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Committee Secretary
House of Representatives
House Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Dear Committee Secretary,

The Former Origin Greats (FOGS) Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos, held throughout Queensland, has developed into a valuable tool for both the Australian Government and Indigenous Australians as one supports the other towards pathways that culminates in employment and/ or education. Through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) FOGS have worked closely with the Australian Government to 'Close the Gap' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in the areas of employment, training and education.

The FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos are a 'Learn, Earn, Legend!' program funded by the Australian Government with the aim of building aspirations of young Indigenous Australians while assisting Indigenous school leavers and job seekers into career pathways or employment and training placements. The Key Performance Indicators established under the funding guidelines have all been well surpassed by FOGS and in 2012 is one of the most successful initiatives under the 'Learn, Earn, Legend!' banner.

The Expos provide Indigenous school leavers and job seekers with the opportunity to link with some of Queensland's most prominent employers, education and training providers in a truly unique environment – in the presence of Queensland State of Origin Greats. To date the FOGS Expos have an accumulated attendance number of

53,660 Indigenous school leavers and job seekers. These Indigenous school leavers and jobs seekers have been exposed to over 1244 exhibitors. This exposure has resulted in excess of 1000 employment, training and educational outcomes, with the events generating over \$1,000,000 of media coverage for the Australian Government's Indigenous Agenda.

These statistics, along with the success and impeccable reputation these events have acquired undeniably prove the role FOGS have in the Australian Government's 'Closing the Gap' agenda. FOGS have assumed the vital role of facilitator, not a Government body, FOGS are able to gather all of the fundamental stakeholders to collaboratively work together in 'Closing the Gap' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in the areas of employment, education and training. FOGS as the facilitator are able to bring about change utilising sport and in particular the game of Rugby League as the vehicle in delivering such a program, as sport and in particular the game of Rugby League is a prevalent interest among Indigenous communities.

The union of stakeholders is coordinated through a three staged approach to the initiative as a whole. This three staged approach is executed in each of the regions visited yearly.

- **FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Breakfast Forum:** held approximately a month prior to each expo in each region.
- **FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Corporate Dinner:** held the night before each regional expo.
- **FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expo:** held on one day in each of the regions.

FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Breakfast Forum

The FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Breakfast Forum serve three main objectives. Firstly, the breakfast forum better explains the yearly event scheduled and illustrates the opportunities available for Indigenous students and job seekers. Secondly, the Breakfast Forums form an important platform for all education and

employment stakeholders in preparation for the Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos by offering great insights and potential networks for all attendees. Thirdly, the Breakfast Forums provide education and employment professionals the chance to discuss their backgrounds and roles in the 'Closing the Gap' agenda, particularly in regard to how Indigenous students and job seekers can benefit for their involvement in the expos. Guest speakers in each region also add great value to the breakfast by presenting information on localised programs to assist Indigenous recruitment and retention, local employment data and employment initiatives and HR best practises examples.

The Breakfast provides the scope and agenda for the event. It gives all stakeholders involved a better understanding of how their participation is related to other stakeholders working to 'Close the Gap'. It creates an environment conducive to coordination, sharing and partnering and combining resources to better address the issue of Indigenous disadvantage in the areas of education and employment. Attendance at the Breakfast prior to each regional Indigenous Employment and Careers Expo further enhances the expo experience for all stakeholders and increases education and employment outcomes for local Indigenous school leavers and job seekers.

FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Corporate Dinner

The FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Corporate Dinner are less formal than the Breakfast Forums and this relaxed environment is intended. Each exhibitor present at the regional expo is entitled to two complimentary tickets and is invited to enjoy dinner with some of Queensland's Former Origin Greats. The FOGS also ensure that key community members are invited to the dinner to ensure collaboration that occurs at these events involves all fundamental regional stakeholders. The dinner is a low key event held the night before each regional expo; the dinner's purpose is to thank exhibitors for their attendance at the expo the following day.

FOGS have found that the combination of a formal Breakfast and then an informal dinner makes for stakeholders to be at ease and willing to mingle, mix and discuss opportunities, challenges and strategies in much more cooperative manner. The

causal networking that FOGS observes at these events often results in stakeholder relationships that enables organisations to collaborate together post the FOGS Expos with a view to gaining Indigenous employment, education and training outcomes.

FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expo

Trialled in 2008 and launched in 2009, the initiatives experienced incredible patronage in its first year, with over 200 exhibitors and 10,500 people attending the expos in six Queensland centres including Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Mackay, Mount Isa and Brisbane. The Expos attracted some of Australia's largest employers, educators and training organisations including the Commonwealth Bank, Virgin Blue, Xstrata, Construction Skills Queensland, TAFE Queensland, Woolworths and Australia Post. As a result FOGS has been responsible for these organisations reviewing their own internal Indigenous employment and training and re-resourcing this part of their employment strategy.

The FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos are staged for one day in seven locations throughout Queensland and attract a wide variety of Indigenous school leavers and job seekers looking to secure employment and career training opportunities across a broad range of industries. Each expo is held from 9:00am until 2:00pm and boasts free admission for the general public. Since its inception in 2009, FOGS have continued to host FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos across Queensland in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, which have resulted in increased successes each year.

Expos have been held in the following Queensland regions:

- Brisbane (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)
- Cairns (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)
- Gold Coast (2010)
- Mackay (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)
- Mount Isa (2009, 2010, 2011)
- Rockhampton (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)
- Sunshine Coast (2012)
- Townsville (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)

➤ Toowoomba (2011, 2012)

The distinct difference between the FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos and other Indigenous Employment Expos is the way in which FOGS utilise the game of Rugby League and more importantly the players to create a truly unique expo environment, one in which Indigenous Australians can relate to. FOGS have been represented throughout all the expos to date by some of the nation's highest profiled athletes including Wally Lewis, Mal Meninga, Allan Langer, Darren Lockyer, Johnathan Thurston, Sam Thaiday, Steve Price, Justin Hodges, the late great Arthur Beetson and Gene Miles. These players are very proud to have an influence on young Indigenous school leavers and jobs seekers. The players do this by actively engaging with the attendees, sharing their personal experience regarding education and employment as well as providing encouragement through discipline and commitment to the cause.

FOGS are committed to assisting the Australian Government in 'Closing the Gap' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. FOG number one, Arthur Beetson was passionate about making a difference in the areas of education and employment for his mob. FOGS now believe in addition to their commitment to the Australian Government they have a commitment to the family of Arthur Beetson to continue his legacy in ensuring positive change continues to occur for Indigenous Australians.

If you require any additional information or wish to clarify certain aspects of the FOGS Indigenous Employment and Careers Expos, please don't hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Gene Miles.

Gene Miles
Executive Chairman

Former Origin Greats



achieving results through
indigenous education



Inspire



Encourage



Succeed

This program is an initiative of



The Former Origin Greats (FOGS) Achieving Results Through Indigenous Education (ARTIE) Academy has a responsibility to Inspire, Encourage and Reward Indigenous students as they progress through the middle and senior phases of school.

In alignment with two 'Closing the Gap' targets, the academy has two main objectives;

- For academy students to complete Year 12 or its equivalent
- For academy students to be literate and numerate as they progress into the world of work beyond school

Supported by the Australian Government and funded under the Sporting Chance initiative, ARTIE uses Rugby League as a vehicle for the promotion, encouragement and rewarding of Indigenous students in 21 Secondary schools in QLD.

The influence of current and former Rugby League personalities has been one major catalyst for the educational improvements amongst academy participants. Moreover, the characteristics required to succeed in the arena of competitive sport can be effectively contextualised into how success in school pursuits can be achieved.

Through a myriad of activities, using multiple mediums, sporting identities inspire and encourage Indigenous students to make the necessary changes to their attitudes and efforts so that their potential can be achieved. They do this through explaining what it takes to be successful.



For example, in workshops delivered in Central Queensland academy schools, Indigenous NRL player, Johnathan Thurston details how success on the field is attributed to effort in training, receiving support from coaches, and being disciplined on and off the field. He integrates these necessities with school related themes. He suggested that effort and discipline is controlled by the individual, and that coaches are the same as teachers.

The following body of work will firstly detail a range of activities that aim to promote and support educational success through the influence of sport and sporting identities. Secondly, academy data will be outlined to support the influence of Rugby League on the educational success of Indigenous secondary students.

Stimulants to Success (Academy Activities)

Global projects

Through effective collaboration with each academy school, the ARTIE program will be implementing a global challenge that will be open to all Indigenous students. Under this challenge, the school and



ARTIE staff will identify an area of the data where students are underperforming. Students will take part in an inspirational workshop that will ultimately lead into them signing on to a project focussing on one or more target areas of attendance, engagement or achievement.

