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CAPACITY BUILDING
INQUIRY
Submission No. 35.1

**House of Representatives Standing Committee
Enquiry Into Capacity Building
On Aboriginal Communities
2002**

**Section Two
Potential New
Structures & Policies**

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Written in consultation with the Nyirrangu Muay Families 1998-2002

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Introduction.

This document has been written as a result of advice from people who belong to the three families known as the Nyirrangu Muay families. These families are from Fitzroy Crossing, which is in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The overall submission has been written in three sections. The first section of the submission relates to sub paragraph A & B of the terms of reference of the enquiry. It provides the evidence of undesirable outcomes that occur as a result of the various structures and policies that government agencies currently utilise. These strategies set families against each other. This results in the diss-empowerment of Aboriginal people. This following two sections of the document relate to sub paragraph C of the terms of reference of the inquiry. It provides some new potential government agency framework and policy suggestions that might better serve the Australian Government if it is serious about addressing the issues raised in this document.

ATSIC

An ethical and efficient system of service delivery that provides transparency and accountability.

Preamble

As described in the first section of this document the Nyirrangu Muay people have for the last three years been trying to achieve various self-determination objectives within the current model of ATSIC service delivery. It is out of the failure of the current structures to remedy our legitimate concerns that this document has been born. It is a model that seeks to address the rights of the family and the individual. The model suggested here does not pretend to be a national remedy. It is designed to remedy problems specific to our region.

One thing that is fundamental that is not taken into consideration when setting up ATSIC and Native Title Tribunal administrative processes is the fact that each family group is in reality a sovereign landowning group in it's own right and should be treated accordingly. The structures and strategies incorporated in this model have been specifically formulated as contingencies that might address the failings of the present system in regard to this problem. The present practice of lumping many families together using language as a way of delineating groups results in an environment where corrupt and sometimes violent individuals end up monopolising the resources of that organisation and marginalizing the families outside of their own families. This is the primary concern of Nyirrangu Muay families and it is a concern that is echoed right across the country in many communities. What we seek to present here is a model that will ensure that each family has an equal and fair opportunity to achieve self-determination. The present divide and rule model which encourages/allows one family to walk over the top of the needs of another family to achieve community development objectives is a cause for national shame on the part of the Australian Government who developed the structure and it must be urgently addressed. It results in the demoralisation of the members of families who are marginalised leaving them vulnerable. As such the present structures could be construed as being in violation of certain sections of the United Nations Anti Genocide Convention which Australia signed back in 1946.

Another major issue is that of funding parity when comparing mainstream "Work for the Dole" (WFTD) schemes and Aboriginal CDEP. CDEP and WFTD is funded at a set rate per participant. CDEP often ends up having to fill the gap for public transport and other services that would normally be provided by local shire or city councils in mainstream Australia where the WFTD schemes run. Why is it then that the WFTD schemes get roughly \$4,000.00 per participant and the CDEP schemes get \$3,000.00 per participant? This is an obvious inequity that needs to be addressed with some urgency. If anything the CDEP schemes should be getting more funding. The cap on the numbers of people in each region who can participate in CDEP schemes is also something that needs to be addressed. Another issue that needs to be addressed is the stigma attached to CDEP as a welfare handout.

If Aboriginal people are going to be able to have an opportunity to get ahead there are some very basic strategies that are going to need to be employed. Some of these might include the topics listed below.

- Performance assessment of present ATSIC Grantee Organisations.
- Development of a new model for service delivery that ensures all families have parity when accessing ATSIC funding programs via a Partnership Facilitation Service (PFS)
- Safeguards for PFS
- Distribution of funding within a PFS and the financial autonomy of families within a PFS
- Multi family infrastructure-equipment purchases within a PFS
- Family projects expenditure contingencies
- Family office worker training
- Flexible service delivery by PFS organisations

- Mentoring program to provide training & other assistance
- Funding parity between CDEP & Mainstream work for the dole projects
- Transport within a family group as a separate program
- Law and Culture
- Diet
- Access to consumer services

It is vital that any new system has contingencies that ensure individual and family rights are protected as an integral part of the structure. Here is an enlarged explanation of the above listed strategies.

- Assessment of present ATSIC Grantee Organisations. Large community based ATSIC grantee organisations and present ATSIC corporate CDEP grantee organisations that administer funding for multiple families should be assessed as to how satisfied each member of each family group is with levels of service, utilisation of funding, community project outcomes and accountability and any other indicators that are of concern to people.
- Assessment format. A comprehensive assessment format needs to be developed by a professional organisation such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics in consultation with individuals from a broad cross section of families in each geographic ATSIC region paying particular attention to families who see themselves as being marginalised. Once an assessment format has been arrived at in consultation with families the process to complete forms should be undertaken by independent persons from the Australian Bureau Of Statistics (ABS). These persons should have no associations with people from that area so as to ensure the integrity of the results. The people involved would need to be specially trained to understand the cultural and administrative complexities that have led up to the present situation of nepotism & corruption. Safeguards would need to be put in place to ensure the ABS personal operate in a spirit of realising the sovereign rights of each family group.
- Recognition of the individual within a family. Provision would need to be made in the form for each individual to nominate the community that they want to affiliate themselves with so as to be able to establish the social dynamic of communities. People should also be able to register their other subsequent interests as well. Individuals might have links with people from other communities through family or marriage or previous living circumstances of some kind where they might in the past have spend a period of time at that place regularly. If a person is a CDEP participant with a particular family group then they would automatically have registered their primary interest with that family group. The survey should be a sample of a cross section of each family group where everyone who wants to participate has the chance to do so. Community elders, teenagers, leaders and CDEP participants should all have an equal opportunity to be able to participate in the survey.
- Right to break away. If one or more family groups wants to break away from a large ATSIC Community Grantee Organisation or a corporate CDEP body then this be allowed to happen.
- Partnership Facilitation Service. Each town service centre should have an organisation established that provides financial and project management services to family groups who in effect become ATSIC grantee organisations in their own right. I will refer to this organisation as a "Partnership Facilitation Service" (PFS). This could (with safeguards) even be a situation where an existing Corporate CDEP or other Community Grantee simply changes it's constitution to allow for each outstation group to be a grantee recipient in their own right but to have their monies managed via a PFS structure. It would be the ultimate responsibility of that organisation to ensure that appropriate assistance is available to ensure that all aspects of the administration of grants is available to families. Charges for operating the PFS would be applied on a costed per head basis to each family depending on the services which the community cannot fulfil at any given time. The people who operate the PFS would need to be proven performers who can provide an ethical, efficient and cost effective service. Some of the strategies that might be able to ensure that was able to occur might include:

