.⁹⁸

- 4.58 Australia Post has increased the number of Indigenous Australians employed by 400 per cent since 1988 when an Indigenous employment strategy commenced.⁹⁹ Currently there are 625 Indigenous Australians employed which is 1.8 per cent of the workforce. Australia Post has a target of 2 per cent.¹⁰⁰ This success is attributed to a strong commitment from senior management and a planned sustained approach.¹⁰¹ The strategy is about ‘providing real, ongoing jobs and real opportunities for Indigenous Australians.’¹⁰²

Leadership across all levels of the system is important; having shared leadership at the Ministerial, senior executive and planning levels, and at the level of service delivery, assists in achieving both process and impact outcomes. Building the capabilities of leaders from both communities and governments to work differently is an important strategy for sustained change.¹⁰³

97 Mr Dean O’Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, pp. 6-8.

98 Mr Dean O’Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 8.

99 Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 16.

100 Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 16.

101 Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 16.

102 Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 17.

103 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 8.

Government initiatives

- 4.59 The Federal Government has a number of initiatives including the *Indigenous Leadership Program*,¹⁰⁴ the *Indigenous Women's Leadership Program*,¹⁰⁵ the *Business Leaders Initiative*,¹⁰⁶ and the *Indigenous Tourism Business Ready Program*.¹⁰⁷ Federal government funding is also available for mentoring through Job Network, which can contract an agency to deliver mentoring, or through Indigenous business support programs, if an Indigenous business wanted to deliver mentoring as a service.¹⁰⁸
- 4.60 There are a number of initiatives outlined at the state, territory and local level but only two are mentioned briefly here. The Northern Territory Government piloted the *Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program* in 2003-2004. All 25 participants graduated in May 2004 with a Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) from Charles Darwin University. The success of the Kigaruk program was directly attributed to the consultation, development and evaluation processes undertaken with Indigenous men to meet their career developmental needs and aspirations. The *Lookrukin Indigenous Women's Leadership Development Pilot Program* is similarly designed for Indigenous women in the Northern Territory public service.¹⁰⁹
- 4.61 Brisbane City Council has two Indigenous reference groups that play an important role in providing representation for Indigenous employees of council and Indigenous people in the community. The Reference Group created its own vision of making Brisbane City Council 'the leading mainstream municipal employer of Indigenous people in Australia and thus contribute to the wellbeing of the

104 Senator The Hon Nick Minchin, Minister for Finance and Administration, *Submission No. 62*, p. 2; See also Australian Public Service Commission, <<http://www.apsc.gov.au/indigenousprograms/index.html>> (accessed 8 February 2006).

105 Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, <http://www.oipc.gov.au/programs/IndigenousWomensDevelopment>> (accessed at 8 February 2006).

106 An Australian Government Initiative, *Achieving Indigenous Economic Independence Indigenous Economic Development Strategy targeting jobs, business and assets*, 2005, p. 13.

107 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 7.

108 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 16.

109 Northern Territory Government, *Submission No. 33*, p. 2; 'Lookrukin: Indigenous Women's Leadership Development Pilot Program, Prospectus 2005/06', *Exhibit 75*; 'Kigaruk: an Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program, Prospectus 2005/06'. *Exhibit 7*.

Indigenous community of Brisbane by delivering on equitable employment opportunities and outcomes.' Its role includes facilitating an enduring, substantial and productive relationship between the council and Brisbane's Indigenous community, and providing advice to council.¹¹⁰

The way forward

4.62 It is vital that the focus in delivery of employment and training programs in Indigenous communities be on equipping those communities with the ability to deliver those services themselves. This will lead to increased employment and self-determination, as well as developing leadership skills, allowing people to perform as mentors and role models in their own communities.

4.63 Ms Jody Broun saw the potential for successfully replicating projects in other places as governments not being interventionist and providing support to communities to develop their own ideas.¹¹¹

A lot of it comes down to community capacity and local leadership. Often you will see that something which is working fantastically in a local community has relied on one or two really strong people in the community doing the work. That is where it gets difficult to replicate it in lots of places. You are relying on leadership.¹¹²

4.64 The Committee believes that Indigenous community leadership is the way forward. Evidence to the Committee frequently referred to the failure of the whole-of-government approach to adequately take on board the views and aspirations of the community leaders. While it is clearly the intent of the whole-of-government approach through the Shared Responsibility Agreements to improve this aspect, there appears to be a residual 'disconnect' in many respects. While the Committee accepts that the whole-of-government approach is still on a learning curve, this is a fundamental aspect that requires urgent attention. The recent review of the COAG trials found that:

110 Brisbane City Council, *Submission No. 74*, pp. 6-7.

111 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 90.

112 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 90.

These place based approaches appear to work most effectively where there were clearly identifiable Indigenous communities with strong representative leadership and where government agencies play a facilitative leadership role, engaging across all levels of government and with community leaders.¹¹³

113 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 5.

Education and training

...‘Literacy, literacy, literacy’ It is the crucial component of any success anywhere.¹

Education

- 5.1 Analysis of the 2001 Census data shows that low educational levels in the Indigenous population explains over 50 per cent of the employment differential between Indigenous and other Australians.² There remains a substantial difference between educational achievement for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians although some progress is being made.³
- 5.2 All of the Indigenous groups that Mr Michael Winer knew of had education as a priority.⁴

Improved educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians contribute directly to improvements in a range of other spheres of life, including health, employment, home ownership, civic responsibility and reduced substance abuse. Education contributes to economic growth through its effect

1 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 37.

2 Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 4.

3 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 4.

4 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 38; see also Mr Daniel Tucker, Director and Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 47.

on labour productivity, technological innovation and adaptation, economic, organisational and individual flexibility and the investment environment.⁵

5.3 Rev Dr Goondarra stressed that education for the children is the only way to find employment.⁶ Education is the key to a positive future and it is about talking to communities about their aspirations and how they might achieve those aspirations.⁷

5.4 In many areas there are jobs available and the goal is to achieve a skills match. The Cape York Indigenous Employment Strategy identified a range of employment opportunities in the region:

We knew the jobs were there, but the problem is the capacity of people to take up those jobs with their poor educational attainment levels and the skills and expertise that are required to secure some of those jobs.⁸

5.5 The responsibility for funding and delivery of education is primarily that of the states and territories. The Australian Government provides Indigenous specific funding to supplement the mainstream programs.⁹ The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy program guides initiatives aimed at closing the educational divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.¹⁰

5.6 Improving the education outcomes for Indigenous students is a priority for the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs for the quadrennium 2005-2008.¹¹

We are working a lot better in urban environments than in the remote, no doubt about that. Certainly in terms of our

5 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 2. See also Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 35.

6 Reverend Dr Djiniyini Goondarra, Chairman, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 58.

7 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, pp. 3, 5.

8 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 11.

9 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 35.

10 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 35.

11 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 35.

leverage – and it is essentially a state responsibility ... Much more meaningful performance criteria about what the states are doing with those resources is built in now.¹²

5.7 The federal government's approach for 2005-08 is to direct its resources to programs that have demonstrably improved outcomes. Mr Anthony Greer commented that 'Initiatives are being directed towards promoting systemic change and developing flexible whole-of-government approaches to education delivery'.¹³

5.8 The Northern Territory Office of Commissioner of Public Sector Employment saw a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach as critical.¹⁴ The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination commented that:

What the education department does in a particular area in a particular community has long been done often without the knowledge or any linkage with what other agencies are doing. That I think has been recognised as one of the reasons why government assistance and investment has not been as effective as it might be and many of the problems have actually got worse.¹⁵

5.9 Government must be clear about the training, education and development programs needed and how this will be measured and what accountability frameworks should be established.¹⁶

5.10 Mrs Eileen Shaw from the Institute for Aboriginal Development stressed that if an Aboriginal person has numeracy and literacy skills, they have the power to make choices and that is self-determination.¹⁷

That is what education does: it gives you the strength of choice, and that choice is in respect of employment, health, housing and your living skills – to be able to not leave your bankbook with the bank because you are taking care of it and

12 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 18.

13 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 35.

14 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 20.

15 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 6.

16 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 21.

17 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 5.

you are managing your own life. That is why we think very strongly that employment itself has to be looked at from a holistic viewpoint, not in isolation from health, housing, culture and education, because all of those things, as we all know, play a part in where we get in the future and what our career path, or occupational path, might be.¹⁸

Culturally appropriate approaches

- 5.11 While Aboriginal numeracy and literacy levels are still below that of non-Indigenous Australians, this is improving and many of the programs already in place will continue to improve this situation.¹⁹ There is a range of different literacy and numeracy models being trialled. To be successful, these models need to be culturally appropriate and learning should be relevant to their daily lives.²⁰
- 5.12 Indigenous children love learning and would be interested in material that is of relevance.²¹ To encourage young people to undertake education we need to know where their priorities are and develop a curriculum that is appropriate.²² Pilbara Iron and the Roebourne High School are looking at the provision of more relevant school programs for years 9-12 and the inclusion of paid work experience which will pay more than CDEP.²³
- 5.13 The material in the curriculum must be presented in a culturally appropriate way.²⁴ Indigenous children may need a hands-on approach to learning without the 'whole school based theory stuff'.²⁵

18 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 5.

19 Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council (New South Wales) Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 19; Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 5; Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 36

20 Ms Melanie Stutsel, Director, Environmental and Social Policy, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 12.

21 Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 44; Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 44.

22 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 33.

23 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 21.

24 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 2.

25 Mr James Remedio, Radio Manager, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 9.

... if it is more about how they can develop life skills at that age - what are some of the life skills they need to build up their confidence as young kids in communities faced with all of these challenges?²⁶

- 5.14 The Scaffolding Literacy approach²⁷, *What Works*,²⁸ and the altering lives one at a time Program (ALTA-1)²⁹ were some of the success stories with an emphasis on cultural appropriateness presented to the Committee.
- 5.15 There is a need for adult literacy training in a way suited to Aboriginal people.³⁰ Tangentyere Council report greater success in numeracy and literacy training with people in employment when they can see the relevance.³¹ The Government is working on numeracy and literacy skills for employment which will enable employees to read signs in the workplace to address the basic occupational health and safety issues.³² The Workplace English Language and Literacy programme integrates this training with the vocational training to meet their employment and training needs.³³

Pre-school preparation

- 5.16 Primary schools need to provide young Aboriginal people with literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to progress through high school. Adequate antenatal care and the forming of good habits in preschools and childcare are needed to address issues arising prior to enrolling in schools. Pilbara Iron are working on an early years program to assist children up to six years, to ensure they are not

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- 26 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 33.
- 27 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 6; Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 41.
- 28 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 44; Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 7.
- 29 Mrs Lynley Tucker, Owner, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 47.
- 30 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 26.
- 31 Ms Maria Harvey, Assistant Manager, Tangentyere Job Shop, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 32.
- 32 Mr Bob Harvey, Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 5.
- 33 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 13.

behind children who have had an opportunity to attend kindergarten.³⁴

- 5.17 Economists focus on cognitive abilities rather than non-cognitive abilities such as motivation and persistent self-discipline.³⁵

... economists have systematically discounted non-cognitive abilities when estimating factors underlying labour market disadvantage. The importance of this is that non-cognitive abilities are formed early in life and are likely to be heavily influenced by the family in the early years.³⁶

- 5.18 Dr Boyd Hunter referred to an underinvestment in Indigenous preschool education and suggested that remediation of any lack of fundamental skills occurs at an early age. He emphasised that while the focus is currently on adults, the problem lies in the quality of the skills acquired at an early age:

... skill begets skill and learning begets learning. There are several critical or sensitive periods in the lives of young children. Once a child falls behind in fundamental skills, he is likely to remain behind. Remediation for impoverished early environments becomes progressively more costly the later you attempt to intervene. Most investments in education, training and labour market programs are positive, but returns to early investment are particularly large because the later investments build on the early investments ...³⁷

School attendance and retention

- 5.19 In 2003 there was an improvement in Indigenous retention rates across most year levels.³⁸ Apparent retention rates for Indigenous students from the beginning of secondary school to both year 10 and year 12 have increased over the last five years.³⁹ For example, at

34 Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 22.

35 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 13.

36 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 13.

37 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 14.

38 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 4.

39 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.3, p. 3.25.

Geraldton previously, on average 5 young men would complete year 12 while in 2005 there were 27 in year 12.⁴⁰

5.20 The Productivity Commission reported that:

- In 2006, 21 per cent of 15 year old Indigenous people were not participating in school education. Only 5 per cent of non-Indigenous 15 year olds were not participating in school education;
- In 2006, Indigenous students were half as likely as non-Indigenous students to continue to year 12;
- In 2006, 31.8 per cent of Indigenous people aged 17 years were participating in school compared to 64.7 per cent of non-Indigenous people of that age; and
- In 2004-05, a smaller proportion (22.1 per cent) of Indigenous people than non-Indigenous people (46.6 per cent) had completed year 12.⁴¹

5.21 Retention rates are still an issue in secondary education but the trend is encouraging in some areas. School retention is underpinned by 'ownership, sense of pride and identity, kids aspiring, parents aspiring with kids, feeling part of the social and economic matrix of your community, and using institutions as a pathway'.⁴² Children at school do not know what they want to do.⁴³

5.22 Ms Kylie Bloomfield saw getting the children to attend school as 'a big problem'. In relation to endowment payments, she believes that:

A lot of parents get their money but a lot of it is spent in other ways, some good and some bad ... Why not make sure that that if parents are planning on getting their endowment, they have proof that their kids are going to school.⁴⁴

5.23 The *Dare to Lead* program engages principals to commit to improving educational outcomes through systemic change through improving

40 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 69.

41 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.3, pp. 3.20, 3.24.

42 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 13.

43 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 7.

44 Ms Kylie Bloomfield, Guide, Alice Springs Desert Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 74.

- literacy and completion rates and revising their curricula and school programmes to develop an understanding of Indigenous culture.⁴⁵
- 5.24 The characteristics of highly effective schools include strong and effective school leaders; learning as the central purpose of the school; teachers who are well trained; strong school culture; parent and community involvement; and well developed systems to monitor and evaluate performance.⁴⁶
- 5.25 The concept of schools as community centres also has the advantages of linking the school with the community, role models for students and provision of local employment and support for the local economy, the development of individual self-esteem and career paths for Indigenous people. There would be greater co-ordination of effort and more effective educational and support programs if the pre-schools, community nurse and other community support personnel were attached to the local school.⁴⁷
- 5.26 Clontarf College begin working with primary school children. There is an opportunity to present them with the normal pathway in terms of education to employment and the range of opportunities that education opens up.⁴⁸ The example was given of the Argyle agreement under which students continuing until year 10:
- ... are guaranteed a trial on the mine in three different roles. If they prove to be successful in one of those careers then they are picked up and employed by the industry. If they go to year 12 then they are guaranteed a job, whatever form that job might take. It will be as senior a job as that person is interested in and capable of doing. They will continue to mentor them and build them through that process.⁴⁹
- 5.27 There are also homework centres for primary and high school students.⁵⁰ The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation provides an after school program designed to foster secondary education to year 12.⁵¹ This program recognises the different learning approaches of

45 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 6.

46 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 6.

47 Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 1.

48 Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 70.

49 Ms Melanie Stutsel, Director, Environmental and Social Policy, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 12.

50 Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 22.

51 South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Submission No. 89*, p. 2.

Aboriginal children and is designed to increase literacy, numeracy and study skills.⁵²

Post secondary education

5.28 The Productivity Commission reported that:

- There has been an increase in the proportion of Indigenous people participating in post secondary education;
- The proportion of Indigenous people with a qualification of certificate level 3 or above increased from 8.3 per cent in 1994 to 20.8 per cent in 2004-05
- In 2004-05, non-Indigenous people were more than twice as likely as Indigenous people to have completed a post secondary qualification of certificate level 3 or above; and
- Higher education success rates (between 2001 and 2004) and TAFE pass rates (between 2002 and 2005) increased for Indigenous students.⁵³

Postsecondary numbers have also risen. Of particular note is the increase in the number of Indigenous new apprenticeships from 6,260 in 2001 to 10,100 in 2004, an increase of 61 per cent. The number of Indigenous students in the vocational education and training system in 2003 was 58,087. As a percentage of all students in VET, that had increased from 3.1 per cent to 3.4 per cent in 2003. Indigenous higher education numbers have also risen, from 8,661 in 2001 to 8,895 in 2004, and the percentage of Indigenous higher education students studying at bachelor level or above rose from 67.4 per cent to 76.4 per cent.⁵⁴

5.29 Clontarf College commented that one of the advantages is that by remaining at school until year 12 enables these young people to 'mature enormously'.⁵⁵ The Clontarf Foundation is a non-profit organisation established to mentor boys, to develop their self esteem

52 South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Submission No. 89*, p. 2.

53 Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.3, p. 3.30.

54 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 36.

55 Mr Craig Brierty, Project manager, Clontarf Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 69.

and support their progression in the school environment by taking them out of a destructive environment.⁵⁶

They want to go out and live more and be able to do other things, but they do not know what. That is half the problem: they just do not know what is out there.⁵⁷

- 5.30 There are a number of other initiatives aimed at increasing school attendance such as the 'no school, no pool' approach, nutritional programs such as providing breakfast, encouraging the presence of Indigenous Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers or parents in the classroom, providing communities with buses, schools becoming more welcoming places and curricula being more culturally inclusive.⁵⁸ Another successful program is Crocfest which assists with school retention as it attracts them to stay at school and is a long-term training program.⁵⁹
- 5.31 Other suggestions include for remote communities which have primary school facilities, that one classroom be allocated to a high school teacher. This would negate the need for young people to leave their communities to get a secondary education.⁶⁰ There has been a great deal of publicity and discussion about policies to increase school attendance levels. The Committee would like to see appropriate consultation with each of the school communities to determine the best policy approach for each area.

Recommendation 7

- 5.32 **The Committee recommends that given the importance of education to future employment possibilities, the Government consider requests from Indigenous communities in relation to their preferred options for stronger incentives to encourage school attendance.**

56 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 3.

57 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 17.

58 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, pp. 41-42.

59 Mr Mark Blackburn, Director, Corporate and Technical Services, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 24.

60 Queensland Indigenous Local Government Association, *Submission No. 81*, p. 2.

Parental involvement

5.33 Mr William Muir attributed the lack of attraction of education to Aboriginal people to not providing an education for the parents and grandparents who are role models for young people.⁶¹ Evidence to the Committee stressed the need to get parents and families more involved to improve educational levels.⁶² Parents need to be convinced that there are benefits in children going to school.⁶³ In families where there have been generations of unemployment, the parents may not be aware of the career options for their children.⁶⁴

You have got to work with the parents. The parents have to want their kids at school, and the parents have to get their kids fed and dressed for school. The parents are the key.⁶⁵

5.34 The *Parent School Partnership Initiative* aims to improve school attendance, literacy and numeracy outcomes, and increased retention.⁶⁶ This is part of the *Whole of School Intervention Strategy* which encourages parents, communities and schools to partner in strategies to overcome local barriers affecting Indigenous educational outcomes.⁶⁷

5.35 Rio Tinto believes that it is important to present to students positive employment options at the end of their schooling and every six months meets with the student and their parents to see how they are tracking to achieve that outcome.⁶⁸

61 Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council (New South Wales) Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 19.

62 Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 22; see also Miss Jenny McGuire and Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 43.

63 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 37.

64 Ms Bernice Kelly, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 17.

65 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 41. See also Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, pp. 43-44; Mr Ray Hansen, Chairperson and Founder, Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 58.

66 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 8.

67 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 8.

68 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 36.

Aspirations

- 5.36 Ms Joy Wii believes that students at the end of primary school need to know about vocational matters and work experience as they have left by years 8 and 9.⁶⁹ The National Tertiary Education Union also referred to the low achievement rates in years 11 and 12 generally and made the point that strategies should target the high drop out rates in years 8 and 9.⁷⁰ Young Indigenous people can also see little point in remaining at school when they see older children who have attained their certificate ending up on CDEP anyway.⁷¹

Progression through school

- 5.37 Concern was expressed that Indigenous children are able to proceed through school on the basis of their age rather than what they have learnt.⁷² Children are facing a brick wall if they are getting to years 10 and 11 without being able to read or write.⁷³ The point was made that the education system should be accountable for their outcomes because those trying to get employment for these youngsters are accountable for their outcomes.⁷⁴

Indigenous tutors

- 5.38 Ms Lynda Ballantyne suggested that employing Indigenous people in schools provides an Indigenous role model and is particularly important. Indigenous adults are seen to value education while providing assistance to the teacher and acting as an interpreter.⁷⁵
- 5.39 In the past Indigenous tutors in classrooms have played a key role in assisting students.⁷⁶ Aboriginal Aides in schools led to many

69 Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning and Development Officer, Cairns City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, pp. 16-17.

70 Mr Joel Wright, Indigenous Officer, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 28.

71 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 4.

72 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 3.

73 Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 44. See also Ms Libby Morgan, Indigenous Employment Centre Manager, Cairns Regional Community Development and Employment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 12.

74 Ms Libby Morgan, Indigenous Employment Centre Manager, Cairns Regional Community Development and Employment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 12.

75 Ms Linda Ballantyne, *Submission No. 112*, p. 2.

76 Ms Bernice Kelly, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 18.

undertaking further training such as teaching.⁷⁷ The *In-Class Tuition Evaluation* Report found the trial had impacted positively on Indigenous students achievement in literacy and numeracy and there was increased attendance.⁷⁸ The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme assists Indigenous students meet the national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.⁷⁹

- 5.40 Throughout this Chapter a number of possible improvements to educational outcomes for Indigenous students have been referred to. The Committee strongly urges the Government to consider all possible enhancements to existing and new approaches that could have a potential impact positively on Indigenous educational outcomes.

Recommendation 8

- 5.41 **The Committee recommends that the Federal Government evaluate and fund a range of options to improve educational outcomes including but not limited to, Indigenous teaching aides, tutors and individualised learning plans.**

Transition to employment

- 5.42 Young people need to see a future in potential employment and there needs to be a smooth transition between school and the workforce. Kids in years 7 and 8 leave school because they believe they will be unemployed when they finish.⁸⁰ Pilbara Iron highlighted that the time between leaving school and moving into employment is when young people become disengaged with school and work.⁸¹
- 5.43 The challenge is to ensure that those completing their schooling do not enter the unemployment situation.⁸² To maximise the investment in education and employment programs, there needs to be a smooth

77 Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 1.

78 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, pp. 7-8.

79 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 8.

80 Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 73.

81 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 20.

82 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 3.

transition between the two.⁸³ Young people need to be connected with the work force as soon as they leave school so they do not fall off the rails.⁸⁴

5.44 This can be achieved through partnerships between the schools, colleges, training providers, businesses and community groups.⁸⁵ Initiatives in Tasmania include the *Guaranteeing Futures* program to facilitate successful transitions from school to independent adulthood and the *oana mallacka* plan to increase access to vocational education for Aboriginal people.⁸⁶

5.45 East Kimberley Job Training emphasised the importance of still being there to assist with the transition to the next job:

If we lose them after they have got into that first job, that whole investment that we have spent – which can be extremely expensive – is out the window. It is gone. It is another transition that we have not managed.⁸⁷

5.46 A program in Shepparton that introduced students to business and industry and demystified this created those links.⁸⁸

Unfortunately, employment is still not what you know but who you know ... If you can do this, this and this, here's the employer that can give you a job.⁸⁹

Financial issues

5.47 Disruption of education as a result of poverty is one of the factors impacting on educational attainment.⁹⁰ Students from low socio-economic backgrounds have been shown to be more sensitive to changes in the cost of education.⁹¹

83 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 4.

84 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 91.

85 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, p. 4.

86 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 113*, pp. 4-5.

87 Mr Murray Coates, General Manager, East Kimberley Job Pathways, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 11.

88 Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 74.

89 Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 77-78.

90 Department of Health and Ageing, *Submission No. 35*, p. 2 citing the report on *Reasons why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students enter the Health Workforce*.

91 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 29.

- 5.48 The Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) believes that support for all levels from preschool to tertiary studies is important.⁹² For example, through scholarships provided by the AEC which target some students at risk, they are getting 70-75 per cent retention rates.⁹³ One of the main enablers to the successful completion of VET and higher education program is financial support.⁹⁴
- 5.49 There was a call for a revision of the Abstudy and HECS arrangements if it is to encourage young Aboriginal people to remain in the educational system.⁹⁵ Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Inc believes that the higher levels of income on CDEP compared to Abstudy or Austudy may be a disincentive to continuing education.⁹⁶ On the other hand, Tangentyere Council has not found that young people in Alice Springs leave school to join the CDEP:
- On the contrary, young people who commence CDEP have usually been out of school for several years, even if they are still teenagers. These young people often have literacy and numeracy problems as a consequence, to the extent that they are likely to be excluded from the wider job market without substantial assistance in this area.⁹⁷
- 5.50 The Central Land Council stressed the need for money management information to be available at the commencement of employment.⁹⁸ The wages received by Indigenous people appear to be a lot of money and they may leave after one or two pays. Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park have attempted to provide full time positions so that there is enough money to change the way that they live and to develop an addiction to a pay cheque.⁹⁹ Desert Park set up a second

92 Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council (New South Wales) Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 17.

93 Mr William Muir, Vice President, Aboriginal Education Council (New South Wales) Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 26.

94 Department of Health and Ageing, *Submission No. 35*, p. 2 citing the report on *Reasons why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students enter the Health Workforce*.

95 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 93; New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, pp. 4-5.

96 Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Inc, *Submission No. 101*, p. 5.

97 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 13.

98 Mr Harold Howard, Employment Unit, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 57.

99 Mr Don Freeman, Managing Director, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 6.

bank account for apprentices to avoid the inevitable sharing of income.¹⁰⁰

- 5.51 Greater financial literacy would benefit Indigenous people who previously could not manage their own affairs.¹⁰¹ Indigenous people working in the financial sector gain valuable skills to transfer to their communities. The Australian Bankers Association are working with Reconciliation Australia to increase financial literacy and there is access to bank services as well.¹⁰² The Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd is also committed to improving financial literacy in Indigenous communities and supporting Indigenous enterprise through micro-financing initiatives.¹⁰³

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

*... the illiterate person of the 21st century will not be someone who cannot read or write; it will be someone who is unable to learn, unlearn and relearn.*¹⁰⁴

- 5.52 There have been a number of positive trends in VET training including an increase in the percentage of Indigenous people attending VET in the last few years, the number of new Indigenous Apprenticeships and the number of Indigenous people undertaking AQF Certificate III and IV, the increase in completion rates and a decrease in the failure rates.¹⁰⁵
- 5.53 Access to VET courses that lead to industry positions is critical to improving Indigenous jobseekers prospects of better careers, however, some do not meet entry-level requirements for industry.¹⁰⁶ The VET system needs to adapt to keep pace with the changing labour market and demographics of the Indigenous communities.¹⁰⁷
- 5.54 The levels of training wages means that young people are leaving apprenticeships and traineeships to meet the cost of living. The point

100 Mrs Jodie Clarkson, Guide Manager, Alice Springs Desert Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 75.

101 Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 6.

102 Mr Dan O'Brien, Head, Government Relations, Australia, National Australia Bank, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 49.

103 Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, *Submission No. 71*, p. 2.

104 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 43.

105 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, pp. 10-12; see also Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 Indigenous Report*, 1 June 2007, Sect 3.4, p. 3.31.

106 See Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, pp. 1, 3.

107 See Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 1.

was made that there are a range of government programs and assistance for families on low incomes. Under the whole-of-government approach, the Committee believes that it is important that those working on a training wages are aware of the assistance available.