Students that succeed in this initiative will be rewarded with a group experience or a reward that signifies their success. ARTIE wishes to, where possible, expose students to new experiences that enable them to increase their scope of the world and ultimately realise that success at school results in experiencing exciting activities.



This major activity correlates strongly with the ARTIE motto of “Inspire, Encourage, Succeed”. Player ambassadors and academy staff inspire and encourage, supporting activities promote and encourage positive attitude and results, and rewards and celebratory events acknowledge success among program participants.

Ambassador Integration



To support the above mentioned global project initiative, ambassadors will co-conduct workshops that aim to contextualise the difficulty in maintaining strong results in Rugby League, University or TAFE with applying effort and succeeding at school. A number of connections are made between the necessity of applying more effort to attain more results in Rugby League and life, and adopting the same philosophy in the classroom. Ambassadors work with ARTIE Academy participants to adopt a philosophy where increased effort equals increased success and therefore increased opportunities following school.

ARTIE has implemented a range of measures as a way to ensure regular integration between NRL and FOG ambassadors and ARTIE Academy participants. To support the previously mentioned Global Project strategy, player ambassadors, both past and present will be motivating and supporting students in their attempts to reach their own academic, effort and/or behavioural goals. A range of activities will support this strategy. They include;

- Player visit – Player ambassadors will visit academy schools and run workshops aimed to promote the importance of success at school and how it affects work. They will work with students to set goals for the term.
- Player text messages – To keep up with what is popular amongst our target group, players will send students motivational text messages during the term.
- Player voice messages – Players will send voice messages to students that either congratulates them on their performance, or encourages them to maintain or improve their efforts. Voice messages will be received by the student via mobile phone.

Passports

An activity that promotes effort in Maths and English, the ARTIE passport is a player driven initiative that sees Indigenous program participants possessing a passport that must be taken to Maths and English lessons for the duration of the project. At the completion of each Maths and English lesson, the student receives a mark out of 10 from the teacher for their effort and behaviour within the class. The students repeat this process and collate the number of points gathered from all lessons. The reward for success is determined at the start of the project and students aim to achieve the desired points.

As an example, in 2012 the campaign was launched by Indigenous NRL player Johnathan Thurston, who explained the project and promoted the relationship between effort and success. Students were rewarded at the end of the campaign with a group trip to Brisbane.



Central Queensland variation – Pricey’s Pathways Project



Former Origin Great, Steve Price, will be conducting a career focussed project for Year 10, 11, and 12 students. Focussed on the linkage of school with work, Steve will be employing the same philosophy as has been described in the career development activities and school based traineeship set up.

Steve will be partnering with a mining recruitment company in the Central Queensland region and will be delivering workshops and mentoring sessions with students interested in working in the mining industry. Importantly, if the student reaches the requirements established in the program, they will be transitioned into further training and work by the recruitment company.

