



Submission No 793

Fregon Anangu School

RECEIVED
23 FEB 2009

BY: ASIA

PMB 132 Alice Springs

N.T. 0872

Phone (08) 8956 2955 Fax (08) 8956 7555

ABN. 16899321875

Tuesday, 24 February 2009

TO: House Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
Inquiry into community stores in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

FROM Fregon Anangu School teaching staff

RE: Inquiry into community stores in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Food supply, quality, cost and competition issues;

1. Foods available are of minimum quality and quantity
2. Costs of healthy food is far greater than that of junk foods
3. Many goods stocked are recognised as causing health problems
4. Small pre-packed vegetables are of poor quality and often past due dates to be consumed
5. Most items are out of date or with one or two days to go
6. Store profits need more accountability
7. Store management should support school attendance by not serving students during school time
8. There is very poor communication between the Store and other services; eg no representative attends the Community Safety meetings organised by the police
9. Profits from the store, which often amounts to many thousands of dollars are used for purchasing TV's etc for Aboriginal people rather than for health
10. Non Aboriginal people who staff the other community services should be supported; ie the current Store Manager states aggressively that he is only here for the indigenous people and has written to the school to state that.

The Health and Nutrition program of the community's school is counteracted by the Store's provision of unhealthy foods

The effectiveness of the Outback Stores model, and other private, public and community store models

This committee can only comment on the particular store in this remote Aboriginal community. The store's work here is counterproductive to health needs of the community. Aboriginal Community members are often desperately unsatisfied but for some reason keep quiet and non indigenous workers in the other services are often intimidated by threats and bad language. Everyone who is involved with health programs in the community frustrated by the store.

We believe the current store management is highly ineffective

Impact of these factors on the health and economic outcomes of communities.

It is well known that the great majority of Aboriginal people living in this and other Aboriginal Lands Communities will get diabetes and will contract it earlier than other sections of the broader Australian community.

Therefore it is very frustrating that some store managers can disregard policy on this critical health matter.

Recommendations

1. Profits should be reduced to make healthy foods more accessible
2. Profits should be used for other more lasting purposes than electrical goods etc that have a limited life in this remote community; eg education and health
3. Suggest that foods for diabetics are stocked and identified in a special section
4. Need much wider variety of food
5. Needs better communication with other services eg
6. Selection of store managers needs to be more rigorous and attached to clear goals and expectations

Ralph Earle

Principal
Fregon Anangu School