- 5.55 There is room for improvement in the course completion rates, employment outcomes for Indigenous students and an increase in the number of Indigenous employees in Government VET systems.¹⁰⁸
- 5.56 The New South Wales Government identified the increase in the 'learning alliances' between industry and the VET sector as the challenge.¹⁰⁹ Vocational Education and Training must deliver industry-based skills to Indigenous jobseekers through more flexible delivery mechanisms and culturally appropriate training.
- 5.57 Rio Tinto has found the funded TAFE system not to be sufficiently flexible to deliver courses as and when they are needed by the mining industry.¹¹⁰ Future Indigenous employment policies need to produce outcomes that link skills development with skill shortages, the aspirations of the jobseekers and employer's needs.¹¹¹
- 5.58 In the construction industry, Indigenous building apprenticeships need some flexibility.¹¹² For instance, the Indigenous apprentices often find the wages too low to support themselves and their families and the need for employers to provide supervision and training that may limit productivity in the first years of the apprenticeships. There is scope for government funding assistance to offset employer costs and provide apprentices with a living wage.¹¹³
- 5.59 While it is appreciated that it is necessary to increase the skills levels to gain a higher income, young people are leaving apprenticeships and traineeships because they can earn more money working on the weekend and after school on the supermarket checkout.¹¹⁴ The cost of

108 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 12.

109 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 24.

110 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 35; Rio Tinto, *Submission No. 80*, p. 4.

111 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 1.

112 For example see *Northern Territory News*, 'Program Faces probe', 31 March 2006, p. 4.

113 Tangentyere Council, *Supplementary Submission 69a*, p. 2; Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, pp. 27-28.

114 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 4; Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 5.

living and the need for a car when transport is a problem are important.¹¹⁵

- 5.60 One initiative is the *Partners in a learning culture – the Way Forward*, a nationally agreed strategy to improve training opportunities and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians in Vocational Education and Training. The blueprint has six areas of priority: building the capacity of the VET sector through Indigenous involvement; creating more pathways for Indigenous Australians from school to training and employment; improving funding frameworks; ensuring the development of culturally appropriate products and delivery; links to employment; and growing VET sector partnerships.

Training

*They could be the best-trained people in Australia, but they are continually going back to college and there are no employment outcomes because they have not got the experience. It is a catch-22 situation.*¹¹⁶

- 5.61 Regionally relevant skills are required for the current ‘demand driven’ environment.

Training should not be provided just to increase participation rates. It is essential to focus on improving the outcomes of Indigenous people in training through courses structured to meet the needs and aspirations of their communities. It must be relevant to the local labour market.¹¹⁷

- 5.62 There is a heavy training component in the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program in Queensland which has seen 91 000 people in jobs since 1998 and 12 per cent of participants are Indigenous.¹¹⁸ In Queensland there has been an increase in the number of Indigenous people in training and education and they are

115 See Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 4, Mr Douglas Taylor, Acting T2 Specialist Guide (Cross Cultural), Alice Spring Desert Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 68.

116 Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 40.

117 Commonwealth Grants Commission, 2001, *Report on Indigenous Funding 2001*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 227.

118 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, pp. 3-4.

achieving at only slightly under the non-Indigenous rate.¹¹⁹ However, the increase in numbers is not as much as hoped for and many of these are in Certificate I and II courses.¹²⁰

- 5.63 The success of the training programs at the Adelaide City Council reflects the endorsement by the Executive Management Team, mentoring by an Aboriginal person, and a close working relationship between the trainee, mentor, team leaders and managers, cultural awareness training for other staff and links between the Reconciliation Officer, Reconciliation Committee, mentor, Human Resources Business Unit and other Business Units across Council.¹²¹
- 5.64 A number of companies are working collaboratively so that a small number of companies do not provide all the training effort while others use chequebook recruitment.¹²²
- 5.65 The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations commented on giving people the basic requirements to get them into a job and then training within the job to improve outcomes through a more flexible training approach.¹²³
- 5.66 Tangentyere Council emphasised that:
- ... training that works best has an emphasis on practical, skills based learning; it occurs in groups, so there is group support and encouragement; the trainer-instructor is Indigenous or has plenty of experience working with Indigenous people; it includes accreditation as part of the process and outcomes; and it builds on learning as part of the project or a contract so that participants learn the requirements of budgets, deadlines and quality control.¹²⁴

119 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 3.

120 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 3.

121 Adelaide City Council, *Submission No. 65*, p. 2.

122 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 33.

123 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 12.

124 Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 27.

- 5.67 Offering traineeships to Indigenous people was not without its challenges. The City of Port Phillip are reviewing their policy of having trainees because of the level of support required:
- I found that it was difficult for business units to support Indigenous trainees and to also provide the level of commitment required to nurture and grow a person into a job-ready candidate from relatively no employment experience or qualifications.¹²⁵
- 5.68 One of the important points raised in evidence was the temptation to overload successful Indigenous businesses with trainees which may impact heavily on their financial viability. Many businesses do not have Indigenous skills development as a priority because of the impact on their bottom line.¹²⁶
- 5.69 The Regional Environmental Employment Program emphasises practical employment related activity more than the written word.¹²⁷ The Larrakia Development Corporation noted that they provide people with training once they are employed:
- We are not interested in training. Training comes once you are employed. Kelvin has about 50 or 60 of the most trained unemployed blackfellas you will ever find out at Karawa Park. We get them jobs then we train them.¹²⁸
- 5.70 Mr Lester Davis made the point that:
- ... we have always looked to try and make one dollar do two jobs. So if you get a federal road grant, you turn it into a training program; you build the roads, people learn the skills and acquire outcomes. If you have it around a mine site, you tag it to employment outcomes, or something tangible that serves as a model.¹²⁹
- 5.71 The Blacktown City Council recruited six AFL trainees; three Indigenous positions and three generalist traineeships. Due to the

125 Mr Mikael Smith, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Multicultural Policy and Programs, City of Port Phillip Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 52.

126 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 25.

127 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 63.

128 Mr Gregory Constantine, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Development Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 72.

129 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 35.

overwhelming number of applications for the generalist positions, two of these were given to Indigenous people.¹³⁰

- 5.72 Dr Dennis Foley commented on the number of Caucasians who are willing to provide training in industry skills to Indigenous people.¹³¹ If tradespeople retiring in urban areas could be encouraged to train Indigenous youths in industry skills it could be of assistance.¹³² Indigenous Community Volunteers have completed 450 projects to transfer skills to Indigenous people since September 2001.¹³³ The Committee commends this important contribution to skills transfer.

Training and distance

- 5.73 Distance is certainly an issue when it comes to accessing training. Face to face training is an important part of the way Indigenous people learn.¹³⁴ Trainees and apprentices have to travel to TAFE colleges even when there are sufficient numbers to warrant flexible delivery.¹³⁵ The Committee was also told that Indigenous trainees in the Kimberley cannot undertake their training in the nearest facility because it is in the Northern Territory.¹³⁶
- 5.74 The cost of training can be higher in remote areas and this can limit 'user's choice' as there are not the same opportunities for competitive tendering for training.¹³⁷ The Bloodwood Tree Association believes that additional training, even on a 'fly in fly out' basis could increase community capacity building to facilitate training.¹³⁸ The example was given of the Kooljaman resort where a tutor is travelling 3.5 hours to provide training to the four Indigenous people working at the resort.¹³⁹

130 Ms Lisa Giacomelli, Manager, Community Development, Blacktown City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 28.

131 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, p. 8.

132 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 16 October 2006, p. 9.

133 Mr Joseph Elu, Co-Chair, Indigenous Community Volunteers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2006, p. 1.

134 Mr Ronald Burns, Training Adviser, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 3.

135 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

136 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

137 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

138 Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Submission No. 34*, p. 3.

139 Mr Ronald Burns, Training Adviser, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 3.

- 5.75 Ms Bain from the Central Land Council commented on the need for training on their own country for land management programs.¹⁴⁰ People with no skills are moving into larger centres and this can have other associated problems.¹⁴¹

Training flexibility

- 5.76 There was a call for more flexible delivery of training programs. Face to face training is an important part of the way Indigenous people learn.¹⁴² The points raised included:
- the need for trainees and apprentices to travel to TAFE colleges even when there are sufficient numbers to warrant flexible delivery;¹⁴³
 - a preference to undertake their training in the nearest facility even if it is in another jurisdiction;¹⁴⁴
 - the higher cost of training in remote areas can limit 'user's choice';¹⁴⁵
 - there was a call for additional training, even if it is on a fly in fly out basis;¹⁴⁶
 - the TAFE system operates on the school year and does not take into account the wet and dry seasons which determine when people are based in their communities or on site;¹⁴⁷ and
 - school based apprenticeships should accept a greater range of vocations.¹⁴⁸

Funding arrangements

- 5.77 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) called for a 'demand driven' approach to funding priorities which would

140 Ms Tina Bain, Regional Land Management Coordinator, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 55.

141 Mr Greg Constantine, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Development Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 72.

142 Mr Ronald Burns, Training Adviser, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 3.

143 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

144 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

145 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

146 Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Submission No. 34*, p. 3.

147 Rio Tinto, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

148 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 5.

provide incentives for training providers to address the needs of employers and encourage competition between training providers.¹⁴⁹ The current approach of having government authorities determining training needs has limited the flexibility and capacity for initiatives to meet the needs of Indigenous clients.¹⁵⁰

The funding priorities set by Governments needs to be flexible enough to meet the ever changing needs of Indigenous participants and the ability to respond to industry demands in locations with significant numbers of Indigenous jobseekers.¹⁵¹

- 5.78 In situations where accredited training is not available locally, funding is not available to send employees interstate.¹⁵² The current funding arrangements do not have sufficient flexibility to address some particular training requirements.¹⁵³ CAAMA called for flexible training programs with specified milestones and outcomes to be achieved to ensure accountability.¹⁵⁴
- 5.79 Adelaide City Council believes that some traineeships should be funded for three years as this would allow the integration and successful transition to full time employment.¹⁵⁵ Funding for a three year traineeship is now difficult because it has become 'so bitsy' that it just becomes impossible to try to piece together.¹⁵⁶ Apprenticeships must offer structured accredited training for sufficient time to allow the completion of the qualification.¹⁵⁷
- 5.80 The supplementary funding provided by the Australian Government is to target specific interventions to accelerate Indigenous students' learning outcomes.¹⁵⁸ Ms Linda Ballantyne added that:

Schools/TAFE would need extra funding to bring in trainers eg English Language trainers, teachers aide trainers etc. This might seem a lot of money on top of the 'new' salaries but when weighed up against dole payments, community

149 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

150 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

151 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

152 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 4.

153 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 4.

154 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, pp. 4-5.

155 Adelaide City Council, *Submission No. 65*, p. 2.

156 Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 2.

157 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 13.

158 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 2.

diversionary programs, community renewal programs, extra policing, violence and vandalism and all other health and welfare issues ... the cost is not that high.¹⁵⁹

- 5.81 On example of success in this approach is Tangentyere Constructions which found the availability of three year funding for the building apprentices program enables them to complete their Certificate III in General Construction.¹⁶⁰
- 5.82 The Committee remains concerned that sufficient strategies have not been developed to enable greater continuity of funding for programs and projects and assurance that future funding will be available if projects successfully meet the terms set out in each agreement.

Training incentives

- 5.83 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation stressed the point that the training incentives may be adequate in normal circumstances but training for Indigenous people can require extra work, backfill wages and study resources.¹⁶¹ They suggested that training and employment criteria could be incorporated in agreements as part of the mutual obligation clause. The Aboriginal organisation could outline the performance indicators and policy backup in return for an agreed funding increase.¹⁶² A clear statement of organisational responsibilities is an important part of the mutual obligations and there needs to be accountability.¹⁶³ CAAMA supported an approach to encourage education/training:

The incentive for providers to pursue education or training outcomes could be strengthened through linking the education/training outcome fee to milestones reflecting retention in and completion of education or training.¹⁶⁴

The need for formal qualifications

- 5.84 It was suggested that in some situations a more flexible approach to qualifications could be appropriate. Indigenous Business Australia commented that 'many of the existing training packages are above the

159 Ms Linda Ballantyne, *Submission No. 112*, p. 4.

160 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 6.

161 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 5; See also Melbourne and Adelaide transcripts.

162 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 6.

163 Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 31*, p. 6.

164 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 6.

level required by Indigenous learners'.¹⁶⁵ TAFE courses can provide non-accredited training which builds individual and community capacity but then there is a need to encourage higher qualifications and skills that are competitive in the mainstream labour market.¹⁶⁶ The point was made that at the end of the day, people do not get jobs because they have qualifications, they get jobs because they have skills.¹⁶⁷ Mr Anthony Greer suggested that one such way could be the recognition of prior learning.¹⁶⁸

- 5.85 There are precedents. In Western Australia there is a move to reduce carpentry apprenticeships to two years allowing people to specialise in fields such as housing.¹⁶⁹ The Queensland Government offered an essential services traineeship, however few people participated.¹⁷⁰ Because of the complexity, however, not all trades will have this type of option. Some licenses are necessary for occupational health and safety skills need to be kept up to date and these qualifications need to be the same standard state wide.¹⁷¹

Cadetships

- 5.86 There was significant support for the Aboriginal Cadet Scheme. The cadet scheme enables Indigenous Australians to be employed by government departments and gain relevant experience while completing their university studies. This provides the cadet with practical experience, the government agency with a valuable resource and the opportunity for non-Indigenous employees to work along side the cadet.¹⁷² Flinders University also has an Indigenous Cadetship program in conjunction with the Cooperative Research

165 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission 104*, p. 25.

166 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 9.

167 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 9.

168 Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 45.

169 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 37.

170 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 8.

171 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 8.

172 Dr Jocelyne Scutt, *Submission No. 61*, pp. 2-3.

Centre for Aboriginal Health for a student to complete a Bachelor in Environmental Health on a full-time basis.¹⁷³

- 5.87 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry acknowledges the success of the program for university studies and would like to see the Cadetship program extended to trade qualifications particularly in industries that are experiencing skills shortages.¹⁷⁴ Rio Tinto has employed 23 cadets in areas such as law, mining engineering, environmental science, business administration and accounting.¹⁷⁵ Mr Jack Pearson also suggested that Indigenous apprentices have the opportunity to include a mobility program as part of their trade training and commented on the advantages of a national TAFE system.¹⁷⁶
- 5.88 The Committee would like to see the National Indigenous Cadet Scheme expanded as this appears to be an effective way of achieving a long-term increase in the number of qualified Indigenous staff across the public service.

Recommendation 9

- 5.89 **The Committee recommends that the Government:**
- **review the National Indigenous Cadet Scheme to identify the most productive avenues for its expansion;**
 - **actively promote cadetships to Indigenous students at the matriculation level as a means of continuing their education; and**
 - **provide public service rotational opportunities for Indigenous cadets in Indigenous organisations and in the private sector.**
- 5.90 The WELL program and the STEP programs are employment entry level programs and in some situations there is now a need for management cadet assistance or marketing cadets. It may need a

173 Flinders University, *Submission No. 70*, p. 2.

174 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

175 Rio Tinto, *Submission No. 80*, p. 8.

176 Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 5.

different type of program to support those wishing to move up within an organisation.¹⁷⁷

Rotational opportunities

- 5.91 Mr Jack Pearson argued strongly for a mechanism that provided an opportunity for Indigenous people working in Aboriginal organisations to be able to spend some time in government departments to ensure that young leaders understood the way government processes work, how to put in funding applications and which agencies to contact.¹⁷⁸ The model envisioned would be a merit based process which enabled some rotations through portfolios with responsibility for Indigenous affairs similar to the graduate program currently in the Australian Public Service.¹⁷⁹
- 5.92 The Committee believes that the establishment of the Indigenous Coordination Centres in regional areas allows additional opportunities that would enable the approach to be considered.

Recommendation 10

- 5.93 **The Committee recommends that the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination develop a model which allows Indigenous employees of non-government organisations to experience work within the public sector.**

Concluding comments

- 5.94 Education is clearly the key to future Indigenous employment opportunities. Average education levels of Indigenous people remain below the achievements of the non-Indigenous population. There have been a number of initiatives introduced in government policies recently and the success and sustainability of these initiatives remains to be seen.

177 Mr Don Freeman, Managing Director, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 22.

178 Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, pp. 1-2; Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 4.

179 Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, pp. 1-2.

- 5.95 The Committee notes the *Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008* report of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs released last year.¹⁸⁰ The Committee supports the suggested directions outlined in the report and in particular would like to see steps taken to 'ensure that schools, in partnership with parents/ caregivers, deliver personalised learning to all Indigenous students that includes targets against key learning outcomes and incorporates family involvement strategies'.¹⁸¹ The Committee believes that this approach has already been demonstrated as best practice by industry.
- 5.96 Unless governments can meet this challenge, future Indigenous employment cannot hope to meet its true potential. The national skills shortage provides Australia with an opportunity to provide economic independence for the majority of Indigenous people.
- The clear role of educators is to prepare children for the future, not the past. The future is an economic one and not necessarily in a remote community. The change in direction will attract reactionary criticism from those whose careers are based on extracting rents from the current regime. The criticism should be expected as a sign that the new direction is the right direction. The new policy direction must not apply different standards to Aboriginal children. It must fundamentally treat Aboriginal children as children.¹⁸²
- 5.97 Literacy and numeracy skills are essential for most employment options and are important for occupational health and safety requirements in many jobs. Some progress has been made in work readiness programs. There is also considerable work being done to increase the relevance and effectiveness of vocational education and training programs.

180 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, *Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008*, Prepared by the AESOC Senior Officials Working Party on Indigenous Education, July 2006.

181 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, *Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008*, Prepared by the AESOC Senior Officials Working Party on Indigenous Education, July 2006, p. 10.

182 Hon Dr Gary Johns, *Aboriginal Education: Remote Schools and the Real Economy*, The Menzies Research Centre Ltd, May 2006, p. 26.

The impediments

Education

- 6.1 Education is not only an issue for remote areas as the lack of education was also a key issue for Indigenous urban youths in Alice Springs:

... not necessarily because it is not available to them but because there are a lot of other factors in their life, such as their culture and peer pressure, which is a big one, which stop Aboriginal kids from continuing on at school. There are a lot of factors that cause them to leave school early and be virtually unemployable.¹

- 6.2 There is a lack of awareness within communities as to where an education can take people.² Aboriginal children have a problem linking education with employment outcomes and a lot are leaving in year 9.³ The Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation found the key to be an understanding of the need to have numeracy and literacy skills.⁴

1 Mayor Fran Kilgariff, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 12.

2 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 35; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5

3 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 36.

4 Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 25*, p. 2.

Numeracy and literacy

- 6.3 The fundamental issue that was raised throughout this inquiry was the frustration of employers attempting to meet targets and skills shortages and the need to provide literacy and numeracy training for potential Indigenous employees.⁵ Without basic numeracy and literacy skills there are basic occupational health and safety issues if people are unable to read warning signs.⁶
- 6.4 It is unreasonable to expect the private sector to pay for systemic literacy issues.⁷ Why does industry have to pay twice, through taxes for education and through direct education for their employees? Due to poor literacy levels, Argyle Diamonds has paid for Indigenous employees to undertake a literacy program at the local TAFE at a cost of \$1 300 per person.⁸ Further, Rio Tinto has found that publicly funded training is 'neither timely nor targeted'.⁹
- 6.5 The Federal Government is working on numeracy and literacy skills for employment which will enable employees to read signs in the workplace.¹⁰ There is a need for adult literacy training in a way suited to Aboriginal people.¹¹ The Workplace English Language and Literacy programme integrates this training with the vocational training to meet their employment and training needs.¹²

A leg-up

- 6.6 Young Indigenous people should not be ignored until they are at risk. Young Indigenous people with potential may also benefit from appropriate support which should be given not only to those who are

5 See also Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources, Voyagers Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 10-11; Voyages, *Submission No. 52*, p. 2; Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 26; Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 38.

6 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 38; Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 16.

7 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, pp. 4, 16.

8 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 16.

9 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 16.

10 Mr Bob Harvey, Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 5.

11 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 26.

12 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 13.

borderline but also to the talented and gifted.¹³ Appropriate assistance should be available to ensure they are able to reach their full potential. Rewards that acknowledge achievements could be beneficial:

One of the things I notice in a lot in western New South Wales is that it is a kid who has played up who gets the trip to Sydney, because we are trying to correct their behaviour. The kids who have not played up seem to get ignored in Aboriginal communities. I have seen a lot of young Aboriginal kids who are doing quite well. They get to a certain stage and they need that little bit of a leg-up, a little bit more support, but, because they have seen the ones playing up getting the trips, the culture care and things like that, they fall over as well. We are losing those types of kids. We need to start focusing on how we can encourage kids who are going to perform and do better.¹⁴

- 6.7 Funding is aimed at the long-term unemployed and assistance should be available to those that may need support to change their career paths.¹⁵ For those in employment there needs to be career development and support.¹⁶ Mentoring and support may enable people who make it anyway to get there sooner and be less angry, less frustrated and have a different outlook on non-Indigenous people.¹⁷

Labour Market Programs

- 6.8 Participation in and completion of Labour Market Programs has been found to lead to better employment outcomes for Indigenous jobseekers.¹⁸ There was also some evidence that the involvement of Indigenous people in service delivery may be beneficial and that there

13 Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Director, Operations, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 3.

14 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, pp. 36-37.

15 Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Director, Operations, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 27.

16 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 44.

17 Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Director, Operations, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 12.

18 Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 3 citing Hunter B, Gray M and Chapman B, 2000, *An analysis of data from the longitudinal Survey of ATSO Job Seekers: Labour Market Programs for Indigenous Australians*, Report to the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, CAEPR, ANU.

were better completion rates if the training component was in the form of a series of shorter accredited courses.¹⁹

- 6.9 There were varying opinions on the effectiveness of wage subsidies in increasing Indigenous employment. The Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research found that wage subsidies have been the most effective form of assistance in improving employment outcomes.²⁰ Wage subsidies have been helpful as they allow the employer to spend time training the employee.²¹ The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry believes that for most employers, financial assistance is secondary to the need to find skilled staff to fill the vacancy and potential Indigenous employees are seen as another resource.²²
- 6.10 The Aboriginal Employment Strategy also argued that wage subsidies lower the self-esteem of the employee and that they want businesses to employ Indigenous people for the right reasons.²³
- People just want to be respected, including Aboriginal people.²⁴
- 6.11 People with special needs may require substantial long-term assistance to become work ready.²⁵ The Great Southern Development Commission also called for Indigenous employment subsidies to be available for a longer period as trainees often take three years training at TAFE to be job ready.²⁶ In situations where a young Indigenous person has had a number of issues in their life, it may take an 18 months or 2 year program to have a successful outcome. This longer

19 Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, pp. 3-4.

20 Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 3.

21 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 9.

22 Mr Dean O'Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 4.

23 Mr Richard Estens, Chairman, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 20; See also Mr Richard Estens *Imagine the Future by Learning from the Past – Aboriginal Employment Strategy: Working together*, Speech to the 2005 Communities in Control Conference convened by Our Community and Centacare Catholic Family Services, June 2005, p. 12; Mrs Cathy Duncan, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2003, Inquiry into Capacity Building in Indigenous communities, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, p. 1386.

24 Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Submission No. 40*, p. 1.

25 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 12.

26 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 4. See also Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 12.

timeframe is not seen as getting runs on the board quickly and is therefore not seen as politically acceptable.²⁷

Indigenous specific employment

6.12 The major challenges to be addressed include the reluctance of companies to provide real jobs, the lack of informed, comprehensive, and appropriate approaches to job placements and a lack of resources to prepare and implement a major project strategy.²⁸ Rio Tinto believes that Indigenous employment must be firmly embedded in the business and not just 'bolted on'.²⁹

6.13 Mrs Shaw from the Institute for Aboriginal Development commented that:

We have a policy for the employment of Aboriginal people – and that does not throw out the door the merit principle of having the best person for the job, because ultimately we have a responsibility for outcomes. If you employ an Aboriginal person for their skin colour alone you are doing them a disservice because you are putting them in a situation that they cannot handle and you may knock back their confidence for about another four years.³⁰

6.14 Miss Jane Lawton believes that in creating Indigenous identified positions, it is essential that organisations value their contribution and not just use it as the statistic on Indigenous employees.³¹

... there should be a quota put on public sector Indigenous people in mainstream and that departments should be held accountable in that context rather than in the number of Indigenous people who are employed in identified positions – that is easy to do – and then left to sit there and rot and not be developed and those sorts of things.³²

6.15 It was suggested that in order to achieve greater success in employment outcomes, other improvements should include:

27 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 4.

28 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 7.

29 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 5.

30 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 8.

31 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 61.

32 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 61.

- a better fit of government programs to major projects;
- ensuring skilled people are available;
- adequate time to prepare and place people;
- adequate resources for preparation and implementation and quality information;
- reduced time to obtain DEWR agreement and excessive government administrative compliance; and
- a holistic co-ordinated approach.³³

Community Development Employment Program

- 6.16 CDEP has provided employment for many in regional areas but has not been without issues. The Committee was told that CDEP does not provide clear linkages to mainstream vocational outcomes and this can disadvantage school leavers who do not have incentives to move to full-time employment.³⁴
- 6.17 ACCI argued that the transition to full-time employment from CDEP could be assisted by better links between CDEP, industry and group training organisations and access to industry based skills and nationally accredited training.³⁵ Skills required by industry in remote and regional areas need to be matched to create pathways for Indigenous jobseekers and the ACCI suggested that progress could be made by developing partnerships between industry and the Indigenous Employment Centre to maximise VET funding.³⁶
- 6.18 The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) told the Committee that despite having jobs on 'country' that people have the skills and capacity to undertake, they still lose workers to CDEP and the dole.³⁷ It can be too easy to remain on or return to CDEP and this can work against fulltime employment. The Indigenous Pastoral Project in the Northern Territory has 1200 jobs and cannot fill the positions.³⁸

33 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 7.

34 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 4.

35 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 4.

36 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5.

37 Mr David Galvin, General Manager Indigenous Land Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 48.

38 Mr David Galvin, General Manager, Indigenous Land Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 49.

Disincentives for leaving paid employment were flagged by the ILC as necessary to increase retention levels.³⁹

- 6.19 The Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation told a similar story. Mr Colin Cameron knocked on scores of doors of previous employees but none were willing to return to the radio station:

Listen, mate, why should I go back there and work when I can get the same money here sitting on the veranda with a can in my hand ... CDEP is crushing their incentive.⁴⁰

- 6.20 Many young people remain in CDEP in areas where the mining industry has a demand for employees.⁴¹ There is a skills gap between the long-term unemployed and those required in the mining industry and this is difficult to overcome.⁴² CDEP programs do not adequately prepare participants for mainstream employment.⁴³ Strategies to assist people moving from CDEP to mainstream employment may need to be regionally specific.⁴⁴
- 6.21 The Toor-Rong Aboriginal Corporation CDEP expressed concern at the introduction of the 12 month requirement for CDEP participants and argued that Indigenous young will not be job ready within 12 months.⁴⁵ The model they are working with has a three year program with one year to get them TAFE ready and it is not until Certificate Level 3 that they are job ready.⁴⁶

Conditions of Service

- 6.22 An important point that was raised on a number of occasions throughout this inquiry was the disparity in the terms and conditions of public service employees who reside in the community and those

39 Mr David Galvin, General Manager, Indigenous Land Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 48

40 Mr Colin Cameron, General Manager, Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 July 2006, pp. 3-4.

41 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 14.

42 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 14.

43 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 14; Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 37*, p. 3.

44 Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 6.

45 Mr Perry Wandin, Chairperson, Toor-Rong Aboriginal Corporation Community Development Employment Program, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 51; See also Mr Bob Mahony, Administrator, Community Development Employment Project, and Manager, Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 21 July 2006, p. 8.