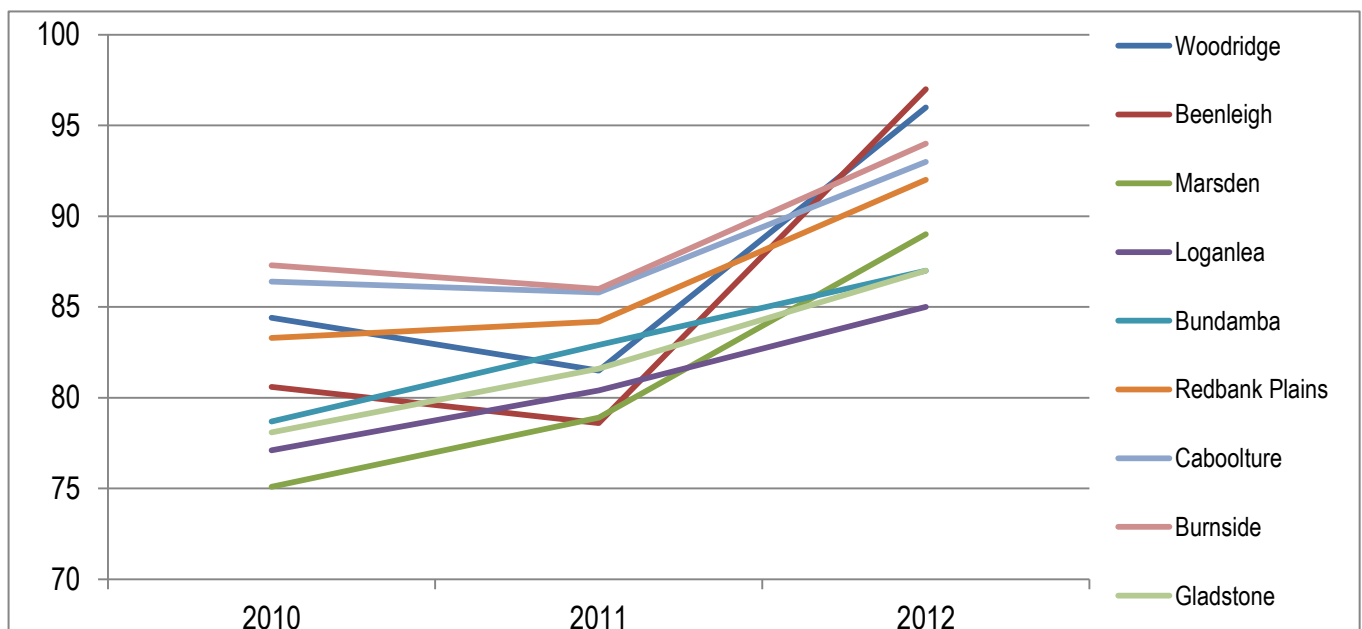


ARTIE Overview (2009 – 2012)

1. Key Performance Indicators

- An increase in school attendance
- Students' strengthened engagement and improved attitudes to schooling
- Improved achievement in student learning
- Increased retention to Year 12 or a Queensland Certificate of Education
- Greater parental and community involvement

1.1.1. An increase in school attendance



1.1.2. Students' strengthened engagement and improved attitudes to schooling

I would like to nominate for his good work ethic in Maths so far this term. – Mrs McNaught

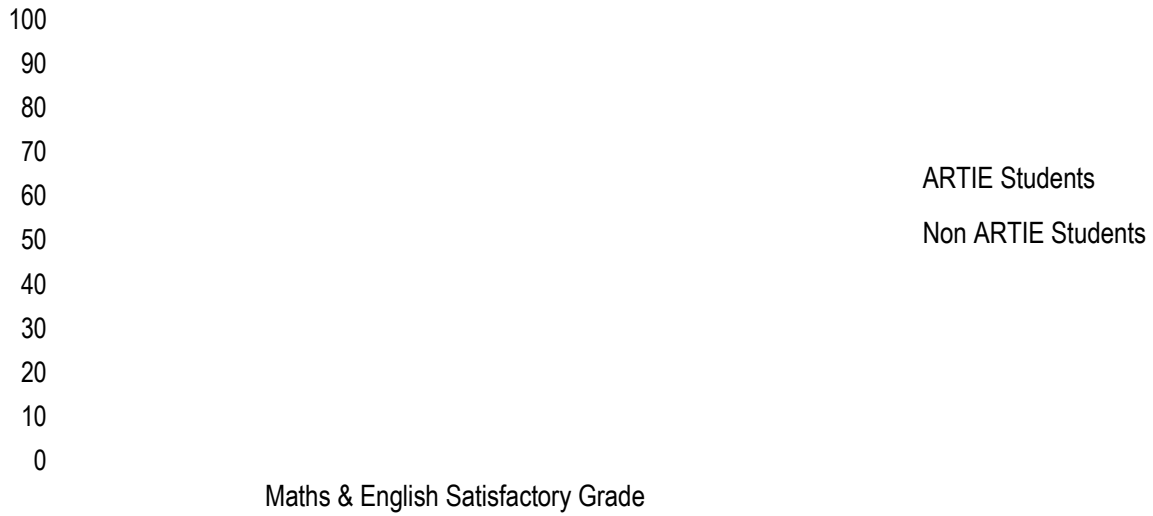
His improved attitude in English. He has been behaving much better in English lately and has been making an effort to get to class on time. He has also been enthusiastically reading his part when reading our play – Ms Graham

Her determination and effort to achieve well in History – which has paid off. Megan got an A and A- on her last exam and is currently topping the class! – Ms Graham

Improved behaviour and effort in class. Also improvement in results – Mrs Parker

Significant improvement in behaviour and work ethic in class. This has resulted in improvement in grades - Mrs Parker

1.1.3. Improved achievement in student learning



1.1.4. Increased retention to Year 12 or Queensland Certificate of Education