46 Mr Shane Charles, Coordinator, Indigenous Learning Pathways Project, Swinburne Technical and Further Education College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 55.

that are recruited elsewhere. One pertinent point was that of housing not being provided for local employees and in some situations transport costs where these are provided for employees recruited from elsewhere.⁴⁷

- 6.23 The Committee believes that a more equitable approach would encourage appropriately qualified Indigenous people to return to their community to take up government positions. This would have a number of additional benefits compared to filling these positions with people from other areas including the income remaining locally and role models.

Recommendation 11

- 6.24 **The Committee recommends that the terms and conditions offered to all Government employees in communities not disadvantage local employees compared to those recruited from elsewhere.**

Lead time

- 6.25 In some circumstances employment requirements are known well in advance. This lead time means that the relevant training can be provided for specific jobs to overcome skills shortages.⁴⁸ It is about industry knowledge and information to recruit people for those positions.⁴⁹ The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy can provide Indigenous people with a list of resource industry skills requirements until 2014.⁵⁰ There will be preliminary training and education for a start up date of 2008.⁵¹

47 Informal discussions, Horn Island, Torres Strait, 16-17 May 2007.

48 Mr Barry King, Manager, Employment and Training Unit, Northern Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 48; Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, pp. 2-7.

49 Mr Murray Coates, General Manager, East Kimberley Job Pathways, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 10.

50 Ms Stephanie Walker, Native Title Officer, South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 27.

51 South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Submission No. 89*, p. 2.

Industry sector views

- 6.26 Skills shortages were the overwhelming concern for the minerals sector, as they are negatively impacting on production levels and expansion opportunities.⁵² Although it is not their preferred option Rio Tinto flagged the possibility of employing skilled migrants if the current demand for suitable employees could not be met.⁵³
- 6.27 Rio Tinto outlined the core issues as:
- a lack of available local Indigenous people with employable skills;
 - potential employees remaining on CDEP and not graduating to paid employment;
 - companies ‘cherry picking’ skilled employees from each other, particularly from the government agencies into the more lucrative mining sector;
 - limited childcare facilities making it difficult for Indigenous women to work;
 - government agencies not providing appropriate or coordinated services, particularly in the area of education:
 - ⇒ poor literacy, with relatively few candidates meeting year eight literacy levels;
 - ⇒ publicly funded training ‘neither timely nor targeted’; and
 - ⇒ limited quality assessment for accredited training certificates; and
 - health services needing to be aligned with employment, to ensure that people are ‘fit for work’ (which includes being ‘drug and alcohol free’ while at work).⁵⁴
- 6.28 In summary, increased mining may be creating employment opportunities but individuals need the skills to participate. Both Rio Tinto and the MCA argued that governments are primarily responsible for social services and they need to ensure that people are ‘work-ready’ and supported to stay in employment.⁵⁵

52 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 1; Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 15; Matilda Minerals Ltd, *Submission No. 67*, p. 2.

53 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 11.

54 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, pp. 14-22.

55 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 3; Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 15.

Work-readiness

6.29 In areas where mining companies operate there is a limited pool of work-ready Indigenous people.⁵⁶ In the Pilbara, Rio Tinto believes that every able-bodied person who wants a job has one but there are many people there who are not work-ready.⁵⁷ The East Kimberley Job Pathways estimated that there are 10 per cent of Indigenous people who are unlikely to work, 50 per cent who are not aware they are interested and 40 per cent who are interested and need job readiness training.⁵⁸ Mr Dick Estens commented that:

... generally about 30% of Aboriginal people move through life fine; and I thought if we could get the middle third grouped up with the top end of the community it would essentially build a mandate to put pressure on the back end of the community to drive the whole community forward.⁵⁹

6.30 The complexity of the task was highlighted by Manguri Employment Services:

Eighty per cent of our job seekers are highly disadvantaged. A significant number, which are not identified by Centrelink, are not job ready and require a lot of personal support. They have multiple barriers. We have heard them all before: educational, social, cultural, health, housing, lack of skills and even down to the point where they have a limited awareness of workplace culture. For the staff, it is a huge challenge to get our people to motivate themselves enough to feel proud and able to actually contest, compete and participate in those environments.⁶⁰

6.31 There are similar issues in other areas. Indigenous people in remote and isolated areas may be hindered from participation in employment because of low levels of numeracy and literacy, currency of skills and

56 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 14.

57 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 33.

58 Mr Murray Coates, General Manager, East Kimberley Job Pathways, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 7.

59 Mr Richard Estens *Imagine the Future by Learning from the Past – Aboriginal Employment Strategy: Working Together*, Speech to the 2005 Communities in Control Conference convened by Our Community and Centacare Catholic Family Services, June 2005, p. 4.

60 Mrs Cheryl Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 2.

work readiness, lack of relevant work experience and low educational attainment.⁶¹

... we found that not many people were work ready for all the reasons that you know: literacy, numeracy, lack of stamina, lack of health, lack of many of the things that we take for granted. These things are often described as cultural, but they are not; they are learned. I am talking about things like regularity, punctuality, sobriety, ability to work in a team, stamina and ability to work long hours. These are learned behaviours. We learn them in our societies and our homes. We of course all grow up in the types of communities where it is taken for granted that you will go to school and you will stay there all day and you will present for all the activities.⁶²

6.32 Those that have been employed have the skills and the need is now to work with Indigenous leaders to develop work readiness in others.⁶³ There are those who do access the opportunities available:

... but then there are the backstreet gang, which I am familiar with. They are my age group now – those who were not too good at school, who fell through the cracks. They are 33 or 34 now. They know that they need to start getting a job because of changes to Centrelink benefits and all the rest of it. They have done 1,001 work readiness type short courses ... Access is one and choice is a second one. The third one is sustainability.⁶⁴

6.33 Mr John Berto from the Northern Land Council referred to the struggles for remote people, particular where there are health issues and low education levels:

It is pretty hard to compare them with their urban brothers and sisters. The standards in urban centres are fairly equal to those of other Australians. It is much easier to get someone job ready if they are in good health and have stable home backgrounds and education levels than it is with someone

61 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

62 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 34-35.

63 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 38.

64 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 48.

who has hardly any of that in place. So the remoteness factor is very difficult to deal with.⁶⁵

- 6.34 Mission Australia Employment Initiatives believes that more time is needed to place long-term unemployed and get them job ready.⁶⁶ People need to adjust to the 'rhythm of employment' in getting to work on time, correctly dressed and ready to start.⁶⁷

Few of the job readiness training programs emphasise team building, effective communication in the workplace and occupational health and safety.⁶⁸

- 6.35 Employers want governments to provide a practical framework and services to better facilitate Indigenous employment outcomes.

We are looking for access to mainstream support services to provide work readiness in a culturally appropriate manner. That will require a fair amount of sensitivity and specific tailoring as the cultural needs and expectations are quite different across communities. We are looking for flexible working arrangements, *a la* the recent industrial reforms. These are very important in terms of the work-life balance, which is quite different for non-Indigenous people. As important as it is for non-Indigenous, it is very important for Indigenous people.⁶⁹

Mobility

- 6.36 Historically Aboriginal people moved when there was a drought or during the rainy season and prior to the 1970s, many Aboriginal people were drovers.⁷⁰ The reality is that mobility can be a feature of the lives of Indigenous Australians, whether by choice – to maintain cultural and kinship links – or necessity. This is not new for Indigenous people. As people develop skills and then options, they

65 Mr John Berto, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Northern Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 44.

66 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 9.

67 Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 37*, p. 2.

68 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 17.

69 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 3.

70 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 33.

will move in and out of communities.⁷¹ Mr Warren Mundine made the point that when considering employment issues:

It is also about mobility – you cannot expect to live in a small community and believe you are going to be employed continuously.⁷²

- 6.37 Mr Larry Kickett commented that in areas such as construction, when the local work is completed, culturally they are reluctant to move interstate to find work.⁷³

This forces Indigenous people to move away from what is often traditional country and move into cities for improved prospects of employment. The pressures placed on the community in a cultural context is obvious and speaks to the fragmentation of Indigenous communities, with dire consequences relative to land rights and native title processes.⁷⁴

- 6.38 Mr Ian Munro commented that:

Aboriginal people affiliate with their country to the degree that there is no possibility of significant mobilisation in search of jobs outside the region.⁷⁵

- 6.39 Aboriginal people can live in communities as they have done traditionally, but they may need to travel to other communities to find continuous work.

You see that in rural towns across Australia – people are always moving around. That is not to say that people have to move from their communities. They can still live in their communities but they have to be prepared to travel 100 or 200 kilometres down the road to do some work or spend two or three months a year working in Darwin or Sydney or somewhere else. That is the reality of it. We need to work

71 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 10.

72 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 31.

73 Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 41.

74 National Tertiary Education Union, *Submission No. 76*, p. 3.

75 Mr Ian Munro, Chief Executive Officer, Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 July 2006, p. 1.

with Aboriginal communities to start looking at those realities.⁷⁶

- 6.40 There has already been some progress. The Federal Indigenous Youth Mobility Program will encourage young people to take up training and employment opportunities in one of ten host locations. Participants will be assisted to stay in touch with their home communities with the view to returning home to take up local skilled positions.⁷⁷

Homesickness

- 6.41 For young people leaving home to work it is too easy for them to return home. One of the reasons for the success of the Boys from the Bush project in Shepparton was that participants were given a one way ticket and had to earn enough money to get home. Some of the participants returned home in cars they had purchased with the money they earned fruit picking.⁷⁸ Young people leaving the community to work can then support others in obtaining employment or can work as leaders in their community when they return.⁷⁹ In many mining operations, Aboriginal people are brought in from elsewhere and are often required to leave their community and need support for their families.⁸⁰ Another initiative was by the Yulella Aboriginal Corporation which is addressing homesickness by drawing up a register of Yamatji people in other areas to act as surrogate families for young people who have to travel long distances to find work of their choice.⁸¹

Community and cultural issues

- 6.42 Tourism is often suggested as an employment opportunity for Indigenous people. Mr Ron Weatherall commented on the time Indigenous people will need to comprehend differences such as the practice of selling rather than giving which may conflict with their

76 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 31.

77 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Submission No. 107*, p. 12.

78 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 36.

79 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 36.

80 Mr Simon Hawkins, Executive Director, Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 22.

81 Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 37*, p. 2.

cultural values.⁸² The Institute for Aboriginal Development commented that:

... it takes a lot of work to get Aboriginal people to feel comfortable in front-line tourism, with people asking questions that you sometimes might not have the right or the knowledge to answer. It can put you in a difficult position.⁸³

6.43 Alice Springs Desert Park have developed non-defensive answers to the 'ignorant, inappropriate and culturally offensive' questions asked by visitors of Aboriginal staff.⁸⁴

6.44 Another issue raised by the Arnhemland Progress Association was the difficulties in employing an Indigenous business manager:

The staff have family and cultural obligations which will always come first, so if they were a manager and one of their family asked them for something they could be duty-bound by their position in the family to give them that.⁸⁵

Discrimination

6.45 The issue of discrimination was raised a number of times during the inquiry as an obstacle to successful outcomes in Aboriginal employment.⁸⁶ The Kimberley Group Training and the Cairns and District Regional Housing Corporation found local employers to be open to engaging Indigenous people.⁸⁷ This was not always the case and the Committee was told that local employers are not always open to engaging Indigenous people. The choice to work can lead to harassment both in the workplace and in the community.⁸⁸ Balranald Shire Council stressed the need to ensure the workforce is aware of unacceptable behaviour.⁸⁹

82 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 13.

83 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 4.

84 Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 4.

85 Mr Alastair King, General Manager, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 54.

86 For example Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 87.

87 Mr John Gummery, Chief Executive Officer, Kimberley Group Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 23; Mr Jack Szydzik, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 May 2007, p. 15.

88 Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 1.

89 Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 1.

- 6.46 Discrimination in the labour market can discourage young people from completing their education.⁹⁰ Dr Scutt also made the point that discrimination can often be a factor in Aboriginal people with an education being unable to gain employment.⁹¹ The inability to gain employment on the individual's merits can result in social exclusion and the willingness to participate in the economic system and Australian society.⁹² Labour market discrimination is more likely to be evident in an Indigenous job seeker being unable to find employment than in being paid low wages.⁹³
- 6.47 There is also the issue of being the only 'black face in a white environment' and interracial prejudices from other local Aboriginal people include 'why are you trying to be white', 'You're not one of us ... you do not belong here' and 'what right has a half caste like you got to tell us about culture'.⁹⁴ Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron also stressed the difficulties in being the only Indigenous employee but added that the support networks available now have made a difference.⁹⁵ A number of employers commented on the benefits of employing more than one Aboriginal person.⁹⁶
- 6.48 Discrimination can also be indirect, for example inflexibility in tender requirements for government services. Inability to deliver services in accordance with current policies may force some Indigenous operators out of the market.⁹⁷
- 6.49 Discrimination from customers, suppliers etc is a barrier to the establishment of successful businesses.⁹⁸ The Committee was informed that many Indigenous entrepreneurs do not publicly identify themselves as Aboriginal because of racism in the workplace

90 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 5.

91 Dr Jocelyne Scutt, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 81.

92 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 5.

93 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 5.

94 Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 4.

95 Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 20.

96 Ms Sheryl Sandy, Equity and Diversity Specialist, Brisbane City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 24; Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 7.

97 Kullarri Network Association, *Submission No. 82*, pp. 1-6. See also Mr Daniel Tucker, Carey Mining Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 42.

98 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 14; Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 2; Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 6.

and marketplace.⁹⁹ An example of discrimination in business was provided by Dr Dennis Foley:

A classic example comes from about 10 or 12 years ago. A gentleman from Lakemba who had a panel beating shop won a businessman of the year award. Within a short period of time, a lot of his clients had dried up and his suppliers were starting to be very heavy on the credit because all of a sudden they realised: 'He's a blackfella. We can't give him 30 days credit.' In the panel beating business they work on a cash cycle of 60 to 90 days. All of a sudden his credit was down to 30 days, then 28 days, 14 days and 7 days, and he found himself with a big problem. If he had stayed being just another coloured person in the inner west of Sydney, he would have still had a very profitable business. I am glad to say that he has built himself up since then, but for a couple of years he had it tough. He had to change suppliers and all that because all of a sudden he was known as an Aboriginal business. Unless you are in tourism or are selling your culture, it can work against you.¹⁰⁰

6.50 Discrimination amongst potential customers means that it will not be possible to succeed even with drive and motivation.¹⁰¹ Dr Foley made the point that mainstream populations need to be re-educated as this is the main inhibitor to business for both debtors and creditors.¹⁰²

All of the Indigenous participants had experienced discrimination that was either race or gender based. It was so common that it was only acknowledged when it was physical or exclusionary. This is possibly the greatest inhibitor to business success and longevity. Aside from tourism, many did not publicly identify as Indigenous Australian. They believed this would produce negative outcomes within mainstream business.¹⁰³

99 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, pp. 5-6.

100 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 9.

101 Dr Boyd Hunter, Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 February 2006, p. 15.

102 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 6.

103 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, p. 6, *Exhibit 42*.

- 6.51 Racism, while it is by a minority, bullying and intimidation can lead to a 'reverse racism' where Indigenous people can take the view 'What am I doing here? Typical whitefella'.¹⁰⁴

... negative and/or prejudiced attitudes and perceptions of employers towards indigenous people are difficult to overcome.¹⁰⁵

- 6.52 Dr Foley recommended that Indigenous Australian studies be incorporated into school curricula from kindergarten to year 12, and every discipline within tertiary institutions. The New South Wales Government suggested that:

An active campaign countering racial discrimination is required, in conjunction with positive employment initiatives, to challenge such attitudes.¹⁰⁶

Cross-cultural awareness training

- 6.53 The need for cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous staff was raised in a number of submissions to the inquiry.¹⁰⁷ Non-Indigenous staff may not appreciate the need to adapt themselves:

Probably in many places there is a tendency to say, 'Well, they're here now. They've got the job and they've got to be the same as everybody else. What's wrong with them? They should just get on with it.'¹⁰⁸

- 6.54 Mrs Shaw, from the Institute for Aboriginal Development, made the point that if you went to Bali you would look at their culture to ensure that you did not offend them and Aboriginal people must be shown the same respect.¹⁰⁹ Mrs Shaw commented that:

104 Mr Craig Rigney, Apprentice Electrician, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 23.

105 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 6.

106 New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 7. See also Mr Andrew West, Manager, Kaurna Business and Heritage Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 80; Mrs Lynette Crocker, Co-Chair, Kaurna Yerta Inc, Native Title Management Committee, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 77.

107 For example see Little Burning Mountain Aboriginal Cooperative, *Submission No. 8*, p. 2; City of Marion, *Submission No. 28*, p. 1.

108 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 4.

109 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 3.

Aboriginal people already have an education and a lifestyle system in their culture and they are very strong on their commitment to their responsibilities, so when you are talking about educating an Aboriginal person who lives a cultural lifestyle you have to acknowledge that their relationship with their kin and their responsibilities to culture come first.¹¹⁰

- 6.55 It is important to look at how the values of Indigenous people can influence the traditional structure of the labour market and the impact of job creation and economic development.¹¹¹

... non-Indigenous lists would start with a house, car, job and that sort of thing. Most of the Indigenous lists started with culture – ceremonies, responsibilities to kin. Further down there was a house. I am not saying that Aboriginal people do not have the right to a house - they do. But what I found was that in their set of values those material things were lower down the list than spiritual and cultural things.¹¹²

- 6.56 The example was given of the Kormilda College where positive results were being seen for students from a remote community. The community withdrew the students because of the impact on their cultural values. This was 'a very good example of how we often get carried away with what we believe are our priorities without necessarily listening to the community'.¹¹³

- 6.57 Employers are demonstrating a willingness to learn and recognise the importance of Indigenous culture by working with communities¹¹⁴ and providing cross-cultural awareness training to non-Indigenous staff.¹¹⁵ . It was suggested that it should be compulsory for all public servants if the majority of their clients are Aboriginal.¹¹⁶

110 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 1.

111 See comments by Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 21.

112 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 10.

113 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 29.

114 For example Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manger, Human Resources, Voyages Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 12.

115 Mr Dean O'Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 4; Australia Post, *Submission No. 96*, p. 4; Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 20; Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27

[T]he very first and most pivotal thing we can do is respect the culture.¹¹⁷

- 6.58 Mission Australia Employment Initiatives called for a national media strategy to create awareness for employers:

There has been national marketing for mature-age job seekers, for apprenticeships and traineeships, and there has been national marketing for other disadvantaged groups, but there has never been an awareness created about the importance of Indigenous employment.¹¹⁸

- 6.59 While there is wide acknowledgement of the benefits of cultural awareness training, this is not without cost. Mr Brian Varcoe of the Adelaide City Council, made the point that workplaces are often limited by time and resource constraints as to how much they can do in this area.¹¹⁹

Cultural leave

- 6.60 There is a perception that Aboriginal are unreliable because they will go walkabout. Australians are notorious for saying 'I'm not a racist but...'.¹²⁰
- 6.61 Some employers did not see cultural leave as an issue provided that you have the flexibility to enable Indigenous workers to balance work and cultural responsibilities.¹²¹ Flexibility and responsiveness are key

October 2005, pp. 20, 30; Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 30; Mr Lester Davis, Manager Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 33; Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources, Voyages Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 2.

116 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 3.

117 Ms Stephanie Walker, Native Title Officer, South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 29.

118 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 6.

119 Mr Brian Varcoe, Development and Liaison Officer, Human Resources, Indigenous Trainees and Apprentices, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 18.

120 Ms Bernice Kelly, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 19.

121 For example see Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 3; Mr Leigh Cleghorn, Manager, Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 64.

aspects of successful Indigenous employment.¹²² Employers can address this through being flexible with industrial arrangements and most organisations have family, recreational leave and rostered days off, time in lieu or swapping days off which can accommodate cultural leave needs.¹²³ Utilising a pool of people to meet the contractual arrangements also provides the flexibility to cover contingencies such as sorry leave and ceremonial leave.¹²⁴ Mr Barry Taylor, Ngarda Foundation, in Port Hedland was reported as saying that the contractors who employ Indigenous people need to be aware that they have cultural practices which need to be factored into work force planning and 'it is not really too difficult'.¹²⁵

- 6.62 While industry and bigger businesses have the capacity to demonstrate greater flexibility, smaller businesses may not have the capacity to implement such initiatives as extensive cross-cultural education or to be able to cover work responsibilities for absent workers.¹²⁶
- 6.63 Also the point was raised that Indigenous people living in urban environments may not have the same responsibilities as someone with a more traditional cultural lifestyle.¹²⁷
- 6.64 While it is appreciated that most employees have difficulty in balancing family and work, this can be more difficult for Indigenous people.¹²⁸ Being part of an Indigenous family comes with many

122 Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 1; Mr Murray Coates, General Manager, East Kimberley Job Pathways, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 12.

123 For example see Mr Kelvin Tytherleigh, Manager, Organisational Development and Governance Unit, Caboolture Shire Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 40; Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 3; Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manger, Human Resources, Voyages Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 3, 12.

124 Mr Michael Maloney, Human Resources Manager, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 29; Mr Lester Davis, Manager Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 40; Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 3; Mr Joseph Elu, Co-Chair, Indigenous Community Volunteers, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 December 2006, pp. 12-13.

125 Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, p. 11.

126 Ms Stephanie Walker, Native Title Officer, South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 30.

127 Mrs Eileen Shaw, Director, Institute for Aboriginal Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 7; Mr Ivan Deemal, Senior Coordinator, Community Relations, Cairns Region Group Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 58.

128 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 6.

responsibilities and cultural obligations that non-Indigenous people and employers may not readily understand.

- 6.65 Employers and Indigenous employees both have a responsibility to help each other to understand these, sometime competing, obligations and reach effective compromises.¹²⁹ In practice, appropriate staffing arrangements can accommodate these responsibilities and cultural obligations.¹³⁰ The Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, observed that:

Most of them get into it and want to do it because they have their own families and they want them to have more than what they had when they were kids.¹³¹

- 6.66 Similarly, Ms Cathy Duncan, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, commented on the balancing act of work and cultural obligations:

Every one of us have to make sacrifices. Sometimes we cannot attend every funeral. That is not always a good cultural thing but it is something that we accept when we step into this world of work. We are not turning our back on our people but we have to be aware that we have made a commitment to our employer.¹³²

- 6.67 Cultural practices and customs and extended family responsibilities may have an impact on an Indigenous person's capacity to participate in employment.¹³³ For example, the community worked with the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park to hold a funeral at a time when the show was not being run.¹³⁴ The Park has an absentee rate well

129 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Employing Indigenous Australians Indigenous Employment Strategy, Framework for Industry, Exhibit No. 145*, p. 15; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

130 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 46; Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 31.

131 Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 24.

132 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 9.

133 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

134 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 18.

below 5 per cent.¹³⁵ Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park commented that:

The minute that you allow the funeral and the community obligations to close down the business – even for a moment – that business is finished because it would be running along community policy and directives, not commercial policy.¹³⁶

6.68 An approach that some employers have found effective is to showcase their business to the families of their Indigenous employees. This serves to build relationships and foster a greater appreciation by workers, families and communities of the importance of fulfilling work as well as cultural responsibilities.¹³⁷ Families can take pride in these achievements.

We are parents too, just like anyone else, and we want for our children the same as everybody else does.¹³⁸

6.69 There are a range of family and social issues which need to be addressed when assisting Indigenous people to prepare for and make the transition to employment.¹³⁹

I think that support program needs to go further than the individual. You need to look at the family situation and not have it as an isolated sort of picture, so that the family comes into the support structure as well, because that is where a lot of the issues come from.¹⁴⁰

6.70 Childcare is another issue that must be addressed to enhance the participation of Indigenous women in the workforce. In remote regions this may be an issue for Indigenous women who are interested in working in the mining industry, particularly in

135 Mr Don Freeman, Managing Director, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 21.

136 Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 July 2005, p. 16.

137 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Employing Indigenous Australians Indigenous Employment Strategy, Framework for Industry Exhibit No. 145*, p. 17.

138 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 15.

139 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 18.

140 Mrs Justine Wardle, Employment Consultant, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 11.

situations where there is shift work.¹⁴¹ Rio Tinto Ltd has child-care and pre-school programs offsite in some locations.¹⁴²

Health

- 6.71 The health status of Indigenous Australians is poor compared to the broader Australian population.¹⁴³ Employment is a major determinant of Indigenous health, conversely health status can also be a key determinant of Indigenous employment outcomes.¹⁴⁴ Many of these health problems are preventable.
- 6.72 The health sector has an important role to play in both providing services to Indigenous Australians and as a source of Indigenous employment.¹⁴⁵ Enhancing the training and employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the health services will not only benefit the individuals accessing these, it also has wider implications for improving Indigenous health.¹⁴⁶

Fitness for work

- 6.73 Pilbara Iron listed fitness to work as the main barrier for Indigenous people gaining employment in the mining industry; cardiovascular health, diabetes, drugs and alcohol and numerous other health challenges.¹⁴⁷ Health problems are not often tackled as an integral

141 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 39; Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 15; see also Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

142 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 40.

143 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, *Social Justice Report 2005*, Report No. 3/2005, pp. 17-18. Available at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/Social_Justice/sjreport05/index.html; See also Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

144 See Ms Joy McLaughlin, Assistant Secretary, Policy and Analysis Branch, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Department of Health and Ageing, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 17.

145 According to the 2001 census Indigenous people employed in the health sector comprised 10 per cent of Indigenous people in the workforce.

146 Department of Health and Ageing, *Submission No. 35*, p. 3; Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, *Submission No. 101*, p. 2; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Health and Welfare of Australian's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005*, p. 186. Available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au>. See also Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, *Social Justice Report 2005*, Report No. 3/2005, p. 77. Available at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/Social_Justice/sjreport05/index.html.

147 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, pp. 19-20.

part of Indigenous job-ready programs.¹⁴⁸ Health was identified as an area where there needs to be greater collaboration:

... we have the fitness for work issues with health, but there is no one place to refer people to. We often have job applicants that do not meet the requirements; they might fail a drug and alcohol test or they might be overweight or have cardiovascular issues. There is no one entity that can help that person to get the help that they need. They might have to go to three or four different agencies.¹⁴⁹

6.74 The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Minerals Council of Australia has state health and education departments involved in terms of health education and awareness:

... making sure that people are capable in the longer term of participating in things like education and training because their health is at a standard that enables them to have a decent life span and a decent quality of life¹⁵⁰

6.75 Substance abuse can be a barrier to employment for Indigenous people and targeted programs are needed, as part of preparing Indigenous people for work, to assist Indigenous Australians to tackle substance abuse problems. Drug education programs for young Indigenous people are critical to educate them about the dangers of drug use and how it can impede career choices.¹⁵¹

Mental health issues

6.76 The issue of mental health was raised in a number of submissions in the context of social and emotional well-being that leads to success in employment opportunities for Indigenous people.¹⁵² Mining

148 Rio Tinto Group, *Submission No. 80*, p. 18.

149 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, pp. 26-27.

150 Ms Melanie Stutsel, Director, Environmental and Social Policy, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 9.

151 Mr Jack Pearson, *Submission No. 102*, p. 7.

152 See Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, *Social Justice Report 2005*, Report No. 3/2005, p. 20. Available at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/Social_Justice/sjreport05/index.html. Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey, *The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young People – Summary Booklet*, 2005, p. 8. Available at: <http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/waachs/>. See also Mr Johnathan Link, Community Liaison and Development Officer, Mental Health Program, Royal Flying Doctor Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 54.

companies have recognised that Indigenous people may require more focused and individual assistance in this area.¹⁵³

Housing

- 6.77 Census figures from 2001 showed that 30 per cent of Indigenous people lived in major cities, 43 per cent in regional areas and 27 per cent in remote Australia, with the proportion of Indigenous people living in cities versus regional or remote settings varying between states and territories.¹⁵⁴
- 6.78 The housing and mobility patterns of Indigenous Australians can be quite distinct from those of non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous housing experiences are often characterised by limited housing stock and options, discrimination, evictions, high levels of mobility, substandard housing and even homelessness.¹⁵⁵ Dependency on welfare limits Indigenous options when it comes to both rental and homeownership.¹⁵⁶
- 6.79 Overcrowding¹⁵⁷ is a key issue to be addressed in order to improve Indigenous housing outcomes. The impact of overcrowding can be wide ranging, affecting the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals and limiting their capacity to pursue education and employment opportunities.¹⁵⁸

153 For example, see Mr Larry Kickett, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 46; Mr Jack Pearson, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 November 2005, p. 10; Ms Roberta Crocker, Indigenous Programs Specialist, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 37.

154 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Health and Welfare of Australian's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005*, p. 4. Available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

155 Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, *21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Future: Literature Review*, February 2006, p. 2. This report is available at: <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/document/index.cfm>.

156 Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, *21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Future: Literature Review*, February 2006, p. 53. This report is available at: <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/general/document/index.cfm>.

157 Overcrowding is defined in relation to the Proxy Occupancy Standard which is a measure of the appropriateness of housing related to the household size and composition. See Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website: <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/327448>.

158 See Centre for Economic and Policy Research, *Overcrowding and Indigenous Health in Australia*, Discussion Paper No. 498, September 2005, p. 1; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Health and Welfare of Australian's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005*, pp. 27, 37-38. Available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au>; Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2003*, Report, p. 10.1, 5. 10.24-5. Available at:

Home ownership

6.80 For Indigenous people, homeownership represents a step towards independence and provides stability and a foundation on which to build other economic opportunities for their families and communities.¹⁵⁹ Mr Ron Morony from IBA commented that the Home Ownership Program ‘provides stability, security and a stable base for families’.¹⁶⁰

6.81 Mr Warren Mundine informed the Committee that, in his view, homeownership is not:

... a panacea for the ills of the Aboriginal community, but I do want a discussion about it. It is not only about home ownership; it is about having private enterprises and the ownership of a number of assets and how we better use those assets to benefit the wider Aboriginal community. There is no great science to this. If you own your own home – and I have had three generations of it in my family – that then forces you to ensure that you are employed, that you have an income and that you are looking after the house because it is your asset. That change in your behaviour then spreads through the wider community.¹⁶¹

6.82 The federal and state governments have a number of programs in place to assist Indigenous Australians purchase a home.¹⁶²

The desire and ability to own a home is commonly linked to benefits such as stability of employment, improved health and education, flexibility to adapt the dwelling as needs or preferences change and as a store of wealth for future lifestyle decisions and economic independence. Home ownership provides a stronger and more stable base for building social

<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2003/index.html>.

159 Department of Education and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, p. 25.

160 Mr Ron Morony, General Manager, Indigenous Business Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 24.

161 Mr Warren Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Native Title Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 41.

162 For example see <http://www.keystart.com.au/key/aboriginal.htm> and <http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=443> for Western Australian and Tasmanian state programs; Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, pp. 24-25.

capital, which in turn can support improved employment outcomes.¹⁶³

Transport

- 6.83 One of the issues for Indigenous people in remote areas can be transport to get them to work.¹⁶⁴ In rural areas where there is no public transport, this can be a significant barrier for those without a driver's license.¹⁶⁵ Vehicles mean access to essential services, education, enables visitation to country and participation in hunting parties and cultural events.¹⁶⁶ In the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2002, 55 per cent of Indigenous people in remote Australia reported that they did not have access to a vehicle and 13 per cent could not get to the places they needed to.¹⁶⁷ In cases where vehicles can be obtained many are not roadworthy.¹⁶⁸
- 6.84 Possessing a driver's licence can be a basic requirement for many jobs.¹⁶⁹ A number of programs are being put in place to assist young people to get a license.¹⁷⁰ There are, however, a number of factors

163 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 16.

164 Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources, Voyagers Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 4; Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 4; Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 6.

165 Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 6; Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 2; see also Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 5.

166 Fogarty W, 'You got any Truck?' *Vehicles and decentralised mobile service-provision in remote Indigenous Australia*, Working Paper No. 30/2005, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research.

167 Australia Bureau of Statistics, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey*, 2002, pp. 14-15. See also Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *The Health and Welfare of Australian's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2005*, p. 14. Available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

168 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 7.

169 Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 2; Mrs Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager, Mission Australia Employment Initiatives, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 6; Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 26; Mr Kevin Dixon, Bega Parks Mowing Team, Bega Valley Shire Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 December 2005, p. 14.

170 For example, see Ms Bernice Kelly, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Corporation, Queensland, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 18; Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*,

which can be barriers to Indigenous people obtaining drivers licenses; lack of awareness of how to obtain a birth certificate,¹⁷¹ inability to pay for handbooks or driving lessons, limited literacy, and lack of access to vehicles to learn to drive and licensed drivers willing to provide driving practice.¹⁷²

- 6.85 Police checks are a big issue.¹⁷³ A common problem appears to be people fined for driving without licenses, not being able to pay the fines. Once an Indigenous person has a criminal record, perhaps for repeat offences for driving while disqualified, they may not be able to pass the police checks that may be mandatory to obtain employment.¹⁷⁴
- 6.86 Programs supporting Indigenous people to attain and keep licences will enhance their capacity to pursue training and employment opportunities and there have been a number of successful approaches.¹⁷⁵ Obtaining a drivers licence can boost the self-esteem of Indigenous people as this is a source of identification, which allows Indigenous people to better access mainstream services such as opening a bank account or renting a flat.¹⁷⁶

27 October 2005, pp. 14-15; Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 21.

171 The Binaal Billa Regional Council of ATSIC would provide grants to cover licence and birth certificate fees.

172 Australian Institute of Criminology, *Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards: Winning Projects 2005*, 10 November 2005, p. 9.

173 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 25.

174 Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager, Footprints Forward, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 25; Mrs Kerri Colegate, Site Coordinator, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 9.

175 Balranald Shire Council, *Submission No. 54*, p. 2; Mr Peter Cowham, CDEP Manager, Tangentyere Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 31; Bloodwood Tree Association, *Exhibit 18*, p. 5; Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, *Exhibit No. 52*, pp. 37, 39; Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning and Development Officer, Cairns City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 18; Jones A & Hyslop D, Department of Corrective Services, 'Can't wait to get out and drive past the cops. This time I'll have a licence.' *Pre-release programs in NSW Correctional Centres: Driver Education at Mannus*, Conference paper, October 2001, pp. 3, 5; Australian Institute of Criminology, *Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards: Winning Projects 2005*, 10 November 2005, p. 9; Placer Dome, *Exhibit No. 133*, p. 2; Mr Johnathan Link, Community Liaison and Development Officer, Mental Health Program, Royal Flying Doctor Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 53.

176 Jones A & Hyslop D, Department of Corrective Services, 'Can't wait to get out and drive past the cops. This time I'll have a licence.' *Pre-release programs in NSW Correctional Centres: Driver Education at Mannus*, Conference paper, October 2001, p. 4.

Role of government

History shows that doing more of the same is simple not an option.¹

Practical reconciliation

- 7.1 Improved employment outcomes are an important part of practical reconciliation. Reconciliation can be measured through employment indicators and Indigenous people moving from unemployment or CDEP into jobs and opportunities to develop businesses.
- 7.2 Evidence was mixed on the contribution of practical reconciliation to improved employment outcomes, with most submitters not directly addressing the issue. The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research stated that it was too early to assess the effects of practical reconciliation:

In our view it is too early to address this question using Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys and the National Census. Policy, particularly in this area, has long lead times and many of the changes made by the Howard Government did not occur for several years after their election in 1996 and a number of changes did not occur until after 2001 (such as Shared Responsibility Agreements). In addition, many of the effects of policy changes on labour market outcomes will take several years to occur. By the time of the 2006 Census we should be in a much better position to assess the contributions of practical reconciliation.²

- 7.3 On 12 July 2005, the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress stated:
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1 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 20.

2 Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 5.

... we do not believe that practical reconciliation has achieved enough to be claiming 'wins' on its scorecard for Indigenous employment yet.³

- 7.4 Tangentyere Council submitted that they excluded the topic because it was not clear how practical reconciliation had added to the provision of essential services.⁴

Reconciliation is not about becoming white men, but sensitively accommodating cultural differences in a supportive and cognizant kind of way. In this manner I see that management has a significant role to play in that transition and I found great mutual respect was gained and significant support was forthcoming from the employee as a result.⁵

- 7.5 Funds provided for services and programs for Indigenous people are largely essential services and the contribution of practical reconciliation can not be identified separately.⁶

Our responsibility is to harness the capacity of government, whether it is mainstream programs or Indigenous specific programs, to ensure that they are working far better for the Indigenous client group that they are servicing.⁷

- 7.6 In contrast to other submitters, the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination responded to the Committee's questions about the impact of practical reconciliation very positively pointing out that the unemployment rate for Indigenous people has fallen:

The strength of the economy, as well as targeted assistance through the Job Network and the Indigenous Employment Program, would have contributed to these changes.⁸

3 Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Inc, *Submission No. 101*, p. 3.

4 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 3.

5 Shire of Trayning, *Submission No. 22*, p. 1.

6 Tangentyere Council, *Submission No. 69*, p. 3.

7 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 19.

8 Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Submission No. 73a*, pp. 4-5.

More effective service delivery

- 7.7 The National Framework of Principles for Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians is based on shared responsibility, involving mainstream, streamlining service delivery, establishing transparency and accountability, developing a learning framework and focusing on priority areas.⁹ The recent review of the COAG trials found that there was a better understanding among officials 'of how the way in which governments deliver programs can contribute to lack of ownership and action by communities'.¹⁰
- 7.8 It appears that many features of the previous system have continued in the Indigenous Coordination Centres. In relation to the lack of awareness in the broader community of the work of the ICCs, the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination commented that:
- We are not focusing too heavily on promoting the architecture or the formalities of the system. We are more concerned about what the impact is locally for people and whether our colleagues in other departments and in other governments are coming on board in terms of changing the way they are doing business. Our Indigenous Coordination Centres are slowly building their profile. People have heard about the abolition of ATSIC. They have noticed that a lot of services are still continuing. To the extent that they want to engage with Indigenous Coordination Centres around shared responsibility agreements, for example, that is slowly building. We are up to around 160 agreements. It is a big transition. We did not just stop everything and say: 'As of now, no longer will we be engaging with you in the old ways, all those programs and services will stop and, as we get around to talking with you, then we will start the ball rolling.' That was not feasible. So it is an evolution in terms of the implementation.¹¹
- 7.9 In relation to the lack of awareness in the Public Service of the work of the ICCs, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations commented that:

9 Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Submission No. 73*, p. 6.

10 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 5.

11 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 20.

Generally people across the Public Service will be aware of the directions because there are a lot of meetings across government about the directions that are occurring. Individually the head of the tourism division may not, but we have engaged with that group, for example, around the tourism strategies in Indigenous employment. ... I probably do not know all the committees and structures that operate through the tourism department. I have a good idea, but if you asked me I probably would know about tourism because we have paid particular attention to it, but I would not know of all the structures that each individual agency operates. People can be excused if they do not always know, but I know that we work with that agency.¹²

Whole-of-community, whole-of-government and whole of industry approach

*... whole-of-community, whole-of-government, and whole-of-industry, founded in mutual respect and the recognition of Indigenous Australians' rights in law, interests and special connections to lands and waters in Australia.*¹³

7.10 The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination stated that the whole-of-government approach, through COAG trials and negotiating arrangements between governments and with communities is about bringing the 'disparate elements into some coherence'.¹⁴ The five principles underpinning the new arrangements are collaboration, regional need, flexibility, accountability and leadership.¹⁵

...despite some cynicism at the outset, all partners believed that other partners engaged with the Trial Process in a spirit of genuine commitment and good faith.¹⁶

12 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 5.

13 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

14 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 23.

15 Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Submission No. 73*, p. 4.

16 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 5.

- 7.11 There has been enhanced cooperation between the States and Federal public services.¹⁷ While the whole-of government rhetoric is not new, there has been a culture change within the bureaucracy:

That is a bigger challenge, I suggest, than communities. It is led at the top ... And, starting from the next budget, the budget process will be informed by an evaluation of what is working and what is not working. That has not been tried before in a whole-of-government context. It is still early days but there is no doubting the commitment and determination of the political and the administrative leadership to try and make change here.¹⁸

- 7.12 The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination commented that it was:

... very encouraged by the seriousness of the commitment to get together with us and sort out these issues. That means that if you are working in a community where this is in place – instead of 40 or 50 sometimes programs being delivered by 20 or 30 agencies without any reference to each other, with 40 or 50 different agreements and accounting obligations, and programs designed in Brisbane, Canberra or Perth and fitting the community into those programs – we are able to say: ‘Well, forget our programs. We have got a combined resource’.¹⁹

- 7.13 The Central Land Council made the point that:

What we have identified recently is that there is a lot of goodwill. There is a lot of discussion about partnerships. There is a lot of direction being given to both Northern Territory and Commonwealth agencies to get out and get involved with Aboriginal communities. It is creating a bit of mayhem in a way, with people tripping over one another. Aboriginal people are quite rightly covering their bets and taking in all-comers and expressing their issues to them. There is definitely a large need to sit down and get these things better coordinated ... I know that the Commonwealth and Northern Territory have different responsibilities and directions, but it would be helpful to all

17 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 2; Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 5.

18 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 7.

19 Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 May 2005, p. 6.

concerned out bush if there were a one-stop shop to address all these things and get better coordination.²⁰

- 7.14 Indigenous Coordination Centres are required to find out the needs and priorities of communities with regard to issues such as employment, education, health, and housing, and to broker solutions.²¹

Then they must package it all up and deliver it to the community so they achieve, from our portfolio perspective, employment outcomes and business outcomes, but also education and health and housing and social ...²²

- 7.15 Mission Australia believes that while the intent is there with the Indigenous Coordination Centres, the guidelines remain around each department.²³

Community know what their needs are but no-one is listening. Everyone is saying, 'This is what you can have,' and we do not fit into that. It is the same across Australia.²⁴

- 7.16 It has not been easy and some companies, local agencies and community people are frustrated by being unable to 'get the message across to well-intentioned bureaucrats who still could not understand that the first thing you do is shut up and listen – not say, 'Hey, we're here'.²⁵ The Committee was told that the reality is that you either play by DEWR's rules 'or you won't play at all'.²⁶

- 7.17 The Director General of the New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs considered the lack of coordination across government and the disjointed approach to programs as important impediments to successful Aboriginal employment outcomes.²⁷ Capacity building is a challenge for

20 Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 52.

21 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 7.

22 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 7.

23 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 49.

24 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 49-50.

25 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 6.

26 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 4.

27 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 88.

the Public Service involved in a whole-of-government approach as well as for Indigenous people.²⁸

For those of us familiar with the long history of national commitments and statements about improving Indigenous affairs, we have heard a lot of talk about improved coordination but not anywhere near enough action. I believe that the approach that has now substantially been embedded in terms of the infrastructure to support the new whole-of-government approach has been well established, but we now have to get on very much with the real and full implementation of that. You are right: at various points in the bureaucracy there are still – I would not say points of resistance – people not being clear or not being skilled or not understanding how they need to work differently in how they come on board, if you like.²⁹

7.18 The whole-of-government approach:

... involves some very significant changes in the way that the public sector does its business and requires quite a lot of cultural change on behalf of people from the grassroots level right up through to the senior levels of the organisation. The Australian Public Service is a big ship of state; it is geared and has been for the best part of 100 years. Of course we are trying to connect to state and territory public sectors as well, so it has been a gradual transition. Without the leadership politically and bureaucratically that has come in behind this, I do not believe that we would have made the progress that we have.³⁰

7.19 The Wunan Foundation does not believe that the reform agenda is being adequately communicated to those who need to understand it and to adjust to the changes.³¹

I think that is an incredibly difficult thing to do, because you have a very tall, deep, complex, unwieldy bureaucracy between Ministers and senior policy makers and the local ICC.³²

28 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 16.

29 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 16.

30 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 16.

31 Mr David Addis, Chief Executive Officer, Wunan Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 26.

7.20 Mr Paul Briggs stressed the need to deal with power imbalances and the position of Indigenous people in the dominance and paternalism of politics and the bureaucracy over time.³³

7.21 The Queensland Government added that:

A major impediment to the effective implementation of such policies has been inconsistency in interpreting policies and defining appropriate measures for success. The interpretation and implementation by Government often does not reflect Indigenous values, priorities, strategies and performance measures.³⁴

7.22 Participation by the community is an essential part of successful programs:

From my extensive study of the COAG process and from the good feedback which the Indigenous leaders gave me in Shepparton, the common characteristic of Indigenous employment initiatives led by DEWR and its leadership of the COAG process is that it consistently excludes Aboriginal people from determining what success would look like.³⁵

Time for change

7.23 Ms Ah Chin is of the view that:

... if we continue to look at this problem as we have traditionally then we are not going to find the solutions. We need to be very creative. I know you would have heard this before but I cannot emphasise it enough: we need to be able to look at what is now an old problem in new ways. We need to look outside the box and identify where we can get synergies. I think that one of our failures is that we think we can solve the problem ourselves. We cannot do that; we need to look at a whole of government and whole of community approach and make sure we get input at a community level.³⁶

32 Mr David Addis, Chief Executive Officer, Wunan Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 26.

33 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2.

34 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

35 Mr Anthony Cutcliffe, Director, The Eureka Project Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 7-8.

36 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 28.

- 7.24 Mr Peter Yuile described whole-of-government as ‘hard yakka’ but his experience was of an enormous amount of good will but ‘we have to think about different ways of doing things from what we had in the past, and accounting’.³⁷

In addressing Indigenous employment we have to look strategically and not isolate or silo the issue of employment into its own category without being conscious of the social and economic issues underpinning the Aboriginal community and the relationship that exists between people in the community in which we live.³⁸

- 7.25 Increasing the pool of work-ready Indigenous people is an issue of national significance.

While a number of Government initiatives aim to achieve Indigenous employment outcomes, their administration and implementation is often undertaken in isolation or independent of other Government agencies, and/ or industry stakeholders. This has resulted in confusion within Indigenous communities regarding government and industry commitment and support to Indigenous employment, a duplication of government effort, ad hoc and or duplication of service planning, development and delivery, and reduced outcomes for Indigenous people.³⁹

- 7.26 The consolidation of all current Indigenous employment and training programs into one department would improve accessibility but CAAMA reported that they had not seen anything happening.⁴⁰ Excessive government administrative compliance and the government programs are not appropriate for the realities of working on major projects.⁴¹ The mentor for the Adelaide City Council’s Indigenous staff told the Committee that he spends 60 to 70 per cent of his time on paperwork.⁴² The Council suggested that paperwork could be reduced if at the end of a

37 Mr Peter Yuile, Executive Director, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 February 2006, p. 10.

38 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2.

39 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

40 Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Submission No. 32*, p. 4; Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 16.

41 Northern Land Council, *Submission No. 103*, p. 7.

42 Mr Brian Varcoe, Development and Liaison Officer, Human Resources, Administration, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 20.

successful contract, the renewal process could be significantly simplified.⁴³ The change from three to two year contracts also adds to the work of councils.⁴⁴

The Australian Government needs to ensure that the process of gaining assistance under the wide range of different Indigenous and mainstream programmes in different agencies does not confuse, disadvantage, delay or discourage Indigenous progress.⁴⁵

7.27 Evidence to the Committee highlighted the fact that the commercial world is reluctant to deal with the bureaucracy because it is too hard. For example, the ANZ Regional and Rural Banking in North West NSW did not use government subsidies for Indigenous employees because it 'is too much work'.⁴⁶

7.28 Mission Australia added that although the intent is there, the Indigenous Coordination Centres are not breaking down the silos and it is still a top-down approach.⁴⁷ When a realistic community need is identified:

At the moment, a government department may not have money but one might have this much money, which is not going to address the whole-of-community need. So without doing that you are really putting the community in a predicament where you say there is a whole-of-government approach to service delivery to address the needs within community but there is no way the government can deliver it.⁴⁸

7.29 Mission Australia has found that there remains a compartmentalisation of employment within government:

The employment department deals with employment, but Indigenous clients who are coming to us, as with all of our clients – and we have done a survey of our staff around this issue – often will come for employment needs, for training needs, accommodation needs, they will have drug and alcohol needs,

43 Mr Trevor Stutley, Human Resources Manager, Administration, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 21.

44 Mr Brian Varcoe, Development and Liaison Officer, Human Resources, Administration, Adelaide City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 21.

45 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission 104*, p. 26.

46 Mr Bruce McQualter, Regional Manager, NSW North West. ANZ Regional and Rural Banking, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 16.

47 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 49.

48 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 49.

they will have mental health issues. Our compartmentalising does not facilitate meeting all of their needs. So how can you move to employment unless you are addressing accommodation needs, mental health et cetera?⁴⁹

- 7.30 The Committee appreciates that employment may only be achieved after many other issues are dealt with. Mission Australia commented that the compartmentalisation is one of the major challenges and suggested that unless the social needs are addressed there will be no change.⁵⁰ Mission Australia suggested an approach where:

... funding is actually related to the person and the person's needs, diverse and complex as they are, with a set of outcomes being, perhaps, secure accommodation, moving into employment, dealing with drugs and alcohol et cetera.⁵¹

- 7.31 Sustainable Indigenous employment has a basis in education and being work ready and appreciating that there is a purpose in having a job.

Funding is so disjointed. When you talk about employment, it is not separate from housing, it is not separate from education. It is not separate.⁵²

- 7.32 Mission Australia stressed that:

... there needs to be some flexible bucket of money or whatever that can be accessed for innovative approaches to dealing with whole of community needs. It does not exist and it is too hard for any community – black, white or brindle; I don't care – to keep having to go to all these different buckets and try to make up all the bits and pieces that will make an improvement to a community.⁵³

- 7.33 Improved coordination between state and Federal training and employment agencies is a critical factor to ensure adequate planning and

49 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

50 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 48.

51 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

52 Mr Mark King, Member, Purga Elders and Descendants Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 55.

53 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 66.

resources to secure Indigenous jobs through select tendering and negotiated employment agreements with industry.⁵⁴

But it requires government to be listening. It requires government to be flexible in program delivery and to be responsive and then to be accountable back to the community ... We still have some work to do. But there has been a significant shift.⁵⁵

7.34 Lack of coordination was raised frequently throughout the inquiry.

... without a collaborative and strategic approach to literacy training, fit for work programs and family support, the number of local Indigenous people employed will continue to be relatively low.⁵⁶

7.35 Ms Jody Broun believes that coordinating across government is critical to ensure mainstream programs do their job.⁵⁷ The Queensland Government emphasised that:

A disparity of coordination and cooperative arrangements between government, industry, training providers and Indigenous communities impedes the flexible delivery and holistic approach needed to address Indigenous employment, social and cultural issues.⁵⁸

7.36 The New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs is establishing regional offices which will co-locate with the Indigenous Coordination Centres to assist in coordination between State and Commonwealth agencies.⁵⁹

There are far too many agencies and far too many programs, with little coordination and cooperation, making it difficult for miners to recruit and retain Indigenous employees and making it difficult for the communities to understand just what is on offer from government.⁶⁰

54 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 2.

55 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 89.

56 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 16.

57 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 94. See also Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 2.

58 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

59 Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2006, p. 91.

60 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

7.37 Dr Patrick Sullivan stressed the complexity of the task:

The coordination across government departments obviously needs to improve, as I think everybody has recognised with this new approach. But there also needs to be coordination at the community level. It is not a straightforward matter to go into an Aboriginal community and ask, 'What do you need here and then what are you going to do?' Who are you talking to? What are the dynamics of the community? How are they related to other community and regional structures? Who speaks for the community? What are the impediments? No matter what they say, what is standing in the way of their being able to deliver? Those are very complex things.⁶¹

7.38 Dr Sullivan added that he remained unconvinced that the Indigenous Coordination Centres had the skills to deal with these complex situations:

They are supposed to be coordinating government services. On the other hand, they are supposed to be negotiating these complex shared responsibility agreements. Initially, my feeling is that they do not have the skills and resources to carry out that important job ... I do not think the ICCs will ever have those necessary resources and skills, and nor should they if they are able to rely on regional representative structures that will be able to deal with those sorts of grassroots issues themselves.⁶²

7.39 Work has commenced in this area. Seven pilot sites have been chosen for collaborative work between the Minerals Council of Australia and the Commonwealth:

The critical difference is that the communities themselves are taking charge of the agenda. Instead of government expenditure programs being checked off by somebody wearing long socks and with a laptop flying in and ticking things off, the agendas and the assurance process are being run by regional partnership committees made up of, in the case of Weipa, people from Comalco, local business people, Aboriginal people, Aboriginal council members and chamber of commerce members – in other words, it is not an Aboriginal problem any more; it is a matter of a community working together to develop opportunity. It is not

61 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, pp. 7-8.

62 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 8.

quarantined and isolated out there as something that the civil servants flying in and the Aboriginal people are going to resolve for themselves. The broader community has bought into it. Where I can see it heading is that they will take overall accountability for the proper disbursement of those funds and the performance delivery. All they want is access to the resources.⁶³

- 7.40 The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination referred to the 'deep seated' ways the Public Service operates:

By and large we deliver services and approach our client base quite successfully for the bulk of Australians, and that involves people working in functional specialisations. For many Indigenous Australians, that has not worked, and we need to do it differently, but it is hard turning the efforts and energies of the service for what is a relatively small part of the population, but a critical one, when things are by and large working fairly well with reasonable outcomes in regard to the overwhelming majority. That is the challenge that is in front of us.⁶⁴

- 7.41 Mission Australia stress that there is much more to learn about working with Indigenous communities:

We have learnt over the years that you can set up any number of services to target Indigenous communities. Even if they're staffed and run by Indigenous workers, it doesn't mean they will be willing to participate. Things need to be taken slowly, and done in consultation with/alongside the Indigenous community elders. They need to see a reason to access the service, and be comfortable with how it is presented, and how they are treated.⁶⁵

- 7.42 The Yamatji Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation operates through working groups. Each working group is nominated by the native title claim groups and have authority to make decisions on behalf of the community about native title matters.⁶⁶

Working groups have the potential to take a leadership role in strategic planning for their communities and the success of this

63 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 40.

64 Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 May 2006, p. 16.

65 Mission Australia, *Submission No. 90*, p. 4.

66 Yamatji Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 98*, p. 2.

model means that governments do not have to re-invent the wheel when it comes to engaging with Aboriginal communities.⁶⁷

- 7.43 Another suggestion from the Great Southern Development Commission was a Regional Indigenous Training and Employment Forum to bring together public sector training, employment and development agencies to coordinate Indigenous employment initiatives with job network members, Centrelink, relevant Aboriginal bodies and registered training organisations.⁶⁸

Community consultation

It is about having faith in a community's ability to deliver for itself ... Our program is designed to get creative thinking rolling, to bring out the flair, to get people working to their strengths.⁶⁹

- 7.44 Advice to the Committee was unequivocal:

The drift is that it is not a bad idea to shut up and listen, to understand the enormous cultural diversity and to understand that they operate and act in a manner that is quite different from our traditions of the Westminster system of government. As I said before, it is a case not so much of giving government a kick in the backside but of urging them to start to look at this from a different perspective than has been the traditional platform of the way governments deliver programs.⁷⁰

- 7.45 Mission Australia believes that communities are not being listened to and they are being told that 'This is what you can have'.⁷¹ Administrators and project coordinators need to listen to the community before deciding on community development directions.⁷² It is critical that Indigenous people on appropriate regional representative bodies are involved in the delivery of Indigenous employment services.⁷³ Mr Jonathon Link made the point

67 Yamatji Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 98*, p. 3.

68 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 3.

69 Mr Richard Estens, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2003, for *Inquiry into Capacity Building in Indigenous communities*, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, p. 1383.

70 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 6.

71 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 49-50.

72 Nyirragu Muay Wurrga'ada Association Inc, *Submission No. 48*, p. 11.

73 Great Southern Development Commission, *Submission No. 68*, p. 3.

that you must involve the clan groups as you cannot expect talking to one person will bring others to the table.⁷⁴

- 7.46 One of the basic objectives of Rio Tinto's Indigenous Employment Strategy is that 'outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will result from listening to them'.⁷⁵

Rio Tinto appreciates that relationships between mining companies and Indigenous people must be built on trust, sound local area governance, formal recognition of Indigenous land connection, and shared participation in the mainstream economy in areas where the Group operates.⁷⁶

- 7.47 The approach needs to include all chambers of commerce, confederations of industry and trade unions. Employment programs based on cooperation between local Indigenous and non-Indigenous people have been the most successful.⁷⁷ Programs that bring communities together in education and employment have great potential because of the opportunity for cooperation and understanding between communities.⁷⁸

- 7.48 There has been considerable success in the work being done in the Goulburn Valley:

... we have people aligned in the private sector, in business, across government with the COAG process and across industry and civic leaders in Shepparton who want to make a change and see this as an issue facing the community rather than isolating it as an Aboriginal issue of Aboriginal unemployment. I think that has been one of the wins that we identify when we talk about the capacity now of the Goulburn Valley to be innovative and to put down a model ...⁷⁹

- 7.49 The Negotiation Table process used by the Queensland Government has been successful in assisting a more co-ordinated approach for whole-of-government and industry.⁸⁰ The Cairns City Council, however, stressed

74 Mr Jonathon Link, Community Liaison and Development Officer, Mental Health Program, Royal Flying Doctor Service, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 53.

75 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 7.

76 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 3.

77 Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 2.

78 Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc, *Submission No. 38*, p. 2.

79 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2.

80 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 4.

the need for Job Networks to go into the suburbs and suggested they visit the community centres where they can sit down and talk to people.⁸¹

Social capital and infrastructure

7.50 The Minerals Council of Australia emphasised the responsibility of government to build social capital and infrastructure in Indigenous communities. This includes health, education and welfare services and work readiness skills, life skills, financial management skills, family support services, numeracy and literacy programs and fitness for work programs.⁸² There are a limited number of job ready candidates of people with employability skills:

This can create a free rider effect, where companies are enticing Indigenous employees away from other companies who have invested heavily in their training and development. We are seen to be stripping capacity out of communities, threatening their sustainability, or cherry-picking good employees. There are plenty of diesel mechanics moving out of local garages and across to the mining community. There are people coming out of the fish and chips shops and the local newsagencies and getting a job. The local accountant is getting a job with us. That is why we concentrate on building sustainable communities, not just on corporate employment programs.⁸³

7.51 ‘Cherry-picking’ good employees from communities means they are losing skilled people to the mining companies without being able to backfill these positions and this makes it difficult to maintain the high level of service to their communities.⁸⁴

Improving succession planning and building capacity in communities will enable a larger pool of people to be job ready so that as one employer attracts an employee the opportunity for new jobs are opened up and are able to be filled by local people.⁸⁵

81 Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning and Development Officer, Cairns City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 21.

82 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

83 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

84 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 15.

85 Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 15.

- 7.52 What is required is mainstream support services that can 'provide work readiness in a culturally appropriate manner'.⁸⁶ Consideration needs to be given to providing employment and training opportunities in a way that the skills can be retained in the community.⁸⁷ Work life balance is different for Indigenous people and flexible working arrangements are necessary.⁸⁸

There are a lot of factors that have led to failure in the past. Not the least of these is the assumption that mainstream programs will work. They don't because they are designed for white people who live in cities or large towns and they miss key elements that would support success.⁸⁹

Working with Indigenous communities

- 7.53 A recent review of the COAG trials found that one of the major challenges was that:

Many government staff lacked the skills and experience to work in whole of government and intergovernmental approaches. This was mirrored by many community leaders needing increased skills in relation to community governance and capacity building.⁹⁰

- 7.54 Mr Anthony Kelly, AFL Northern Territory Ltd emphasised that:

... we must first consider the need to do things with Aboriginal people, not to or for Aboriginal people. Words such as 'ownership' and 'empowerment' will only resonate truly if they are backed by policy that is inclusive of Indigenous Australians from the outset.⁹¹

- 7.55 Pilbara Iron believes that relationships are built on respect and the provision of practical support.⁹²

86 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 3.

87 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 13.

88 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 3.

89 Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 37*, p. 3.

90 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 6.

91 Mr Anthony Kelly, Participation Manager, AFL Northern Territory Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 61.

92 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 19.

Equally important is to ensure that future policy initiatives actively engage indigenous people and/or their communities in the development, implementation and monitoring of employment and training programs, especially in rural and remote areas. Too often programs are created that appear on the surface to meet community needs, but fail because they are not accepted or understood by the people they were intended to support. The lack of consultation/engagement is not intentional but a result of not knowing who to involve or how to involve them.⁹³

7.56 Mission Australia believes that a multi-level response is needed which may include working with the extended family and community:

The complexity of issues confronting many Indigenous clients also means that simply dealing with one presenting issue, whether it be unemployment or homelessness, will not bring about sustainable and positive change.⁹⁴

7.57 Mission Australia has a best practice model in five key areas:

- *Holistic and strengths based responses* which help build a strong sense of cultural awareness;
- *Program flexibility* as local input is needed to ensure appropriateness and it may be difficult to replicate the successes of one area in another;
- *Partnerships* with a range of organisations, government agencies and business have achieved good outcomes;
- *Relationships* at the individual and organisational levels can achieve real and sustainable outcomes; and
- *Mentoring and access to ongoing support* and mentors need to be viewed as mainstream as these are key elements of successful initiatives.⁹⁵

7.58 Another issue raised was the lack of consistency within the Indigenous Employment Centres.⁹⁶ The Committee believes that there would be some benefit in reviewing the quality controls and accountability of these

93 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 8.

94 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 42.

95 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, pp. 42-43.

96 Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 50.

centres. It was suggested that it may be beneficial to move staff from the metropolitan areas because of the level of expertise.⁹⁷

There is a fear within government departments – both Commonwealth and state – that putting staff into communities like that is difficult because first you have to attract them. They need to look at the capacity within the community already. I know of several communities that have highly qualified Indigenous people within their communities but do not have exactly what that government department is saying in their selection criteria so therefore they do not get employed. I know of a COAG trial where there were two qualified social workers in that community yet they had social workers visiting. I struggle with that. Communities have capacity but people do not look at the community's capacity. They just keep imposing and bringing in.⁹⁸

- 7.59 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder commented on the tendency of non-Indigenous people to be patronising. He believes that if you treat Indigenous people as equals they are terrific to work with.⁹⁹ The trust factor is important and has been developed over a long term relationship with the local Indigenous communities.¹⁰⁰

... best practice are based on situations where there are longstanding relationships with Indigenous communities and demonstrable mutual benefit, mutual trust and mutual respect. That is a fundamental precursor to success.¹⁰¹

- 7.60 The National Tertiary Education Union saw as critical the need for leadership to embrace the principles of an Indigenous employment strategy and to have a senior Indigenous person with:

... a strong mandate or capacity in the decision making process, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of Indigenous program activity relative to the organisation.¹⁰²

97 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 51.

98 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 52.

99 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 14.

100 Mission Australia Employment Services Bega, *Submission No. 99*, p. 2.

101 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 6.

102 Mr Joel Wright, Indigenous Officer, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 27.

7.61 In Indigenous culture family is everything and when there are one or two family members earning a wage, it can put a strain on family relationships.¹⁰³ Miss Jane Lawton believes that it is negligent to look at the employment strategy and not the social needs of the community:

... but there are people being brought into a status by having a job and being able to move up, and those sorts of things, and people get envious and there are more conflicts. There are traumas with people thinking, 'Well, why didn't I get the opportunity?' and all those sorts of things. Those are social concerns.¹⁰⁴

7.62 Indigenous policies need to be flexible and allow for difference, have the capacity to allow the people in the communities to make decisions and for governments to make effective the rhetoric about coordinated approaches and have the same policy parameters across the various agencies.

Indigenous youth have shown that they can make a significant contribution within the local labour market. They only need the opportunity and a bit of encouragement and support to make a successful transition into the workforce.¹⁰⁵

Relationships

7.63 Newmont Australia Ltd stressed the point that it is a layered approach, emphasising that it is 'absolutely about relationships':

Another thing I would leave you with is that it is all about relationships and layering of support. We have registered prevocational programs and those sorts of things, and everybody in the industry has. It is really a matter of getting a team of people together who have a relationship one to the other at all the different levels ... It is the realisation that it is not just one person who does this. It is layered. It is supported by the elders, the communities and a whole host of different people.¹⁰⁶

7.64 Mr John Corboy believes it is not about money and comes down to whether the Government genuinely wants Indigenous communities to

103 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 66.

104 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 65.

105 Job Futures – Bunbury, *Submission No. 30*, p. 2.

106 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, pp. 38-39.

take ownership and participate in addressing the issues.¹⁰⁷ A reoccurring theme throughout the inquiry was that responses from government are not giving local ownership. Implementation of national policies must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate and support local solutions. One of the issues raised was:

The issue is not so much layers of jurisdiction but a preparedness by departments to accept that a methodology which looks and acts differently to their own is in fact legitimate.¹⁰⁸

7.65 Mr Corboy has found that the system is so rigid that you are unable to participate unless you fit into an existing program.¹⁰⁹

Or is it a matter of 'You can play, as long as it is by my rules, even if it does not make any commercial sense to you'? The response from business people is, 'We can go and make money.' None of us get paid for this. There is no vested interest for us. I think there is an enormous chasm there that needs to be bridged. I am not saying it is the government's fault, DEWR's fault or the employer's fault. I think there needs to be one good dose of commonsense in here.¹¹⁰

Partnerships

7.66 Pilbara Iron have found programs to be most successful when they work in partnership with others; government agencies, non-government organisations or communities.¹¹¹ The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry described partnerships between industry, communities and governments as central to what they do.¹¹² The Aboriginal Employment Strategy has also found partnerships to be pivotal:

I can sum up the success of our programs in six words
"Partnerships, partnerships, partnerships, mentors, mentors,
mentors".¹¹³

107 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 5.

108 Mr Anthony Cutcliffe, Director, The Eureka Project Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 11.

109 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 6.

110 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 5.

111 Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development, Pilbara Iron, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 20.

112 Mr Dean O'Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 November 2005, p. 1.

113 Mr Richards Estens, *Don't care should care - Anti-Poverty Week*, www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=83 (accessed on 6 May 2007, p. 3).

7.67 The Minerals Council of Australia has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Government.¹¹⁴ MCA added that:

... it is hoped that the MOU will deliver enhanced Government accountability and service delivery to Indigenous people through improved access to:

- literacy and numeracy education;
- work readiness initiatives such as Fitness to Work programs;
- the acquisition of standard vehicle licences;
- drug and alcohol services;
- financial services;
- family support services including child care and counselling services; and
- human and financial capital to facilitate Indigenous enterprise development.¹¹⁵

7.68 The minerals industry sees government's responsibility as 'providing an enabling framework and community capacity to take up the opportunities offered by the industry, through the provision of quality public infrastructure, in terms of education, health and welfare'.¹¹⁶

... to ensure that Indigenous people are work-ready and have the appropriate support for themselves, their families and communities post employment, to stay in employment.¹¹⁷

Evaluation processes

7.69 An issue that arose repeatedly in the evidence to the inquiry was that of adequacy of the data collected. Incorrect data on the Indigenous population was a particular problem as this has implications for policy development, strategic planning and deciding future directions.¹¹⁸

7.70 The Committee remains concerned about the adequacy of data on which to base the formulation of new government policy. Notwithstanding DEWR's collection data mechanisms in various programs, given the whole

114 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 2.

115 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, pp. 2-3.

116 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 3.

117 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 3.

118 For example see Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2; Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3; Centre of Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, *Submission No. 72*, p. 3; Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 75.

of government approach, this information needs to be available to the industry and community participants in a useful format.

- 7.71 Dr Michael Dockery expressed concern over what he saw as a lack of transparency and rigour in the evaluation of Indigenous labour market programs and economic policy.¹¹⁹ He referred to the mismatch between the objectives outlined in the policy documents and the measured outcomes. The basic elements of an evaluation framework are missing:

Having decided the objectives, you put in place some policy or processes that for some theoretical reason you believe is going to help bring about those outcomes that you want. Then to evaluate whether it is working or not you have some indicators, which you believe measure whether or not you are moving towards those objectives. These things are fundamental to any evaluation that you might conduct.¹²⁰

- 7.72 The way that performance is measured for Indigenous employment programs can undermine effective program delivery:

This is compounded by a lack of understanding of the social, cultural, and economic issues confronting Indigenous people by those responsible for making decisions about policies, programs and services to achieve Indigenous employment outcomes.¹²¹

- 7.73 The setting of goals must be realistic with the political and administrative capacity to achieve them.¹²²

... at the end of the day you do not want to be too hung up about achieving a particular number, which you may end up not achieving because of something completely out of your control like a world downturn. You had the example when the Job Network came in where people were given targets and they were funded according to certain placements. The really successful Job Networks ended up placing their full allotment and had to shut up shop because they were too successful. They had met their targets. If you achieve your targets, does that mean you then stop trying? I have concerns about targets. I think principles are more important.¹²³

119 Dr Michael Dockery, *Submission No. 6*, p. 1.

120 Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, p. 1.

121 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 6.

122 Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, pp. 6-7.

123 Dr Michael Dockery, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 December 2005, p. 7.

- 7.74 The Kaurna Heritage Board called for comprehensive longitudinal surveys and evaluations of Indigenous employment throughout Australia.¹²⁴ Rio Tinto Ltd is contributing to the development of a tool kit on Indigenous employment to assist mining companies to achieve improved employment outcomes.¹²⁵ The minerals industry has needed to build towns, hospitals, schools, airfields and railways line because there is an opportunity cost in a highly competitive market in waiting for governments.¹²⁶

Currency audit

- 7.75 Ms Deemal-Hall emphasised the need for a currency audit to identify the expertise available within government agencies and the communities' ability to engage in negotiations before commencing negotiations, including those for shared responsibility agreements.¹²⁷

We need to get our stories straight and also know what each of us can do, what our strengths and weaknesses are. I do not think we have really done a blueprint of what we bring to the table. You get some communities that already know exactly where they want to go, but government is a bit slow on the uptake.¹²⁸

- 7.76 Departments are not working collaboratively and sharing information and it is important to recognise strengths and weaknesses in community governance.¹²⁹ Ms Deemal-Hall suggested that departments could engage with other areas such as police and customs so that they can access the expertise and skills of other areas. In relation to the culture of engagement, in some situations one partner has more power than the other:

... it is not really a partnership and when we engage we are not really engaging. The same could be said about education and employment. We have people who are part of the work first program but are only passively working or passively getting educated. It is really about nutting out what the culture is that we are going to use in terms of engagement, what we will not use and how we are going to action that.¹³⁰

124 Kaurna Heritage Board, *Submission No. 49*, p. 1.

125 Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 41.

126 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, pp. 4-5.

127 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 45.

128 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 48.

129 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 49.

130 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 47.

7.77 This will lead to the next stage which is one of mentoring change and accountability.¹³¹ Mr Leigh Cleghorn would like to see greater accountability of Aboriginal organisations:

... the accountability from federal and state funding bureaucracies is not making people accountable enough when things first start to go wrong and then expecting it to be fixed, is not the answer. The bureaucracy should be having more of a hand in what is going on all the time, perhaps a bit of input before it goes too far, so that people do not get an expectation of, 'That's how things are. That's how we can operate. The money keeps coming.'¹³²

7.78 Dr Patrick Sullivan made the point that Indigenous Coordination Centres have a very difficult job as they need to be responsive to Canberra, have a policy coordination role for government agencies which are not under their control, Indigenous regional politics, regional social relations and community relations in discrete settlements.¹³³ The skills on which senior public servants are recruited may not be the skills set needed to negotiate with communities. The logistics are also difficult because of the large areas involved:

You would either be spending all your time out of the office, and not doing the work that you are supposed to be doing back in the office, or you would be spending all your time in the office and not knowing what is happening on the ground. There are structural constraints, cultural constraints and constraints of knowledge and skills which I think are going to make the job of these ICC managers extremely difficult.¹³⁴

7.79 Indigenous Coordination Centres may be able to utilise organisations to act as an intermediary with the communities or regions.

Those organisations will be able to have more time on the ground and will have the necessary skills – not necessarily in a single individual. Some of those people will be good at communicating with the communities, other people will have skills in putting together plans and other people will be good at negotiating with

131 Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 47.

132 Mr Leigh Cleghorn, Manager, Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 62.

133 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 10.

134 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 11.

government. The difficulty for OIPC is how to negotiate the relationship with such NGOs.¹³⁵

- 7.80 The consistent theme of evidence to the Committee was the apparent lack of communication between government agencies. Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency summarised the situation as:

A scattergun approach to deal with Indigenous employment – and by that I mean funding a number of agencies to go and do a whole lot of different things, where there is a lot of crossover and similar things – creates a huge amount of confusion both for the individuals within the community and for the employer groups we are dealing with. If we are serious about changing the situation, we need to be more concentrated and defined in how we work forward. The last thing we can afford is for individuals being confused and dropping out of the process. Similarly, we cannot afford to have 15 people all knocking on the door of business and industry saying, ‘Take my person, take my person,’ so they withdraw from the process. That is the very reality that we are tripping over ... It can become a quagmire of service provision...¹³⁶

- 7.81 Kimberley Group Training believes there needs to be an acknowledgement of those working in the field who have the skills, knowledge and ability to progress this.¹³⁷ The Wunan Foundation raised the issue of feedback to the government:

There are not really a lot of formal structures in place to provide feedback to government. Policies tend to come out and we never have an opportunity to discuss those. We have irregular discussions with senior people in the bureaucracy. They tend to be informal rather than formal and not policy focused on what we are doing. There is the regional partnership agreement process ... which may provide a better structure for communication with government and achieve some real coordination of government resourcing into this sort of stuff.¹³⁸

135 Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 September 2005, p. 11.

136 Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer, Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, pp. 79- 80.

137 Mr John Gummery, Chief Executive Officer, Kimberley Group Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 22.

138 Mr David Addis, Chief Executive Officer, Wunan Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 18.

Funding arrangements

- 7.82 The South Australian Government would like to see a stock-take of funding available for training and employment at the federal and state levels and the possible broad-banding of funding arrangements for Indigenous training and employment to enable greater flexibility in the use of resources.¹³⁹ A discretionary budget would enable people who live and work and who have a much better understanding of the local requirements to make the decisions.¹⁴⁰ Local decision making and cross-pollination of available funds while maintaining accountability for taxpayer funds would be a better approach which would enable progress beyond the previous silo approach.¹⁴¹ The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder have a 'heads of agency' meeting where a collective view is taken and one agency then coordinates and leads the process for that particular issue.¹⁴²
- 7.83 One off funding grants can establish a program but do not enable it to continue.¹⁴³ There is no quick fix and long-term solutions require long-term funding.¹⁴⁴ It was argued that many people in the current system may need at least 18 months to deal with a multitude of issues and to skill them up.¹⁴⁵
- 7.84 Dubbo City Council has found success with funding arrangements which enable three years of employment. Those demonstrating abilities over that period have been able to win permanent positions with Council.¹⁴⁶
- 7.85 Support from the wider Indigenous community could also enhance the success of the projects.¹⁴⁷

A further challenge for all governments is to ensure that employment programs are developed and funded in ways that permit indigenous people to become, in time, providers of training and employment in their own communities ... It is now well recognised that improved opportunities at the community level

139 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 8.

140 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 8.

141 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, pp. 6-7.

142 Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 8.

143 Bankstown City Council, *Submission No. 55*, p. 1.

144 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 8.

145 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 8.

146 Dubbo City Council, *Submission No. 56*, p. 1.

147 Bankstown City Council, *Submission No. 55*, p. 1.

can be a key driver in generating long-term viable employment outcomes as well as breaking the dependency on government welfare.¹⁴⁸

- 7.86 Mrs Cheryle Taylor argued strongly for a longer funding arrangement for Indigenous specialist employment services dealing with highly disadvantaged clients.¹⁴⁹ In the construction industry, for example, continuity of funding is important because most traineeships and apprenticeships are over several years.¹⁵⁰ The time issue is critical and there is a need to understand and be sensitive to what is required to empower Indigenous people.¹⁵¹

A key thing is that governments give Aboriginal people money for a few years and then just pull it. It is a constant process. There is no organisation that is building, building, building, building career paths and going for the long-term outcome. Three times the rug tried to be pulled from under this organisation and that is the tragedy. The government owns the Aboriginal issue. Surely in this country now we are about getting people working and building the partnerships.¹⁵²

- 7.87 The South Australian Government has made funding available to the Tauondi College for four years and this provides a passage for students.¹⁵³

Flexibility of government programs

- 7.88 Voyagers Hotels and Resorts commented on the flexibility of DEWR programs when they experienced difficulties in finding local Indigenous people to undertake the required Certificate course under the contract for the Structured Training and Employment Program.¹⁵⁴

One of the things that I have identified is flexibility. It has to be flexible. It goes back to work practices – they have to be flexible ...

148 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 110*, p. 8.

149 Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 2.

150 Cullacabardee Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission No. 12*, p. 2.

151 Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Manguri Employment Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 11.

152 Mr Richard Estens, Chairman, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 11.

153 Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 5.

154 Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources, Voyagers Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 5.

These contracts and any type of funding have to have the flexibility inbuilt. It cannot be rigid, because it is not a matter of one size fits all.¹⁵⁵

- 7.89 There were also a number of suggestions for enhancements to the current STEP program which could provide some up-front payments and thus reduce the financial risk for the employer.¹⁵⁶

Coordination of government approaches

- 7.90 Universities are now required to have an Indigenous Employment strategy and that Indigenous people are involved in the decision making processes of the institution.¹⁵⁷ The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) expressed concern that DEWR and DEST have advised some universities to remove references to their Indigenous employment strategies from their enterprise agreements pursuant to being compliant with the Higher Education Workplace Reforms Requirements.¹⁵⁸ This was explained as allowing flexibility for management to change the resource allocations over time.¹⁵⁹ The NTEU believes that there should be recognition of the circumstances of a particular policy objective in the application of a general principle.¹⁶⁰
- 7.91 The NTEU believes that the binding requirements in the enterprise agreements has been one of the major drivers in the 24 per cent increase in Indigenous employment in the tertiary education sector over a four to five year period.¹⁶¹ The NTEU believes that Indigenous employment in Australian universities is trending in the right direction.¹⁶² The Committee

155 Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources, Voyagers Hotels and Resorts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 5.

156 Mr Murray Coates, General Manager, East Kimberley Job Pathways, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 14.

157 Mr Joel Wright, Indigenous Officer, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 22.

158 Mr Joel Wright, Indigenous Officer, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 23.

159 Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 23.

160 Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 23.

161 Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 24.

162 National Tertiary Education Union, *Submission No. 76*, p. 7.

has been told that the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council is aware of this contradiction.¹⁶³

- 7.92 The Committee believes that in situations where there are unintended adverse consequences from recent reforms that the move to greater flexibility should not override essential aspects of existing agreements in a manner that disadvantages a particular group. The Government should enter into genuine discussions with all key stakeholders to identify the implications of the industrial reforms and alter the policies where appropriate.

The Future

*This is my passion. I am employed and I can make a difference.*¹⁶⁴

- 7.93 Reverend Dr Gondarra OAM, Chairman of the Arnhemland Progress Association summarized the current situation as dependency being ‘one of the biggest diseases in Australia’.¹⁶⁵ He stressed that handouts will not help Aboriginal people and that unemployment is now one of the biggest concerns and that his people need to take up the challenge.¹⁶⁶

This is where the government needs to start to think very seriously that unemployment is a disease, it is killing our people. People are dying – in 10 or 20 years time a lot of the people are going to die. It is creating a health problem: they sit and do nothing. I think this is where we need to start to think about it seriously. Dependency is killing people. If we want Aboriginal people to be educated, give them opportunity. There must be an open door where they can find jobs rather than sitting and doing nothing. ALPA has 200 employees. There is a challenge and we always need to see that our people get something to do.¹⁶⁷

- 7.94 Dr Foley commented, however, that:

163 Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 24.

164 Ms Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 66.

165 Reverend Dr Djiniyini Goondarra, Chairman, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 59.

166 Reverend Dr Djiniyini Goondarra, Chairman, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 59.

167 Reverend Dr Djiniyini Goondarra, Chairman, Arnhemland Progress Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 60.

We are entering a new era in Indigenous Australian history. This is characterised by a new structure in Indigenous leadership, a new philosophy of mutual responsibility and a greater awareness of the plight of indigenous people.¹⁶⁸

One size does not fit all

7.95 A collaborative approach is needed as Australia is facing the economic implications of an ageing population, labour shortages and a five per cent unemployment rate of which a significant proportion are Indigenous people.¹⁶⁹ The COAG trials were implemented in different ways at the various locations:

Flexible approaches need to be applied which reflect the individual circumstances of communities, the nature of the issues facing communities, and the developmental status of intergovernmental and cross sectoral relationships. There cannot be a one size fits all approach.¹⁷⁰

7.96 Newmont Australia Ltd told the Committee that Government should:

... support where you can, but do not try to be all things to all people. You cannot do it—just as we cannot be an alternative government.¹⁷¹

7.97 Dr Foley emphasised the need for different policies and progressions for different groups of Indigenous people.¹⁷²

... the field of Indigenous affairs is littered with the unintended consequences of people trying to do good things. We must learn from that.¹⁷³

7.98 One policy will not fit everyone and there needs to be put in place different steps for the ladder of progression of economic development for

168 Dr Dennis Foley, *Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible*, Opening statement to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 23 May 2005, p. 6, *Exhibit No. 42*.

169 Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 17.

170 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 7.

171 Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 39.

172 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 8.

173 Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman, Northern Territory Government Task Force on Indigenous Economic Development, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 2.

these groups.¹⁷⁴ For example, policies, resources and legislation appear to be geared to remote Indigenous peoples and the situation in urban areas is very different.¹⁷⁵

7.99 There are also differences at the individual level.

I think one thing is overlooked here, and it is culture. It is a culture of men and boys and women and girls entering the workforce. Men generally are like a football team: they get together and support each other. When you have a contractor like Spotless which can provide manual labour and a blokey environment outdoors, you will have success. I do not know anything about nursing, but you have a group of women with their uniforms on – that type of environment is conducive to good outcomes because the culture bit is there.¹⁷⁶

National approach

7.100 Evidence to the Committee suggested that there could be improvements in taking a longer term national approach. The Queensland Government would like to see a strategic national policy framework developed in consultation with the state and territory governments, local government, Indigenous communities, peak industry bodies and unions to work to achieve enhanced employment outcomes for Indigenous employment.¹⁷⁷ Indigenous Business Australia called for a national reference group to link vocational education and training, employment, professional development, business opportunities, business management, industry strategies and regional strategies.¹⁷⁸ Mr Ian Trust would like to see a 10 to 20 year long-term vision or strategy for Aboriginal people.¹⁷⁹

The domino effect

7.101 Dr Foley's research has shown that:

174 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 8. See also Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 48.

175 Mr Paul Tulloch, Manager, Strategic Planning, City of Onkaparinga, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 39.

176 Mr Mikael Smith, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Multicultural Policy and Programs, City of Port Phillip Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 60.

177 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 105*, p. 12.

178 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission No. 104*, p. 27.

179 Mr Ian Trust, Executive Director, Wunan Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 July 2006, p. 33.

... if we can invest in even one Indigenous person and allow them to be successful in business, somewhere between 24 and 38 people in their family structure can be affected directly or indirectly.¹⁸⁰

7.102 Dr Foley observed that:

Interestingly, the greatest capital investment is human capital, which is the development of their children. If we understand the Greeks, Italians and the Vietnamese who have come to Australia as migrants, the first generation work hard as labourers, build up their capital and invest it into their children, who go through university. It is exciting to now see second generation Indigenous children from the entrepreneur going through into professional areas or as second generation entrepreneurs. When I started this 14 years ago I did not see any of that.¹⁸¹

7.103 Dr Foley added that:

There is so much negativity in our community ... but there are positives out there, If we do not have a glimmer of hope, we have nothing.¹⁸²

Cultural connect

7.104 The success of a cross-cultural work team requires flexibility, trust and open and honest communication.¹⁸³ The recent review of the COAG trials found that:

Government staff need training in how to engage with respect for the protocols and processes in Indigenous communities; this is particularly true for those staff who are new to Indigenous affairs or to the community.¹⁸⁴

7.105 Some of the issues for government programs are about sensitivity and cultural awareness and 'the road to hell is often paved with good intentions'.¹⁸⁵

180 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 6.

181 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 5.

182 Dr Dennis Foley, *Transcript of Evidence*, 23 May 2005, p. 14.

183 Alice Springs Desert Park, *Submission No. 84*, p. 1.

184 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 7.

185 Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 5.

The basis of recognition and respect for indigenous people lies with an understanding and awareness of Indigenous cultures and the issues facing indigenous people today within and outside the workplace.¹⁸⁶

- 7.106 The Minerals Council of Australia believes that working with Indigenous people ‘needs to be founded in mutual respect and in the recognition of Indigenous Australian’s rights in law, interests and special connections to land and waters in Australia’.¹⁸⁷ The *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations* listed as a challenge ‘learning to develop effective respectful relationships and partnerships’:

Some government officers did not have sufficient understanding of Indigenous communities and culture, and some Indigenous leaders did not have enough understanding of government processes and roles and culture.¹⁸⁸

- 7.107 Delivering successful outcomes from employment services for Indigenous communities requires sound preparation, developing trusting relationships and networks and:

Acknowledging and reinforcing the importance of Indigenous culture is a fundamental princip[le] underpinning good practice. Our clients are often dealing with low self-esteem, lack of confidence and, in some cases, limited or no knowledge of their culture and history. Building a strong sense of cultural awareness is an important factor in their personal development.¹⁸⁹

- 7.108 The Committee believes that the Government should openly recognise the damage that past welfare policies have done to the employment incentives for many Indigenous people and that the Government implement more culturally and community appropriate policies which strongly emphasise the value of employment

186 Alice Springs Town Council, *Submission No. 51*, p. 2.

187 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, p. 1.

188 *Synopsis Review of the COAG Trial Evaluations; Report to the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination*, Morgan Disney & Associates Pty Ltd, Tracey Whetnall Consulting and Wis-Wei Consulting Pty Ltd, November 2006, p. 6.

189 Mission Australia, *Submission No. 90*, p. 4.

Cultural diversity

7.109 A lack of appreciation of cultural diversity within and across Indigenous communities is one of the key cultural impediments.¹⁹⁰ Engaging Indigenous Australian in the workforce may require different systems and support structures.¹⁹¹ Ms Ah Chin from the Office of Commissioner for Public Employment stated that:

Addressing Indigenous employment at a community and whole-of-government level must reflect the diverse range of cultural values, specific or regional issues and the world views of Indigenous people, and these must be integrated into the development and application of policies and strategies.¹⁹²

7.110 One of the biggest challenges is preparing Aboriginal communities and our populations for the challenge. We need to identify the community priorities and expectations as a starting point. Mr David Rathman described the challenge for Aboriginal people as moving from a position of high unemployment to one of working and at the same time not losing their cultural integrity in that process but emphasised that 'That is our business'.¹⁹³

7.111 Mr Ivan Deemal commented that people coming through are accepting that they can retain their culture at home but must acquire the necessary skills to earn a living.¹⁹⁴ Mr Ron Weatherall outlined the basic principles as being:

... about valuing and respecting cultural diversity and difference, working in partnership with Indigenous people and building positive and constructive relationships with Indigenous people as equal partners. If people do that then there is an opportunity to go forward in a meaningful way.¹⁹⁵

190 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

191 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

192 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 21.

193 Mr David Rathman, Executive Director, Aboriginal Education, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 17 February 2006, p. 6.

194 Mr Ivan Deemal, Senior Coordinator, Community Relations, Cairns Region Group Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 58.

195 Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Employment and Indigenous Initiatives, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 July 2005, p. 13.

7.112 The Committee is aware of many other examples where Indigenous people are keen to share their culture. The Committee would argue that employers sometimes do not respect their knowledge and culture and do not bring out the best in Indigenous communities. The Committee would like to congratulate those employers who put more effort into adapting work practices to accommodate local Indigenous cultures rather than requiring Indigenous people to work in a way that is entirely alien to them. Employers have found a number of ways in which this bridge can be built.¹⁹⁶

Private sector employment opportunities

7.113 Given the severe skills shortages facing many industries in Australia, the Committee believes that the private sector is able to provide a broad range of opportunities for Indigenous employment in the future. With the proximity of many minerals industry operations to Indigenous communities and as the largest Indigenous employer in Australia, it has a range of employment opportunities across the professions, skills and services.¹⁹⁷

7.114 There remain, however, areas in which there is a lack of Indigenous employment despite significant local skills shortages.¹⁹⁸ Shepparton was described as a vibrant community where there were plenty of jobs:

But when you thought about it, if you walk into any business in Shepparton and you saw an Indigenous person involved in that business - be it banking, retail or whatever - it would be a surprise.¹⁹⁹

196 For example Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development, Newmont Australia Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 October 2005, p. 40; Ms Lisa Giacomelli, Manager, Community Development, Blacktown City Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 29; Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager, Northern Territory, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 44; Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, Mrs Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 July 2005, p. 13; Flinders University, *Submission No. 70*, p. 2.

197 Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 1.

198 Mayor Fran Kilgariff, Alice Springs Town Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 12 July 2005, p. 12; Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

199 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

7.115 The point was made that the business leaders in Shepparton are prepared to employ Indigenous people provided they are trained and there is support for the employers in dealing with unfamiliar issues.²⁰⁰

We really don't want subsidies. We want this to be a business deal. We are on about employing people and getting something at the end of it.²⁰¹

7.116 Finding suitably qualified Indigenous jobseekers to fill the positions is one of the challenges facing industries today and this may make it difficult to achieve the employment targets.²⁰² For example, the *Ladders to Success* program run in Shepparton was not continued because of the lack of available work-ready Indigenous people in the area.²⁰³ Those wishing to increase the number of Indigenous employees are competing with others for people who have the skills required.²⁰⁴

Tackling barriers holistically

7.117 A holistic approach is necessary to improve Indigenous employment outcomes as there is a range of contributing factors such as housing, transport, drug and alcohol level compliance, health, self-esteem and social support, which need to be addressed.²⁰⁵ The foundation of the whole-of-government approach is governments and Indigenous people taking responsibility, with all government polices and funds coordinated and used effectively and strategically in cooperation with local communities.²⁰⁶

200 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

201 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 3.

202 For example, see Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 64*, p. 2; Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 38.

203 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 6.

204 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 12; Ms Debra Dodgson, National Manager, Workforce Diversity, Australia Post, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 21; Ms Colleen Lazenby, Manager, Community Safety and Well Being, City of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 53; Rio Tinto Ltd, *Submission No. 80*, p. 14.

205 Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 August 2005, p. 7; Mission Australia, *Submission No. 90*, p. 4; Rio Tinto Group, *Submission No. 80*, p. 20; Bloodwood Tree Association Inc, *Exhibit No. 19*, p. 4; New South Wales Government, *Submission No. 111*, p. 5.

206 For information on whole-of-government approach to Indigenous Affairs, see http://www.oipc.gov.au/About_OIPC/Indigenous_Affairs_Arrangements/1ImprovingIndigenousServices.asp.

7.118 Ms Ah Chin stressed the need to look at the role of governments in creating, supporting and maintaining employment, economic development and sustainability for Indigenous people in communities.²⁰⁷

7.119 In recognising the interconnectedness of factors, the Northern Territory Government's approach includes law and justice, housing, education, economic development and employment to develop a 'critical mass' to improve Aboriginal health.²⁰⁸ The CEO of Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships in North Queensland agreed that:

You need a strong health program, a strong youth and child program, a strong leadership program and strong family programs if you are to get strong employment and economic development outcomes.²⁰⁹

7.120 Community groups also acknowledge the necessity of a holistic approach to improving Indigenous employment outcomes. Mr Paul Briggs of the Rumbalara Football and Netball Club in Shepparton, referred to the need to break down the barriers and enhance the level of communication between the Aboriginal people and the community. In Shepparton the dialogue is now happening between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders after 10-15 years of hard work:

It requires a whole of community and a whole of government approach to address the crisis in Indigenous family lives. Indigenous unemployment is not just about statistics; it is not about politics, bureaucracy or programs.²¹⁰

It is a generational issue and the data has not changed over numerous years and over successive governments. It requires a change in culture and practices and that sometimes requires innovation and courage on all parts to create the change that is necessary if we want to enjoy a better outcome. It is about people and about families ... By addressing the issues of unemployment, we are also addressing the issues of health and education and the social and economic standing of Indigenous people.²¹¹

207 Ms Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy, Office of Commissioner for Public Employment, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 July 2005, p. 21.

208 Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce, *Exhibit No. 125*, p. 7.

209 Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 July 2005, p. 29.

210 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc., *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 1.

211 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc., *Transcript of Evidence*,

- 7.121 While recognising and promoting the involvement of the private sector, government must ensure that it is meeting its own responsibilities. The Minerals Council of Australia, for example, encourages the federal government to recognise the basic social capital and infrastructure that is needed in remote and regional Australia including the need for increased resourcing for programs, including work-readiness, driver education, access to drug and alcohol services and family support services.²¹²
- 7.122 Mr Paul Briggs can see this happening in Shepparton through the alignment of the private sector, the government through the COAG process and civic leaders 'to want to make a change and see this as an issue facing the community rather than isolating it as an Aboriginal issue of Aboriginal unemployment.'²¹³

Governments can't fix these problems, we have to fix it as a town. And I think what happens in Australia is that we tend to sit back a bit and wait for the bureaucrats to deliver for us. That is not really the way to go - you have to build your own fight in the town.²¹⁴

Whole of person approach

- 7.123 Indigenous people seeking employment will often have training needs, accommodation needs, possible drug and alcohol needs and may have mental health issues.²¹⁵ Compartmentalisation is one of our major challenges.²¹⁶ Employment departments deal with employment but a better way to do things is to have funding relating to a person:

The person's needs, diverse and complex as they are, with a set of outcomes being, perhaps, secure accommodation, moving into employment, dealing with drugs and alcohol et cetera.²¹⁷

11 April 2006, p. 2.

212 Minerals Council of Australia, *Submission No. 118*, pp. 2-3; Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 February 2006, p. 2.

213 Mr Paul Briggs, President, Rumbalara Football and Netball Club Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 2.

214 Mr Richard Estens *Imagine the Future by Learning from the Past - Aboriginal Employment Strategy: Working together*, Speech to the 2005 Communities in Control Conference convened by Our Community and Centacare Catholic Family Services, June 2005, p. 3.

215 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

216 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

217 Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 19 August 2005, p. 47.

Concluding comments

- 7.124 Everyone is now aware of Indigenous employment potential and there are a greater number of positions being offered.²¹⁸ This is reflected in young people being more aware of the opportunities available for them and more are staying at school.²¹⁹
- 7.125 The Committee believes that the reasonable aim of Indigenous people participating in the mainstream Australian economy will be enhanced by more enlightened policies in welfare, education and employment which recognise long-term employment as a key foundation to the above outcome.
- 7.126 While a lot of employment for Indigenous people is with government agencies, most public services employ fewer than their employment targets would suggest is optimal. Further, the skills shortages across Australia have provided a significant incentive to private companies to actively pursue Indigenous employees. The Committee sees much of the potential to increase Indigenous employment opportunities being in the private sector as they address these skills shortages.
- 7.127 The Committee believes that the Government should fully recognise the creative opportunities available in the private sector for Indigenous employment - particularly in the mining industry - and ensure maximum recognition by all areas of government of the success that is being achieved and where government services have clear responsibility to be more adaptive to those positive examples.

Recommendation 12

- 7.128 **The Committee recommends that the best practice models within industries like the mining industry be understood, promoted and encouraged by Government as one of the best models to achieve greater Indigenous participation in the workforce.**
- 7.129 This inquiry has shown that a great deal is being done and there is an improvement across the board on how to achieve success in Indigenous

218 Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 37.

219 Miss Jenny McGuire, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 October 2005, p. 37.

employment. More is now known about how to address the barriers that have historically limited Indigenous employment opportunities.

Recommendation 13

7.130 The Committee recommends that the Government promote the Memorandum of Understanding of the Minerals Council of Australia and the Indigenous Land Corporation models as best practice which could be adopted by other sectors.

Recommendation 14

7.131 The Committee recommends that the Government disseminate innovative strategies with respect to Indigenous employment within and between public and private sectors and the implementation of best practice within the public service where appropriate.

7.132 While the whole-of-government approach is relatively new and there has been a steep learning curve with a great deal more to be learnt, the Committee believes that there is a genuine attempt by bureaucracies to improve service delivery. The Committee believes that real inroads can only be achieved through partnerships and welcomes the enhanced involvement of the corporate sector and Indigenous communities.

7.133 The issues canvassed in this report are by no means new. In August 2001, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee tabled the *We can do it* report which stated that:

The Committee is optimistic that the right attitudes exist to address the many problems faced by Indigenous people. However, in order to achieve real solutions for all Indigenous people wherever they live in Australia, there needs to be continuing co-operation, collaboration and consultation between all levels of government, Indigenous Australians and the wider community.²²⁰

220 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 2001, *We can do it! The needs of urban dwelling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*, p. 153.

7.134 This Committee also tabled the *Many Ways Forward* report in June 2004 which stated that:

Several key themes dominated the evidence, specifically, the need for greater coordination and integration of service provision, the need for improved governance within Indigenous community organisations and the need for greater individual empowerment in order to enable Indigenous people to play a key role in articulating and achieving better outcomes. Overlaid on these themes are factors of geographic location. Different strategies are needed to address issues in remote, rural, regional and urban areas, and there is no one-size-fits-all model.²²¹

7.135 The Committee's report in 2004 concluded that there has been:

... the need for Indigenous people to be more involved in the design and delivery of services. This functions on many levels of policy advice, to training mainstream providers, to directly providing services, to participating in effective partnerships. The evidence also indicated that in many cases Indigenous people understand the issues and the solutions but are not supported or resourced to implement initiatives in a sustainable way ... The evidence suggested that no one was better placed to understand location - or community-specific issues and to contribute to the design and delivery of targeted services better than Indigenous people themselves.²²²

7.136 The Committee fully appreciates the challenges in moving to the whole-of-government approach. The size of administrative bureaucracies means that they usually take a broad brush approach. The evidence to the Committee, however, repeatedly emphasised the need for an individual approach in encouraging Indigenous people into employment on an ongoing basis. While there has been considerable movement to a more flexible approach and to listen to Indigenous communities, in many areas there remain significant gaps between the regional needs and the provision of services from an employer's and an employee's perspective.

There is a considerable amount of work to be achieved under the whole-of-government framework of the Indigenous Economic

221 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 2004, *Many Ways Forward: Report of the inquiry into capacity building and service delivery in Indigenous communities*, p. 3.

222 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 2004, *Many Ways Forward: Report of the inquiry into capacity building and service delivery in Indigenous communities*, p. 237.

Development Strategy, but if the momentum of government agencies matches the political and community aspirations, then we should expect that success will be forthcoming.²²³

- 7.137 There are layers of bureaucracy which are an impediment to service delivery. When decisions are taken at the community or regional level, there need to be decision-making capacity at the coalface. The bureaucracy needs to think more in terms of the clients. Departments have a responsibility to understand their clients and develop programs that can work.
- 7.138 Ms Cathy Duncan believes that 'The answers for Indigenous people are in the communities and the people' and we should be providing programs which allow the people to come forward.²²⁴
- 7.139 The Committee believes that it is time for a reality check and an acknowledgement of how things really are to enable progress to be made. Mr John Corboy stressed the need to know where things are now and to take an 'all-of-problem' approach.²²⁵
- 7.140 The evidence is that it can be done and is happening. The capacity of those who rely on enlightened self interest from all perspectives are doing it with skill, quiet determination and leadership.

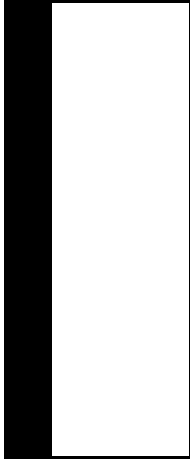
BARRY WAKELIN MP

Chairman

223 Indigenous Business Australia, *Submission 104*, p. 28.

224 Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation, Aboriginal Employment Strategy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 February 2006, p. 26.

225 Mr John Corboy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 April 2006, p. 8.



Minority report on Indigenous employment

**The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP,
Ms Annette Ellis MP, Mr Peter Garrett MP and
The Hon Warren Snowdon MP**

The tabling of this report to the House of Representatives takes place against the background of the government declared national emergency and the dramatic military-supported federal intervention in the Northern Territory following the “Little Children are Sacred” report¹. Amongst the recommendations of that report, most of which have so far been ignored in the government’s response, were several which highlighted the crucial role of employment in promoting indigenous wellbeing and, conversely, the destructive impact of unemployment on “self esteem, disposable income, personal relationships” and in creating “a social environment of boredom and hopelessness.” The authors of the report, Anderson and Wild, emphasised that the government needed to work closely with Indigenous communities in policy development and implementation rather than taking unilateral action which implicitly denies Indigenous agency and reinforces the sense of powerlessness which many already feel.

Anderson and Wild are by no means the first to underline how important regular employment is in redressing indigenous disadvantage more generally. In fact, they are the most recent in a long line of commentators

¹ The Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, p. 193.

who've urged governments to take more effective action in assisting indigenous Australians to gain a more secure economic footing, and to do so in a way that respects and engages Indigenous values and culture. While the specific recommendations for action may vary, all start with the recognition that unemployment is corrosive of the quality of both individual and community life, producing poorer health outcomes, reduced life expectancy, domestic violence, homelessness and substance abuse. Poverty is the characteristic which best explains the prevalence of poor health in any community and, according to the World Health Organisation, the standard of health of Indigenous Australians lags almost 100 years behind that of other Australians, with Australia ranking last among rich countries who have indigenous populations.

International research has documented the connections between poverty and unemployment and poor health, addictions, involvement in illegal drugs, violence, sexual exploitation, prostitution at an early age and despair. It is also well understood that health and destructive behaviour patterns improve with improvement in a community's economy.

As we shouldn't need to be reminded, "European settlement and subsequent capitalist economic development in Australia resulted in widespread destruction of the traditional economic and cultural activities of indigenous Australians". As Dockery and Milsom, the authors of the previous quote, argue in their NCVER² sponsored review of Indigenous employment programs, to the extent that Indigenous Australians aspire to integration with the mainstream economy, they face the considerable disadvantages inherent in being in the early phase of "a profound cultural and economic transition" as well as the barriers presented by the ignorance and prejudice which still exist in the wider community. They have also suffered from a lack of sustained political action to address these complex problems, including short term funding cycles, constantly changing bureaucratic arrangements and inexperienced staff. For example, the South Hedland based Western Desert Puntukumuparna Aboriginal Corporation (WDPAC) based in Port Hedland, Western Australia which administers 18 CDEP's across in remote locations, reported that:

Unfortunately it is very hard to attract good people to these positions and consequently, some shortcuts have been made in the recruitment process in an endeavour to fill a position. Often a program coordinator is selected on availability

² Dockery, A Michael & Milsom, N *A review of Indigenous employment programs*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2007, p. 8.

and not merit. Sometimes the right person is found but more often than not, they aren't. This is due in part to the poor working conditions found in communities, such as poor housing (if available at all), poor water supplies (often undrinkable but still all that is available to the community members) and poor pay rates within a resource rich, high paying mining environment. Coupled with these are the wider communities' misconceptions of Aboriginal communities being populated by violent substance abusers.³

One of the submissions to our committee⁴ put it bluntly,

"Despite a mountain of research and clear evidence of the degree of disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians in the labour market and with respect to almost all other socio-economic indicators, the effort put into improving Indigenous labour market outcomes in this country has been woefully inadequate. This may not be as evident in terms of 'input' measures such as budgetary commitment as it is in the lack of political will to resolve critical questions on the broader objectives of Indigenous policy and thus the ability for policy makers to remain unaccountable for the lack of progress in addressing Indigenous disadvantage".⁵

In what may be a precedent in Committee reporting, Labor members of the ATSI Committee were not prepared to endorse the majority report of this inquiry into indigenous employment, not because of any fundamental disagreement with the few recommendations it proposed (although we do not agree with all of them), but because of the report's failure to come to grips with the gravity of the problem or to suggest policy settings and programs which had any real prospect of increasing employment.

We argued that the Chairman's draft report, as initially presented to us (and still largely unmodified in the final draft), needed major revision. In fact, much of the report is little more than a catalogue of case studies which could have formed the starting point for sound deductions about future directions for effective policy development but instead are simply presented without coherent analysis.

The majority report appears to accept untested assertions about various programs and public relations assertions from the private sector if they are as persuasive as carefully constructed evaluations. Government department and agency claims about the effectiveness of various policy settings are often accepted without question rather than being subjected to reasonable critical scrutiny. The purpose of the report, after all, was to try to find out what really

³ Western Puntukurnuparna Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission 16*.

⁴ House of Representatives Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

⁵ Dr Michael Dockery, *Submission 6*.

worked. Our constructive suggestions along these lines and our request for a major revision of the report so that we could achieve unanimity were initially accepted but later refused on what we believe to be spuriously imposed deadlines that prevented such revision.

After almost three years of hearings, including many witnesses, 137 submissions and travel to every corner of the continent, the conclusions are disappointingly shallow. We argue that the findings and recommendations presented to us in the draft report and accepted by government members fall so far short of what is needed as to constitute an insult to the many people who spoke to us. Sadly, given the resources at our disposal and the now truncated reporting timeline, the Labor members are not in a position to write a comprehensive report which fully addresses these problems, but we can point to areas where a future government should act. We can also briefly review what is known about the effectiveness of the programs which constitute the government's Indigenous Employment Policy.

Evaluation: What works?

In setting the terms of reference, the Committee deliberately set out to try to avoid simply restating the often reported deficit in employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians but rather to ascertain what programs and strategies actually succeeded in increasing employment and what, if anything, could be learned from these successes - what factors were predictive of success, what program elements or interventions were most useful and where resources could most effectively be allocated.

While we did not intend to ignore program failures and obstacles to improvement, we did try to shift the focus to discerning the possible reasons for the lower participation and higher unemployment - the impediments - which successful programs should seek to overcome. Labor members were disappointed that these intentions are not clearly reflected in the majority report. We recognise that this was always going to be a difficult task not least because of the relative lack of rigorous evaluation, the lack of continuity in government programs and the lack of clarity about the objectives of economic development and labour market programs targeting Indigenous people. Pointing out such deficiencies would have assisted future policy makers - if they were inclined to take any notice of committee reports.

As well as the broad question of what works to increase Indigenous employment, the Labor members suggested that the committee should seek to ascertain whether what works varies from place to place and community to community. It seemed vital to us that in reporting our findings we should test the validity of claims made about various programs and approaches,

including by the government and its agencies, and to accord greater weight to hard data rather than assertion or pious hopes.

We also suggested that in reporting the results of our inquiry we should try to distil from the evidence we had been given an understanding of what economic development settings seem to be successful in generating new opportunities for indigenous people, what maintains employment for those already in the workforce, what improves labour market readiness and what helps overcome the obvious obstacles that indigenous people face. In particular, we suggested that these questions should be examined as a structural or systemic level as well as for individually targeted interventions. In the first case, it seemed sensible to ascertain the effectiveness of:

- ensuring that Indigenous people are involved in the planning and implementation of economic development and employment programs which affect them;
- setting employment targets for Indigenous people in the public and private sectors;
- providing financial incentives to employers;
- including Indigenous employment obligations in government contracts and agreements with the private sector;
- Indigenous specific employment strategies (national, state and local government) versus “mainstreaming”;
- policies incorporating recognition of the “customary”⁶ sector – including art, wildlife harvesting and heritage and natural resource management in economic development in remote communities;
- programs to train and employ Indigenous people to replace non-Indigenous workers in providing core services to Indigenous communities;
- supplementing CDEP programs to provide services in education, health, construction, maintenance, community order, conservation and cultural activities;
- increasing access to land and capital, including through Native Title land use agreements, the Indigenous Land Council and Indigenous Small Business Fund;
- anti-discrimination and promotion programs to potential employers on the benefits of employing Indigenous workers; and
- modifying working conditions to accommodate cultural differences and distance constraints.

⁶ Altman, JC *The Indigenous hybrid economy: A realistic sustainable option for remote communities?* Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, www.anu.edu.au/caepr/

Similar assessment should also have been made of interventions aimed at changing individual behaviour and capacity such as education, training and work readiness programs, mentoring, small business development assistance, leadership programs and, as the terms of reference required, some evaluation of the contribution, if any, of the changes introduced under the rubric of "practical reconciliation" to improving Indigenous employment. Given the government's major shifts in policy direction including the abolition of ATSIC, the transfer of CDEP to DEWR, the introduction of mutual obligation and shared responsibility agreements and the "mainstreaming" of services to Indigenous people, it is reasonable to ask whether they have yet produced any measurable benefits.

Indigenous Employment Policy

While we are not in a position to fully assess the questions outlined above, the evidence presented to the committee and available on the public record allows us to indicate some possible mechanisms for expanding indigenous employment, especially in remote and regional communities which have been the focus of recent government attention.

Any such attempt should begin with the published research. Due to data limitations, our knowledge of what does and does not work in overcoming Indigenous disadvantage in the labour market is very limited since there are few rigorous analyses of those data. In 2004-5, labour force participation of Indigenous people was about three quarters of that of non-Indigenous people, while the unemployment rate was about three times the rate of the rest of the community. Many are long-term unemployed. Overall, the employment rate for the Indigenous working age population is barely more than 50% including the approximately 36,000 CDEP participants.

The major government program in this area is the Indigenous Employment Policy announced 1999. This is a composite of several programs, encompassing a range of Indigenous-specific programs such as CDEP as well as Indigenous access to mainstream employment programs. It now has three main elements: the Job Network, the Indigenous Small Business Fund and the Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) whose key sub-programs are listed in Attachment 1.⁷ We briefly review the success of these interventions which are the primary vehicles for the Commonwealth Government's "practical reconciliation" agenda.

⁷ See Attachment 1.

Since the point of the inquiry was to inform policy development, it seemed important to us that we begin with the state of play. The government has used both system wide data and post-program employment rates to argue that there has been an improvement for Indigenous Australians since the introduction of this policy framework devised as part of the government's shift to so-called "practical reconciliation". While the majority report repeats the view of DEWR that there have been improvements in Indigenous employment, there is no attempt to assess whether at a time of such low national levels of unemployment and labour shortages, the *relative* position of indigenous people has significantly improved.

Census data show that the unemployment rate for Indigenous Australians did fall between 1996 and 2001 from 22.7% to 20% (it has since fallen further, although the 2006 Census data which would allow like with like comparisons are not yet available). Without additional information it is difficult to determine how much of this improvement would have occurred in any event and whether the changes can be attributed to the policy itself. While it does appear that the Indigenous labour force participation rose between 1996 and 2005, the increase was small – from 52.7% to 54% compared to the non-Indigenous population increase from 61.9% to 73.3%.⁸ The majority report does not untangle whether the increases were due to increases in CDEP participation or in open employment and why Indigenous people appear not to have increased their engagement in the Labour market at the same rate as non-Indigenous Australians.

The most recent major review of Indigenous employment programs suggests that "the unemployment rate for Indigenous Australians would appear to be more to related to the general improvement in labour market conditions."⁹ The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey shows that over the same period (1996- 2001) the total unemployment rate for Australia fell from 8.2% to 6.1%, a greater fall in relative terms, than that experienced by Indigenous Australians.

In general, it seems that a number of indigenous specific programs have been effective in boosting employment. Dockery and Milsom concluded that,

"patchy as it is, the evidence suggests that a mix of on-the-job work experience, achieved through wage subsidies or brokered placements, combined with other

⁸ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Submission No. 108*, Appendix A, p. 32.

⁹ Dockery & Milsom (2007), *op cit*.

appropriate support such as mentoring and training, offers the most successful approach to achieving market employment outcomes for Indigenous job seekers”

They further concluded that wage subsidies were one of the most effective means of assistance. Research on vocational training programs has also shown superior outcomes for Indigenous students in Indigenous specific courses conducted by Indigenous teachers, and when study is undertaken with Indigenous registered training organisations.¹⁰

These conclusions are consistent with much of the material presented to the Committee in submissions and hearings. For instance, the Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation which is run for and by Aboriginal people pointed to individually tailored training courses, effective mentoring and the use of CDEP for work experience as key elements in achieving successful employment outcomes.¹¹

Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)

Despite the fact that CDEP participation forms a significant proportion (36,000 people or 25%)¹² of those counted as employed, the majority report largely avoids the questions of whether CDEP has a continuing role in providing employment and of the likely effects of the substantial changes to the CDEP program that commenced on July as part of the government’s 2005 revision of the Indigenous Economic Development strategy. Nor does it systematically explore the impact of earlier changes despite the fact that CDEP is the nation’s longest lasting program to assist Indigenous people to gain work skills and employment and “widely regarded as one of the most successful.”

This is a serious omission since in very remote Australia only 15% of Indigenous adults are in mainstream employment, with 42% in CDEP employment. While the figures are lower in urban and regional Australia, CDEP has been the vehicle for many community programs and related employment. One of the “key messages” from Misko’s assessment for NCVER of the role of CDEP in rural and remote communities was that while “the scheme cannot be expected to solve the problems of employment and under-employment of Indigenous Australians in the bush or elsewhere”, it “can assist by providing funds to support employers to provide training and employment for participants” and it “enables rural and remote communities

¹⁰ Durnan, D and Boughton, B (1999) *Succeeding against the odds: The outcomes attained by Indigenous students in community-controlled adult education colleges*, NCVER.

¹¹ Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, *Submission 31*.

¹² ATSI 2004, pp. 145-146.

access to substantial blocks of funds and resources to customise activities and enterprises and thus improve the physical and social environments of local communities".¹³

The recently introduced changes mean that around 5000 CDEP participants, principally in urban and regional Australia, will be moved to STEP and Newstart and the CDEP programs of which they were a part closed down. In addition, under the current intervention in the Northern Territory, all CDEP funding has been moved from twelve month to three month basis and placed under direct government, rather than community, control. No rationale has been given for these changes.

Already, many people in urban and regional Australia previously employed under CDEP programs to provide community services such as street patrols, support for the victims of domestic violence and sobering up shelters are now treated as unemployed, with all that implies. The services they formally provided are now either closed or much reduced. State governments are being forced to fill some of these service gaps, at short notice and without consultation or funding transfers from the Commonwealth government. It seems to be a classic case of cost shifting. For example in Broome, the closure of CDEP programs would have resulted in the demise of the Goolari Media Enterprises, which as the employer of 37 people is the largest Indigenous employer in Broome and a significant force in the Indigenous community. But for the \$2.13 million funding package provided by the State government over the next three years, Goolari, which has been operating for 15 years and as a registered training organisation which has won numerous State and Commonwealth government awards for its employment based training in areas such as radio, screen, broadcastings and events management, would have closed. Other programs which have lost funds are the PCYC which provides various programs for troubled Indigenous youth and the town based women's shelter which helps train workers to assist women in crisis, principally as a result of abuse. Similar programs in other States and Territories have also been cut.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Tom Calma, in his 2006 Social Justice Report, attempted to assess the likely impact of these changes. While allowing, as most commentators do, that there are problems with CDEP, the Commissioner recognises that the "CDEP scheme plays a central role in the economic and community life of many discrete

¹³ Misko, J The role of Community Development Employment Projects in rural and remote communities, *NCVER Report*, 2004, p. 5.

Indigenous communities and rural towns with a significant Indigenous population.”¹⁴ Although the scheme is in some respects a prototype of later “work for the dole” programs, since it was originally devised to redress the perceived negative effects flowing from simply providing social security benefits especially in areas where no formal labour market existed, it is now seen by some as being part of the problem of passive welfare.

In its original form, the program provided for unemployment benefits payable to members of a community to be taken collectively by the community’s council and distributed in return for work undertaken on projects devised by the community. Over time, additional funds were provided for project management and associated capital. The primary emphasis was on community development which generated employment, not just on individual employment readiness.

As indicated in the majority report, several witnesses to the committee indicated that they believed that CDEP funded activities sometimes drew Indigenous people away from “real jobs” and were essentially a “dead end” rather than a pathway to long term full employment. Others have pointed to the fact that CDEP is used to provide services that should be provided by governments or to subsidise operations that would otherwise have to pay award wages. The Waringarri Media Aboriginal Corporation pointed out, for example, that there is an Indigenous Media Award that should be paid to all the Indigenous employees in the media instead of CDEP payments which do not provide any incentive to work because they are no different from unemployment benefits which are also available in the same community.

Despite these criticisms, it is clear that CDEP has enabled many communities to develop valuable community services such as night patrols, childcare centres and garbage collection which, disgracefully, would not otherwise be provided and to start up local businesses which would not otherwise receive capital. As Tom Calma points out, it has also contributed to the development of Indigenous businesses, entrepreneurship and leadership in some communities. The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation based in Maningrida, for example, has hosted a CDEP since 1989 and provides for support, maintenance and development of 32 surrounding communities with almost 600 participants. Their emphasis has steadily shifted toward becoming a regional development organisation with the goal of achieving economic independence for the client groups. They make it clear that CDEP plays a

¹⁴ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2006 *Social Justice Report*, Report No. 1/2007, p. 39.

critical role in this process because it has had “the flexibility necessary for the difficult tasks of growing the regional economy” in an area where there is no mining, manufacturing or agricultural activity and where the challenge of “accommodating a willing workforce in relevant and productive employment requires creative and clever solutions.” The corporation, frustrated in finding other sources of funding, have used profits from their successful trading enterprises set up under CDEP to provide seed capital for business development and to top up wages. This may well represent a legitimate future direction for CDEP in communities with limited opportunities for conventional employment. In their submission they suggest several ways in which CDEP could be improved including removing access to unemployment benefits (UB) in such communities (since the simultaneous operation of CDEP and UB destabilises CDEP), providing business funding linked by formula to CDEP and providing funding for training and associated capital.

Professor Jon Altman, director of CAEPR, has made similar suggestions, including the need to enhance links between CDEP organisations and training providers and to provide realistic capital and in-cost support. Research undertaken by NATSISS and analysed by CAEPR shows that CDEP organisation can assist participants with their incomes, enhance working hours, participate in non-market activities (with direct benefits to individuals and families) and participate in cultural and ceremonial activities. Critically, CDEP could be further enhanced to generate employment in the arts sector, sustainable use of wildlife, natural and cultural resource management, land and sea management, wildfire management, carbon abatement, biodiversity conservation, security and coastal surveillance.

At the moment, the lower CDEP pay rates effectively allow governments to provide services on the cheap, to the detriment of continuing, fully waged jobs. Governments, and some communities, sometimes provide “top ups” to CDEP funded positions in school, clinics and community services which in other places would be fully funded positions. As a number of communities have suggested, one method of securing better levels of Indigenous employment would be to supplement funds currently directed toward CDEP programs in Indigenous communities so that full time, appropriately paid jobs could be offered within those communities. In fact, the government has introduced a very modest program which does just this. In 2006-7 an annual allocation of \$5 million was set aside to create 130 full-time equivalent positions for health worker duties. In its 2007-8 budget under the heading “Building an Indigenous Workforce in Government Service Delivery, 97.2 million over four years (35.9 diverted from CDEP programs) is set aside to fund 825 jobs across Australia in environmental and heritage protection, education, child care, night patrol in indigenous communities and community

care. Labor members believe that a more generously funded program encompassing a wider range of services, including state and local government services such as water supply, housing, waste management and so on, and funded in part by additional commitments from the states and territories would obviously benefit Indigenous employment and deliver a standard of services (and the additional wages income) taken for granted by the rest of the community.

While there are weaknesses in the CDEP, the changes introduced by the government do not appear to have built in any systematic way on the documented strengths of the scheme. Nor do they appear to have taken account of the benefits for Indigenous people's cultural needs and self-determination aspirations of being in control of such programs.

Job Network

Much of the recent government policy emphasis has been on shifting Indigenous people into mainstream job market programs. Indeed, from July 1 this year, the urban and regional CDEPs have been closed and participants are being moved either to STEP or Newstart, to be assisted through the Job Network. However, the early results from the first round of Job Network contracts suggested poor servicing of Indigenous job seekers. While the government sought to address this problem in the second round of contracts by requiring a greater focus on specialist services for Indigenous jobseekers, the available evidence shows that "participation rates for Indigenous people in Job Network services have remained below target, in contrast to program commencement rates for Indigenous people under the Commonwealth Employment Service."¹⁵

What's more, despite DEWR's claims to the Committee about the effectiveness of the job network (p 32 of the majority report), their own data also show that while Intensive Assistance providers have improved their effectiveness in getting Indigenous people into work, the placements are not being sustained. In 2005-6, only 21% of Indigenous job seekers placed were still in work at 13 weeks, falling to 16% at 26 weeks. The following year's figures were no better. This compares with figures for 2005 from the population at large which show that 59, 46, 39, and 47 percent of job seekers who commenced Job Search Training, Customised Assistance, Work for the Dole and Mutual Obligation respectively, were still in employment 12 months

¹⁵ Dockery & Milsom, 2007, *op cit*.

later.¹⁶ The figures for 2006 indicate similar deficits, with total positive outcomes (employment plus education) for intensive support programs reaching 59% for the total population and only 39% for Indigenous job seekers.

It should come as no surprise, that within the suite of Job Network programs, the most successful are those which are linked with Indigenous people's interests and which are flexible enough to encompass cultural and family responsibilities. Research suggests that better results are often achieved when Indigenous people are involved in service delivery, perhaps because they are better able to deliver culturally appropriate assistance. "The accumulated evidence from major programs suggests that Indigenous-specific programs and wage subsidy programs in particular are among the more effective forms of assistance in promoting mainstream employment outcomes."¹⁷ Is not clear whether, in general, Indigenous people are faring better under the Job Network than they did under previous labour market programs.

Practical Reconciliation

One of the tasks the committee set itself was to assess what contribution, if any, "practical reconciliation" had made to any positive outcomes we identified. This is one area in which the majority report is clearly deficient; enough time has passed since the government's shift of policy was announced to allow an evaluation of the effectiveness of its new approach in tackling unemployment and several attempts had been made to do so.

Preliminary results are not encouraging. In their evaluation of the effectiveness of the "practical reconciliation" agenda, the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research at the Australian National University analysed Australian Bureau of Statistics data over a 10-year period from 1991 and concluded that there was no statistical basis to the claim that "practical reconciliation" is delivering better outcomes in employment, housing, education, health or the income status of Indigenous Australians than previous policies. For example, in four of the five indices of participation in the labour force, the status of indigenous people relative to the rest of the population appeared to have declined. Their median income had also fallen, as had the ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous participation in tertiary education. Census data to be released later this year will allow further

¹⁶ www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/ProgrammeEvaluation/ANetImpactStudyofJobNetworkProgrammesandWorkfortheDole2006.htm

¹⁷ Dockery and Milsom, 2007, op cit, p. 46.

evaluation of any trends. Since the abolition of ATSIC and the transfer of some its responsibilities (including CDEP) to DEWR, the government has been in complete control of its agenda. The results to date are not encouraging.

In looking at the reasons why “practical reconciliation” does not appear to have improved the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians, the authors of the above review, Altman and Hunter, argue pointedly that:

“One of the major problems with the practical reconciliation agenda is that it fails to recognise that many of the practical outcomes highlighted are driven, directly and indirectly, by social, cultural and spiritual needs”.

In a by now familiar response to criticism, the government invested public funds in contracting a firm with close links to the conservative think tank, CIS, to undertake a critique of the CAEPR work. This attempt to discredit the authors continued despite the fact that the Altman and Hunter paper was refereed by peers and published in a reputable economics journal. Although it has enjoyed significant public sector support for over 15 years and despite the conclusion by independent reviewers that CAEPR is “the only major grouping of researchers having expertise and producing sustained quality research in the broad field of Indigenous economic and social policy in Australia at a present”, Government core funding was cut at the end of 2005 and the government continues to ignore their research findings.

Conclusion

There is little disagreement that improving the wellbeing of Indigenous people depends, at least in part, on reducing material poverty. A key to such improvement lies in programs and initiatives which increase sustainable employment. It is disappointing that the evidence to date does not allow any firm conclusions about the necessary components of effective interventions and how they might need to be adapted for different communities. Equally disappointing is the failure by government policy makers to confront the complex – and contentious – questions. For instance, it appears to be taken as read that all Indigenous people naturally desire the lifestyle and values that come with economic integration and that if they don’t a carrot and stick approach will be effective in achieving such integration. As Tom Calma argued in his recent report to government:

“The compliance mentality that currently permeates Indigenous policy making processes does not address [the] full sweep of issues. It is an increasingly punitive

framework that cherry picks issues and neglects important essential characteristics for good policy.”¹⁸

The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP

Ms Annette Ellis MP

Mr Peter Garrett MP

The Hon Warren Snowdon MP

¹⁸ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2006 *Social Justice Report*, Report No. 1/2007, p. 6.

Attachment 1

The Indigenous Employment Programme (As described in NCVER Report)

Community Development Employment Projects Placement Incentive

Promotes the Community Development Employment Projects scheme as a staging post for Indigenous participants to move from developing their work skills into the mainstream labour market. The Incentive provides a \$2200 bonus to Community Development Employment Project sponsors for each placement of a participant in a job external to the program and off program wages. That job must be for at least 15 hours per week.

Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project

A partnership between companies and the Commonwealth Government whereby companies commit to employing Indigenous people and the Commonwealth provides access to flexible funding for that purpose. Companies can design an employment project or strategy to suit their own business environment and access a mix of assistance under the Indigenous Employment Policy. The underlying aim is to encourage and assist Australian companies to generate more jobs for Indigenous Australians and provide equal opportunities for them in the private sector.

Wage Assistance

This is an aid to Indigenous job seekers to find long term employment, either through Job Network or their own endeavours, using an eligibility card. To be eligible, job seekers must be registered as looking for work with Centrelink and in receipt of an income support payment, including Community Development Employment Project wages. Employers can receive up to \$4400 over a 26 week period to assist with costs.

Structured Training and Employment Projects

This project provides flexible financial assistance to businesses which offer structured training such as apprenticeships that lead to lasting employment opportunities for Indigenous job seekers. While the Government's focus is to increase jobs in the private sector people, funding is also provided to community and public sector organisations.

Structured Training and Employment Program funding is negotiated directly with the employers and projects can involve differing levels of training including job training, apprenticeships and traineeships, depending on the needs of the employer. Funding is also available to organisations that train participants then place them with employers, but such intermediaries are expected to demonstrate they offer special skills not otherwise available from local employers.

National Indigenous Cadetship Project

Provides support to companies prepared to sponsor Indigenous tertiary students as cadets. Employers pay cadets a study allowance while they attend full-time study in an approved course and then provide paid work experience during long vacation breaks. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations reimburses employers to a certain limit for study allowance. Participating employers are expected to offer their cadets full-time employment at the conclusion of their cadetship and study. Through this model, the organisation gains a professionally qualified employee who has worked in and understands their organisation.

Indigenous Small Business Fund

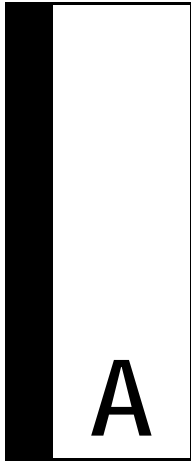
This can fund Indigenous organisations to assist Indigenous people to learn about business, develop good business skills and expand their business, as well as funding individuals for the development of business ideas with potential.

Indigenous Employment Centres (abolished 2007)

The establishment of Indigenous Employment Centres was announced in the 2001-02 budget to augment the Community Development Employment Projects Placement Initiative in assisting Community Development Employment Project participants find external employment. The Centres are based on work preparation trials and operated by program organisations 'in areas with job opportunities'. The first Centres began operation in April 2002 and by 30 September 2003 had assisted more than 1,700 participants and placed in excess of 400 people into employment.

The Voluntary Service to Indigenous Communities

This Service matches skilled volunteers with the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Appendix A: List of Submissions

Submission Individual/organisation

1. Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation
2. Nambucca Shire Council
3. Emerald Shire Council
4. Jedda Boomerangs
5. Radio 6WR
6. Dr Michael Dockery
7. Alexandrina Council
8. Little Burning Mountain Aboriginal Corporation
9. Ali Curung Council Association Inc
10. Rainbow Serpent
11. Dr Christina Cregan
12. Cullacabardee Aboriginal Corporation
13. Noongar Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
14. Swan Valley Nyungah Community Aboriginal Corporation
15. Ms Sandra Rogers

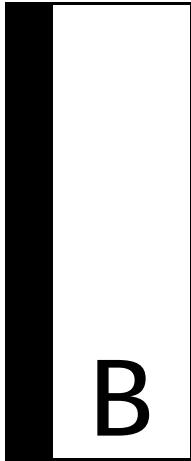
16. Western Desert Puntukurnuparna Aboriginal Corporation
17. Bluefin Seafoods Pty Ltd
18. Shire of Plantagenet
19. Lismore City Council
20. Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
21. Armidale Dumaresq Council
22. Shire of Trayning
23. Yuwaaliaay Elders Aboriginal Corporation
24. Arnhemland Progress Association
25. Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
26. Senator Meg Lees
27. Caboolture Shire Council
28. City of Marion
29. City of Melbourne
30. Job Futures Bunbury WA
31. Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation
32. Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
33. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
34. Bloodwood Tree Association Inc
35. Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
36. Tweed Shire Council
37. Yulella Aboriginal Corporation
38. Aboriginal Education Council (NSW) Inc
39. City of Stonnington
40. Aboriginal Employment Strategy
41. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
- 41a. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd Supplementary Submission
42. Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

- 42a. Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Supplementary Submission
43. City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
44. Blacktown City Council
45. National Australia Bank Ltd
46. Shire of Campaspe
47. City of Port Phillip
48. Nyirrangu Muay Wurrnga'ada Association Inc
49. Kauma Heritage Board
50. IPC Employment
51. Alice Springs Town Council
52. Voyages
53. Tenterfield Shire Council
54. Balranald Shire Council
55. Bankstown City Council
56. Dubbo City Council
57. Barwon Darling Alliance
58. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
59. Shire of Pingelly
60. ACT Government
61. Dr Jocelyne Scutt
62. Senator the Hon Nick Minchin, Minister for Finance and Administration
63. Indigenous Land Corporation
- 63a. Indigenous Land Corporation Supplementary Submission
64. Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
65. Adelaide City Council
66. Professor Marcia Langton

67. Matilda Minerals Ltd
68. Great Southern Development Commission
69. Tangentyere Council
- 69a. Tangentyere Council Supplementary Submission
70. Flinders University Adelaide
71. Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd
72. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
73. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- 73a. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs Supplementary Submission
74. Brisbane City Council
75. Gosford City Council
76. National Tertiary Education Industry Union
77. Port Stephens Council
78. Regional Vermiculture Australia Pty Ltd
79. The Council of the City of Shoalhaven
80. Rio Tinto
81. Queensland Indigenous Local Government Association Inc.
82. Main Roads Western Australia
83. Saima Torres Strait Islander Corporation
84. Alice Springs Desert Park
85. Mr Kevin Bird, Wesley Uniting Aboriginal Employment Services
86. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
87. Whitehorse City Council
88. Professor Jon Altman
89. South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy
- 89a. South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy Supplementary Submission

90. Mission Australia
91. Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council
92. Centre for Appropriate Technology
93. City of Onkaparinga
94. Victorian State Government
95. Purga Elders & Descendants Aboriginal Corporation
96. Australia Post
97. Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation
98. Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation
99. Mission Australia Bega
100. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- 100a. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Supplementary Submission
101. Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
102. Mr Jack Pearson
103. Northern Land Council
104. Indigenous Business Australia
- 104a. Indigenous Business Australia Supplementary Submission
105. Queensland Government
106. Mr Ian Alcorn
107. Department of Education, Science and Training
108. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- 108a. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission
- 108b. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission
- 108c. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission
- 108d. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission

- 108e. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Supplementary Submission
109. Institute for Aboriginal Development Inc.
110. Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education;
Minister for Youth; Minister for the Status of Women - South
Australian Government
111. New South Wales Government
112. Ms Linda Ballantyne
113. Tasmanian Government
114. Narana Creations
115. Ms Ilona Renwick
116. Mr Jason Solomon
117. Mr Peter Dickson
118. Minerals Council Australia
119. Mr Bret Fishley
120. Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
121. The Eureka Project Pty Ltd
122. Australian Public Service Commission
123. Capital Region Area Consultative Committee
124. The Hon Andrew Robb MP, Minister for Vocational and
Further Education



Appendix B: Public Hearings

Monday, 23 May 2005 - Canberra

Individual

Dr Dennis Foley, Visiting Indigenous Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal and Economic Research

Monday, 30 May 2005 - Canberra

Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Mr Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Ms Kate Gumley, Branch Manager, Shared Responsibility Agreement Strategy Branch, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Ms Helen Hambling, Group Manager, Policy Group, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Ms Deidre McNally, Team Manager, Economic Development Section, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Ms Kathryn Shugg, Branch Manager, Policy Innovation Branch, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Monday, 11 July 2005 - Darwin

Arnhemland Progress Association

Dr Djiniyini Gondarra OAM, Chairman of the Board of Directors

Mr Alastair King, General Manager

Australian Football League Northern Territory

Mr Brenton Toy, Project & Training Development Officer

Mr Anthony Kelly, Participation Manager

Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd

Mr Gregory Constantine, Chief Executive Officer

Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Kelvin Costello, Coordinator

Northern Land Council

Mr John Berto, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Ms Natasha Jeffrey, Project Officer

Mr Barry King, Manager / Employment and Training Unit

Mr David Ross, Project Manager

Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce

Mr Dennis Bree, Chairman

Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment

Ms Wendy Ah Chin, Principal Advisor Indigenous Policy

Mr John Kirwan, Commissioner for Public Employment

Tuesday, 12 July 2005 - Alice Springs

Alice Springs Desert Park

Ms Kylie Bloomfield, Guide

Ms Jodie Clarkson, Guide Manager

Mr Vincent Forrester, Guide

Mr Gary Fray, Park Manager

Mrs Iona Matthews, Guide

Mr Bobby Stuart, Kwertengerle (Traditional Owner)

Mr Douglas Taylor, Acting T2 Specialist Guide (Cross Cultural)

Mr Garth Forrester, T2 Ranger, Parkes and Wildlife Service NT

Mr Hugh Woodbury, T1 Ranger, Parkes and Wildlife Service NT

Alice Springs Town Council

Mr Mark Blackburn, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Mr Fran Kilgariff, Mayor

Mr Rex Mooney, Chief Executive Officer

Central Land Council

Mr David Alexander, Manager, Land Management

Ms Tina Bain, Regional Land Management Coordinator

Mr Harold Howard, Employment Unit

Institute for Aboriginal Development Inc

Ms Eileen Shaw, Director

Tangentyere Council

Mr Peter Cowham, CDEP Manager

Ms Maria Harvey, Assistant Manager, Job Shop

Mr Michael Maloney, Human Resources. Manager

Mr Peter Strachan, Manager, Tangentyere Job Shop

Mr William Tilmouth, Executive Director

Wednesday, 13 July 2005 - Alice Springs

Individual

Ms Joanne Lane, Consultant, Imparja Television

Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association

Ms Priscilla Collins, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Jennifer Howard, Corporate Services Manager

Mr James Remedio, Radio Manager

Foot Prints Forward

Ms Marilyn Smith, Manager

Wednesday, 27 July 2005 - Cairns

Tjapukai Aboriginal Culture Park

Mr Ernest Brimm, Cultural Officer

Mr Don Freeman, Managing Director

Mrs Judy Freeman, Director of Marketing

Thursday, 28 July 2005 - Cairns

Individuals

Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall

Mr Tom Phillips

Cairns City Council

Ms Bernice Kelly, Community Planning & Development Officer

Ms Joy Wii, Community Planning & Development Officer

Cairns Regional Community Development & Employment Aboriginal & Torres Strait
Islander Corporation

Mr Patrick Low, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Libby Morgan, Indigenous Employment Centre Manager

Cairns Region Group Training

Mr Ivan Deemal, Senior Coordinator- Community Relations

Home Fab Steel Truss and Frame

Mr Barry Byrne, Managing Director

Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships

Mr Michael Winer, Chief Executive Officer

Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia

Mr Johnathan Link, Community Liaison Development Officer

Friday, 29 July 2005 - Brisbane

Bluefin Seafoods Pty Ltd

Mr Ross Meaclem, Managing Director

Mr Darren Burns, Board Director, Quandamooka Land Council
Aboriginal Corporation

Brisbane City Council

Mr Les Collins, Indigenous Employment Strategist

Ms Lyndal O'Neill, Manager, People Services

Ms Sheryl Sandy, Equity & Diversity Specialist

Caboolture Shire Council

Mr Kelvin Tytherleigh, Manager, Organisational Development and
Governance

Purga Elders & Descendants Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Daniel Abad, Hanson Advisory Services

Mr Thomas Abad, Project Officer, Hanson Advisory Services

Mr Mark King, Member of PEDAC

Queensland Government

Mr Bernie Carlon, General Manager, Employment and Indigenous
Initiatives

Mr Ron Weatherall, Executive Director, Department of Employment
& Training, Employment & Indigenous Initiatives

Monday, 8 August 2005 - Canberra

Department of Education, Science and Training

Mr Anthony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions
Group

Mr Shane Hoffman, Branch Manager, Indigenous Business
Management

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Ms Jo Caldwell, Group Manager, Intensive Support Group

Mr Graham Carters, Group Manager, Working Age Policy Group

Ms Jody Hamilton, Assistant Secretary, Business and Policy
Development Branch

Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and
Business Group

Indigenous Business Australia

Mr Colin Clements, Assistant General Manager, Home Ownership
Programme

Mr Ron Morony, General Manager

Mr Ian Myers, Deputy General Manager

Mr Ivan Parrett, Assistant General Manager, Business Finance

Ms Michaela Woods, Executive Policy Manager

Friday, 19 August 2005 - Sydney

Aboriginal Education Centre

Mr William Muir, Vice President

Blacktown City Council

Ms Lisa Giacomelli, Manager, Community Development

Mr Ron Moore, Director, Finance and Corporate Strategy

Mission Australia

Ms Anne Hampshire, National Manager, Research & Social Policy

Miss Jane Lawton, State Operations Manager/ Northern Territory

New South Wales Government

Ms Jody Broun, Director General, Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Rainbow Serpent

Ms Caroline Friend, Director

Mr Brad Parnes, Director

Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd

Mr Marc Aussie-Stone, Chief Executive Officer

Voyages

Ms Simone Haynes, Executive General Manager, Human Resources

Monday, 12 September 2005 - Canberra

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Dr Patrick Sullivan, Visiting Research Fellow

Thursday, 27 October 2005 - Kalgoorlie

Carey Mining

Mr Daniel Tucker, Managing Director and Owner

Mrs Lynley Tucker, Owner

City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder

Mr Ian Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer

Newmont Australia

Mr Lester Davis, Manager, Learning and Development

Pilbara Iron

Mr Lennis Connors, Community Liaison Officer

Mrs Kellie McCrum, Superintendent Training and Development

Friday, 28 October 2005 - Perth

Individuals

Mr Larry Kickett

Ms Jenny McGuire

Ms Sandra Rogers

Clontarf Foundation

Mr Craig Brierty, Project Manager

Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Ray Hansen, Chairperson/ Founder

Ms Shirley Humphries, Secretary

Manguri Employment Services

Mrs Kerri Colegate, Site Coordinator

Miss Sallie Paternoster, Administration Officer

Mrs Cheryle Taylor, Chief Executive Officer

Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Anthony Dann, Chairperson

Mr Simon Hawkins, Executive Director

Monday, 7 November 2005 - Canberra

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Mr Ronald Burns, Training Advisor

Mr Dean O'Neil, National Manager, Indigenous Employment & Training

Monday, 28 November 2005 - Canberra

Individual

Mr Jack Pearson

Friday, 2 December 2005 - Bega

Individuals

Mr Anthony Allen

Mr Chris Hoskins

Ms Yuin Kelly

Bega High School

Mrs Kerist Blacker, Staff Member

Ms Rebecca Thomas, Trainee Administration Assistant

Bega Valley Shire Council

Mr Rob Cattnach, Human Resources Manager

Mr Kevin Dixon, Bega Mowing Team Member

Mr Tait Farram, Trainee Environmental Health Officer

Mr Ian Goward, Parks Mowing Team Member

Bermagui Plumbing Drainage and Gasfitting

Mr Haiden Briggs, Employee

Mr Michael Cosgrave, Proprietor

Mission Australia Bega

Ms Kathleen Boyne, Service Manager

Mr Neville Voysey, Employment Consultant

Mrs Justine Wardle, Employment Consultant

Wallaga Lake CDEP Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Leslie Aldridge, Pathways to Employment Leader

Mr Richard Barcham, Manager and Board's Delegate

Monday, 5 December 2005 - Canberra

Individual

Dr Michael Dockery

Monday, 6 February 2006 - Canberra

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Mr Tom Aldred, Executive Manager, Natural Resource Management Division

Mr Colin Hunter, Acting National Manager, AQIS

Mr Glenn Hurry, General Manager, Fisheries and Aquaculture

Mr John Shannon, Policy Officer, People and Strategies

Mr Ian Thompson, Executive Manager, Rural Policy and Innovation Division

Mr Peter Yuile, Executive Director, AQIS

Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Ms Lyn Allan, General Manager, Indigenous Culture and Arts Support

Ms Sally Bassar, General Manager, Indigenous Arts and Training

Ms Lynn Bean, Deputy Secretary, Arts and Sports Division

Mr Rohan Buettel, General Manager, Public Broadcasting Branch, Broadcasting Division

Mr James McCormack, General Manager, Access Branch, Information Economy Division

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr Lex Bartlem, Assistant Secretary, Staff Development and Post Issues Branch

Ms Karen Mundine, Executive Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program

Ms Sarah Roberts, Manager, Graduate Recruitment

Department of Health and Ageing

Ms Joy McLaughlin, Assistant Secretary, Policy and Analysis Branch

Ms Lesley Podesta, First Assistant Secretary, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Mr Craig Dukes, Acting Director, Workforce Policy and Development Section

Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources

Mr Philip Noonan, Head of Tourism Division

Friday, 10 February 2006 - Sydney**Aboriginal Employment Strategy**

Ms Cathy Duncan, Director, Culture and Reputation

Mr Richard Estens, Chairman

Mr Danny Lester, Director, Corporate Relations

Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine, Director, Operations

Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Limited

Mr Bruce McQualter, Regional Manager, NSW North West

Mr Michael Vasta, Manager, Public Policy, Government and
Regulatory Affairs

Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Mr Thomas Eckersley, Area Manager, Retail

Native Title Services

Mr Warren Mundine, CEO, NSW

Monday, 13 February 2006 - Canberra**Individual**

Professor Jon Altman

Centre for Aboriginal and Economic Research

Dr Boyd Hunter, Research Fellow, Centre for Aboriginal Economic
Policy Research

Friday, 17 February 2006 - Adelaide**Adelaide City Council**

Mr Craig Rigney, Apprentice Electrician

Mr Trevor Stutley, Human Resource Manager/ Administration

Mr Brian Varcoe, Development and Liaison Officer, Human
Resources

City of Marion

Ms Leanne McEwan, Manager, Community Development

City of Onkaparinga

Mr Paul Tulloch, Manager, Strategic Planning

**South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and
Technology**

Dr James Fowler, Deputy Chief Executive, Planning, Policy and
Innovation

Mr Lou Hutchinson, Director, Employment Programs

Mr David Rathman, Executive Director, Aboriginal Education,
Employment Strategies Unit

Indigenous Land Corporation

Mr David Galvin, General Manager

Kaurna Business & Heritage Centre

Mr Andrew West, Manager

Kaurna Heritage Board

Ms Lynette Crocker, Chairperson

Ms Dianne Markic, Human Resource Advisor

South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy

Ms Stephanie Walker, Native Title Officer

Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Leigh Cleghorn, Manager

University of South Australia

Ms Luisa O'Connor, Human Resources Consultant, Indigenous
Employment Scheme

Monday, 27 February 2006 - Canberra

Minerals Council Australia

Mr Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Environmental and
Social Policy

Ms Melanie Stutsel, Director, Environmental and Social Policy

Tuesday, 11 April 2006 - Melbourne

Individuals

Mr Jim Andreadis

Ms Leah Brown

Mr John Corboy

Dr Jocelynn Scutt

Australia Post

Ms Debra Dodgson, National Manager, Workforce Diversity

Mr Rod McDonald, Group Manager, Human Resources

Mr Brian Walker, Diversity Consultant, MND Victoria/Tasmania

City of Melbourne

Mrs Colleen Lazenby, Manager, Community Safety and Wellbeing

Ms Bev Murray, Senior Indigenous Policy Officer

City of Port Phillip Council

Mr Mikael Smith, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Multicultural Policy and Programs

Ganbina Koori Economic Employment and Training Agency

Mr Adrian Appo, Executive Officer

Mr Neville Atkinson, Chair

Indigenous Learning Pathways Project Swinburne TAFE

Mr Shane Charles, Coordinator, Indigenous Learning Pathways

National Australia Bank Ltd

Mr Craig Buller, Regional Manager, Engagement and Culture

Mr Michael Coll, Chief Executive Officer, Mandala Career Brokers

Mr Dan O'Brien, Head of Government Relations Australia

National Tertiary Education Union

Dr Carolyn Allport, National President

Ms Emma Cull, National Policy and Research Officer

Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary

Mr Joel Wright, Indigenous Officer

Rio Tinto Limited

Ms Roberta Croker, Indigenous Programs Specialist

Mr Bruce Harvey, Chief Advisor, Aboriginal and Community Relations

Rumbalara Football and Netball Club

Mr Paul Briggs, President

The Eureka Project Pty Ltd

Mr Tony Cutcliffe, Director

Toor-rong Aboriginal Corporation Community Development Employment Program

Mr Perry Wandin, Chairperson

Whitehorse City Council

Ms Helen Killmier, Manager, Community Development

Corrugation Road

Mr Paul Deeming, Chief Executive Officer

Monday, 22 May 2006 - Canberra

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Ms Joanne Caldwell, Group Manager, Intensive Support Group

Mr Bob Harvey, Group Manager, Indigenous Employment and Business Group

Ms Mary-Anne Sakkara, Assistant Secretary, CDEP Future Directions Branch

Ms Lynne Stevenson, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Employment Branch

Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Ms Kate Gumley, Assistant Secretary, Regional and Priority Interventions Branch

Dr Bruce Smith, Assistant Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations and Welfare Reform Branch

Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary

Monday, 29 May 2006 - Canberra

Australian Public Service Commission

Ms Ngaire Hosking, Group Manager, Evaluation

Ms Claire Page, Group Manager, Better Practice Group

Ms Lynne Tacey, Deputy Commissioner

Monday, 17 July 2006 - Maningrida

Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Peter Danaja, Secretary

Mr Christopher Davies, Senior Project Officer

Mr Morris Geinbaraba, Employment Officer

Mr Gordon Machbirrbirr, Chairman

Mr Ian Munro, General Manager

Mr Victor Rostron, Ranger

Mr Matthew Ryan, Ranger

Maningrida Jobs, Education and Training Centre

Mr Charlie Djordila, Chairperson

Tuesday, 18 July 2006 - Kununurra

East Kimberley Job Pathways

Mr Murray Coates, General Manager

Kimberley Group Training

Mr John Gummery, Chief Executive Officer

Wunan Foundation

Mr David Addis, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Ian Trust, Executive Director

Thursday, 20 July 2006 - Kununurra

Radio 6WR

Mr Colin Cameron, General Manager, Warringarra Media Aboriginal Corporation

Friday, 21 July 2006 - Broome

Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Dennis Batty, Manager, Djaringo Registered Training Organisation

Mr Ray Christophers, Manager, Municipal Services and Environmental Health Services

Ms Jessica Cook, Trainee, Indigenous Employment Centre

Ms Emma Eccles, Coordinator, Broome Youth and Accommodation Services

Ms Kathleen Edgar, Aboriginal Education Training and Employment Officer

Mr Bob Mahony, Administrator, Community Development Employment Project; and Manager

Ms Marcia Roe, Employment Consultant, Indigenous Employment Centre

Mr Martin Sibosado, Director, Djaringo Registered Training Organisation; and Chairperson of Nirrumbuk

Monday, 14 August 2006 - Canberra

Capital Region Area Consultative Committee

Mrs Marion Donaldson, Executive Officer

Mr Terry Williams, Executive Officer

Monday, 11 September 2006 - Canberra

Department of Defence

Ms Dianne Harris, Director General, Fairness and Resolution Branch

Captain Cameron McCracken, Director, Defence Force Recruiting

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Parker, Commanding Officer, NORFORCE

Mr Peter Sullivan, Director, Fairness and Resolution Branch

Monday, 16 October 2006 - Canberra

Individual

Dr Dennis Foley

Monday, 4 December 2006 - Canberra

Indigenous Community Volunteers

Dr Joseph Elu, Co-chair

Mr Peter Steigrad, Co-chair

Mr Paul Tyrrell, Chief Executive Officer

Monday, 12 February 2007 - Canberra

Goori House Association Treatment Centre

Mr John Close, Managing Director

Mr Dean Logan, Consultant

Monday, 26 March 2007 - Canberra

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Mrs Marilyn Hoffman, Acting Director, Business Development

Mr Bob Harvey, Acting Deputy Secretary, Workforce Participation

Ms Mary-Anne Sakkara, Assistant Secretary

Ms Lynne Stevenson, Assistant Secretary

Tuesday, 15 May 2007 - Cairns

Individual

Mr Jack Szydzik

Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park

Mr Ernest Brimm, Operations Manager

Miss Shirley Hollingsworth, Gallery Manager and Training Coordinator

Mr Emmanuel Ross, Host and Performer

Miss Natasha Woodleigh, Groups Coordinator and Acting Supervisor
for Sales and Reservations

Wednesday, 16 May 2007 - Thursday Island

Queensland Department of Employment and Industrial Relations

Mr Brian Norris, Indigenous Employment and Training Manager

Torres Strait Regional Authority

Mr Toshie Kris, Chairperson

Mr Wayne See Kee, General Manager

Mr Jesse Sagaukaz, TSRA Member from Bamaga

Mr Brendan O'Connor, Manager Policy

Thursday, 17 May 2007 - Thursday Island

Torres Strait Shire Council

Mayor Pedro Stephen

Mr Leo Akee, Private Capacity

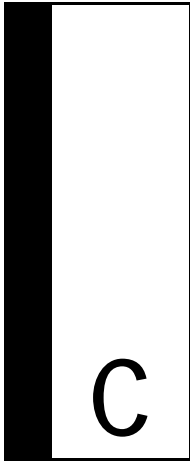
ITEC Employment

Ms Hazel Wymarra, Employment Consultant

Monday, 21 May 2007 - Canberra

Individual

Mr Jack Szydzik



Appendix C: List of Exhibits

Exhibits

Organisation

1. Outback Areas Community Development Trust
Successful Programs
2. Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd
Newsletter number 16 - March 2005
3. Curtin University of Technology
Reassessing Indigenous disadvantage and Indigenous employment policy (Related to Submission No. 6)
4. Rainbow Serpent
Rainbow Serpent Australian Aboriginal Art Craft Design 2005 Catalogue (Related to Submission No. 10)
5. Rainbow Serpent

*Rainbow Serpent Australian Aboriginal Art Craft Design
Promotional Book (Related to Submission No. 10)*

6. Bluefin Seafoods Pty Ltd
Documents and Photographs (Related to Submission No. 17)
7. Yuwaaliaay Elders Aboriginal Corporation
Document and Photographs (Related to Submission No. 23)
8. Guurrbi Tours Aboriginal Rock Art Tours
*Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Social Capital, Judy Bennett &
Wilfred Gordon 2005*
9. Arnhemland Progress Association
*Nutrition Policy: Arnhemland Progress Association Inc (Related
to Submission No. 24)*
10. Arnhemland Progress Association
*Profile: Arnhemland Progress Association Inc (Related to
Submission No. 24)*
11. Arnhemland Progress Association
*Annual Report 2003-2004: Arnhemland Progress Association Inc
(Related to Submission No. 24)*
12. Arnhemland Progress Association
*Information CD: Arnhemland Progress Association Inc (Related
to Submission No. 24)*
13. CONFIDENTIAL

14. Worktrainers Limited
Working Partners Employment - The Relationship between Worktrainers and Ganbina/KEETA, Worktrainers 2004
15. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Indigenous Employment & Career Development Strategy 2005-06, Progress report September 2003 (Related to Submission No. 33)
16. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Indigenous Employment & Career Development Strategy 2002-2006, Progress Report for the period of September 2003 to May 2004 (Related to Submission No. 33)
17. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Indigenous Employment & Career Development Strategy 2002-2006, Advancing Indigenous Employment- Improving Business Outcomes (Related to Submission No. 33)
18. Bloodwood Tree Association Inc
Local Employment Strategy, Employment Directions Network (Related to Submission No. 34)
19. Bloodwood Tree Association Inc
TAFEWA Pilbara, Preparing the Workforce for the Resources Industry, Community of Practice Indigenous Training Program (Related to Submission No. 34)
20. Corrugation Road
My Corrugation Road, Beyond Their Limits

21. City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Study Tour Report of Ian Fletcher Chief Executive Officer City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder July 2005, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia (Related to Submission No. 43)
22. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
Video, Aboriginal Experience Part 1, Open Training & Education Network 1994 (Related to Submission No. 41)
23. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
Video, Aboriginal Experience Part 2, Open Training & Education Network 1994 (Related to Submission No. 41)
24. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
Success in Aboriginal Communities, A Pilot Study (Related to Submission No. 58)
25. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
Success in Aboriginal Communities, volume 2 (Related to Submission No. 58)
26. ACT Government
The Canberra Plan, Social Spatial Economic, 2004 (Related to Submission No. 60)
27. ACT Government
The Canberra Spatial Plan, March 2004 (Related to Submission No. 60)
28. ACT Government

The Economic White Paper for the Australian Capital Territory, April 2004 (Related to Submission No. 60)

29. ACT Government
A Social and Cultural Profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Canberra, August 2004 (Related to Submission No. 60)
30. ACT Government
Building Our Community, The Canberra Social Plan, 2004 (Related to Submission No. 60)
31. Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Indigenous Employment, Education, Training & Small Business Development (Related to Submission No. 64)
32. Mission Australia Bega
Employment extra: Issue 13, December 2004, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (Related to Submission No. 99)
33. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
Indigenous Job Search Success, Discussion Paper No. 274/2005 (Related to Submission No. 72)
34. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
Indigenous Socioeconomic change 1971 - 2001: A Historical Perspective (Related to Submission No. 72)
35. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research

A Case Study of the Bungala CDEP: Economic and Social Impacts, No. 208/2000 (Related to Submission No. 72)

36. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
Australian Census Analytic Program: Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market, 2001 (Related to Submission No. 72)

37. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research
The Grameen Bank micro-credit model: Lessons for Australian Indigenous economic policy, No. 178/1999 (Related to Submission No. 72)

38. Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd
ANZ Quarterly Newsletter, March 2005 (Related to Submission No. 71)

39. National Tertiary Education Industry Union
NTEU Submission to DEST Review into the Impact of Abstudy Policy Changes that came into Effect in 2000, February 2005 (Related to Submission No. 76)

40. Dr Dennis Foley
Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: A Case Study Analysis, (unpublished PhD thesis, October 2004)

41. Dr Dennis Foley
Successful Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: A Case Study Analysis

42. Dr Dennis Foley

- Copy of presentation, " Indigenous Australian Entrepreneurs: Successful and Invisible", to the ATSIA Committee, Parliament of Australia, 23 May 2005*
43. Alice Springs Desert Park
Application for the Position of Apprentice Park Guide (Related to Submission No. 84)
44. Alice Springs Desert Park
Frequently Asked Questions: Contemporary Aboriginal life in Central Australia (Related to Submission No. 84)
45. Alice Springs Desert Park
Aboriginal Employment and Training Program at the Alice Springs Desert Park, Hugh Woodbury, 25 September 2005 (Related to Submission No. 84)
46. Alice Springs Desert Park
Consulting with Central Australian Aboriginal People about Cultural Interpretation (Related to Submission No. 84)
47. Alice Springs Desert Park
Indigenous Employment and Training at the Alice Springs Desert Park (Related to Submission No. 84)
48. Alice Springs Desert Park
Presenting Cultural Interpretation at the Alice Springs Desert Park, Guide Workshop May 2000 (Related to Submission No. 84)
49. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Ministerial Statement: Senator the Hon Amanda Vanstone, Sharing Responsibility: Agreements Target Exceeded, Friday 27th May 2005 (Related to Submission No. 73)

50. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Australian Government Investment in SRA Activities (Related to Submission No. 73)

51. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Developing an SRA with the Community at Bonya (Related to Submission No. 73)

52. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Shared Responsibility Agreements (Related to Submission No. 73)

53. Professor Jon Altman

CDEP 2005, A New Home and New Objectives for a Very Old Program? (Related to Submission No. 88)

54. Professor Jon Altman

Economic Development & Participation for Remote Indigenous Communities: Best Practice, Evident Barriers, & Innovative Solutions in the Hybrid Economy (Related to Submission No. 88)

55. Professor Jon Altman

Transitions & Risk, New Directions in Social Policy, February 2005 (Related to Submission No. 88)

56. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, The Kids of Wadeye, Volume 3 Edition 8, Themes: Sea Rangers of Borroloola (Related to Submission No. 92)
57. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, The Aburru bulk carrier at the Bing bong port facility, Volume 3 Edition 9, Theme: Partnership of Mawa and McArthur River Mine (Related to Submission No. 92)
58. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, Volume 3 Edition 10, Theme: Partnership of Mawa and McArthur River Mine part 2 (Related to Submission No. 92)
59. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, On the road to Dhuruputjpi Homelands, Volume 3 Edition 12, Theme: Moses, a traditional ranger looking after his country (Related to Submission No. 92)
60. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, Volume 3 Edition 16, Theme: Indigenous Cane Toad Research Centre Proposal (Related to Submission No. 92)
61. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, The Kids of Wadeye, Volume 3 Edition 21, Theme: Future Dreams and Hopes of Wadeye (Related to Submission No. 2)
62. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, Basket making at Jabiru Mahbilil Festival, Volume 4 Edition 2, Theme: General Principles to do with Indigenous Business in remote regions (Related to Submission No. 92)

63. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, Volume 4 Edition 3, Theme: Marcus Guthia - Dreams of becoming a Stockman - Raminginning part 1 (Related to Submission No. 92)
64. Centre for Appropriate Technology
Our Place, Volume 4 Edition 5, Theme: Youthworx and Kormilda College (Related to Submission No. 92)
65. City of Onkaparinga
Kurna Tappa Iri Reconciliation Agreement 2005 – 2008 (Related to Submission No. 93)
66. Goolarri Media Enterprises Pty Ltd
The ATQF at Work- Examples of Good Practice, Goolarri Media Enterprises Pty Ltd, Accessing vocationally competent trainers in remote locations
67. Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation
Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation Business Plan 2004-5 (Related to Submission No. 97)
68. Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation
Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation Business Plan, Proposal to Establish a Community Centre (Related to Submission No. 97)
69. Koorlbardi Aboriginal Corporation
Correspondence to The Hon Dr GI Gallop, 12 June 2005 (Related to Submission No. 97)
70. Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation

Working Group Services Delivery Model, A Policy Paper, 18 May 2005 (Related to Submission No. 98)

71. Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation
The Working Group: Bridging the gap between traditional owners, government and stakeholders (Related to Submission No. 98)
72. Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
The Larrakia People
73. Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
The Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation: Submission to CDEP Discussion Paper
74. Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
75. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Lookrukin: Indigenous Women's Leadership Development Pilot Program, Prospectus 2005/2006 (Related to Submission No. 33)
76. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Kigaruk: An Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program, Prospectus 2005/2006 (Related to Submission No. 33)
77. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
Northern Territory Public Sector, Indigenous Employment Tool Kit (Related to Submission No. 33)
78. Northern Land Council

Map of Northern Land Council Represented Area (Related to Submission No. 103)

79. Arnhemland Progress Association
Unity Through Enterprise, Senate Inquiry into Indigenous Employment, July 2004 (Related to Submission No. 24)
80. Arnhemland Progress Association
Unity Through Enterprise CD (Related to Submission No. 24)
81. Alice Springs Town Council
Alice Springs Town Council Calender 2005 (Related to Submission No. 51)
82. Alice Springs Town Council
Alice Springs Town Council, Newspaper, Eight Edition, June 2005 (Related to Submission No. 51)
83. Central Land Council
A Community Ranger Group in the Hermannsburg area, 2005-the start
84. Central Land Council
Celebrating 30 Years of the Central Land Council, Annual Report 2003-2004
85. Central Land Council
The Way Forward: National Indigenous Land and Sea Management Conference, Alice Springs 2005

-
86. Central Land Council
*National Indigenous Land and Sea Management Conference DVD,
Alice Springs April 19-21 2005*
 87. Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd
News Letter, December 2004/ #15
 88. Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd
News Letter, June 2005/ #17
 89. Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd
Community Harmony Strategy Brochure
 90. Larrakia Development Corporation Pty Ltd
Case Study, First Language Research Project
 91. Alice Springs Desert Park
*Guide Apprenticeship Advertisement (Related to Submission
No. 84)*
 92. Cairns City Council
About jobs- Manoora
 93. Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia
Collections of newspaper articles
 94. COMALCO
Code of Conduct, May 2004

95. CONFIDENTIAL
96. Ms Eileen Deemal-Hall
Action Learning Solutions
97. Queensland Government
Indigenous Employment and Training Mangers Program (Related to Submission No. 105)
98. Queensland Government
Indigenous Employment and Training Support Program (Related to Submission No. 105)
99. Queensland Government
People Working Together (Related to Submission No. 105)
100. Queensland Government
Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Projects (Related to Submission No. 105)
101. Queensland Government
Kaulder Jibbijah-2003, Our Working Partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (Related to Submission No. 105)
102. COMALCO
The Way We Work, April 2003
103. Department of Education Science and Training

- Indigenous Education and Training, 2003* (Related to Submission No. 107)
104. Department of Education Science and Training
What Works, The Work Program (Related to Submission No. 107)
105. Australian Football League Northern Territory
Annual Report 2004
106. Australian Football League Northern Territory
Sporting Traineeships, Giving Careers a Sporting Chance
107. Australian Football League Northern Territory
Paper by Anthony Kelly, An Inquiry into Indigenous Employment
108. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
Fiji's Lost Opportunity \$24 Million: Lost by not proceeding in 1986 with a sustainable, village owned, culture hotel, tourism project
(Related to Submission No. 41)
109. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
Engage: the newsletter of the International Conference on Engaging Communities, Day 4: Wednesday 17 August 2005 (Related to Submission No. 41)
110. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (Related to Submission No. 41)

111. Tourism Industrialists Pty Ltd
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Report on the fourth session (16-27 May 2005 (Related to Submission No. 1)
112. City of Onkaparinga
Kurna Tappa Iri Regional Agreement: Heritage, Culture and Business Development 2005-2008 (Related to Submission No. 93)
113. Rainbow Serpent
Inquiry into Indigenous Employment 19 August 2005 (Related to Submission No. 10)
114. Rainbow Serpent
Paradise Drive Inn, Wholesale for Wholesalers (Related to Submission No. 10)
115. Rainbow Serpent
The Financial Review 'Should a fake Didgeridoo?' Page 3, 29 July 2005, Author Sue Williams (Related to Submission No. 10)
116. Rainbow Serpent
Label of Authenticity (Related to Submission No. 10)
117. New South Wales Government
Two Way Together: The NSW Government and Aboriginal people coming together to do business (Related to Submission No. 111)
118. New South Wales Government

- Aboriginal participation in construction, Implementation Guidelines* January 2001 (Related to Submission No. 111)
119. New South Wales Government
Two Ways Together Report June 2005, *the NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan 2003-2012* (Related to Submission No. 111)
120. New South Wales Government
Fact Sheet: Economic Development in New South Wales
(Related to Submission No. 111)
121. New South Wales Government
New South Wales Department of Aboriginal Affairs: Aboriginal Communities Development Program, Program Progress Report No 42, June 2005 (Related to Submission No. 111)
122. New South Wales Government
Aboriginal Employment in Practice for the NSW Public Sector
(Related to Submission No. 111)
123. New South Wales Government
Elsa Dixon: Aboriginal Employment Program (Related to Submission No. 111)
124. Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce
Information Paper Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce
125. Northern Territory Government's Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce

Northern Territory Indigenous Economic Development Strategy

126. Narana Creations
The Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress
(Related to Submission No. 114)
127. Narana Creations
Narana Creations (Related to Submission No. 114)
128. Narana Creations
Narana Creations, Aboriginal Handcrafts (Related to Submission No. 114)
129. Narana Creations
Aboriginal Victoria (Related to Submission No. 114)
130. City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
BHP Billiton Indigenous Initiatives
131. Placer Dome
Osborne Mine - Community Relations
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