- Distribution of funding. The distribution of grant funding for each family group could still be determined by the number of CDEP participants in each of those families the same way funding is presently allocated as per CDEP participant numbers on a regional and national basis. There may be some complexity with people whom like to move between two or more different communities in terms of allocating that persons \$3000.00 contribution to running of the office and project costs etc. This might be able to be addressed by having the amount of money split up between the different locations a person stays in depending upon the percentage of time in an average year that person spends in each location they live in.
- Financial Autonomy. The PFS should have a structure that ensures each individual family within the PFS has the ultimate control over the use of its funding. IE That each family becomes a grantee in their own right with acknowledgement that they have to adhere to ATSIC rules for the utilisation, management and accounting of funding grants.
- Multi family infrastructure-equipment purchases. That each PFS which purchases items for the benefit of all of the groups in the PFS only utilises amounts of family grants where all of the family leaders and participants of each family group involved agree to the funding being diverted for this purpose. That the use of this equipment be on a non-profit basis with the maintenance costs being attributed according to the utilisation of that equipment by families. There should also be safeguards to ensure all families who contributed to the purchase of the piece of infrastructure or equipment have equal access and that if it is damaged through neglect or misuse by a specific family that they be solely liable for the cost of repairs. That other families within the PFS should be able to buy equal shares in the piece of equipment based upon it's initial purchase price and that the money should be equally refunded to all of the families who contributed to it's purchase. That families who wish to utilise equipment or infrastructure should be able to but they pay what is considered to be an average commercial lease cost for that use and that they be subject to paying the cost of repairs in event of neglect or misuse.
- Family projects expenditure contingencies. That the direction of a specific family group be acted upon preferably only after a consensus in reached within that group. That if a consensus is not able to be reached concerning the utilisation of funding for a specific project purpose that the money be broken up equally and be allocated to specific projects depending on the support of each individual participant. For example, three members might want a garden and the other four might want a car and another four might want both. If the funding level was \$2000 per head then \$10,000 would go towards the garden and \$12,000 would go towards the car.
- Family office worker training. That each family group should have it's own office and that willing people nominated by the family be trained under mentorship's so as they can undertake all levels of administration of ATSIC grants.
- Flexible service delivery by PFS organisations. That service delivery specifications and training be tailored to the specific needs, skills, and willingness of the individuals within that family group to engage.
- Mentoring program. That the Australian Government use non-ATSIC funding to start up a Mentor program where people with skills are placed to act as mentors with individual family groups. That the primary selection criteria include a previous background in social justice and that these people should be able to demonstrate a special knowledge of the values and ethical complexities involved with working with Aboriginal people under a mentorship capacity. It would be ideal if the people selected already had a working relationship with a specific family group that they wanted to work with. That if these people do not have adequate skills around the various administrative responsibilities they are going to need to be able to pass on that they be given training so as they are able to do so in a professional manner that is in accord with ATSIC funding guidelines.

- Family dynamics & service delivery. Over the years the situation in relation to the specific needs of a family group is going to change. Some of these factors might include:
 - The extent and success of training provided over that year.
 - The loss and gain of skills as people leave or enter the group.
 - The completion or non-completion of projects.
 - The identification of new community development priorities.

These variables need to be assessed, analysed and acted upon. A yearly report should be compiled by ABS staff that encourages people to confidentially talk about issues that concern them. Some of these issues might include:

- Success of training.
- Problems around completion or non completion of projects.
- An audit of the loss and gain of skills in the community.
- Satisfaction levels of participants and other community residents in relation to whether their needs are incorporated into the overall community plan.
- Satisfaction levels of participants & other community residents in relation to the community mentors interaction with the community.
- Satisfaction levels of participants and other community residents with the PFS structure.

In a more general across the board sense there are some issues that need to be addressed on a regional level in terms of the ATSIC structure to make it more effective in it's aim to provide a service that meets the needs of Aboriginal people.

- Safeguards. In the case of existing organisations becoming PFS organisations there would need to be special safeguards to prevent old patterns of corruption and marginalisation from occurring.
- Funding parity between CDEP & Mainstream work for the dole projects. In mainstream Australia where there are cities and towns everyone has access to public transport. In remote Aboriginal family situations this is often not the case. The transport requirements of people from within the family group for getting supplies, traditional hunting and cultural activities and social activities needs to be addressed as a program that does not impinge on CDEP funding.
- CDEP vehicles. The question of the use of CDEP vehicles for getting supplies, hunting and cultural and social activities needs to be addressed in a clear-cut way. Education and training around vehicle maintenance procedures, and assistance for people to be able to get drivers licences are other vital issues that need to be addressed within a CDEP.
 - Transport to attain food and other essential day-to-day living requirements. In some situations the nearest supermarket or fuel station might be 200 km return trip from an outstation location. In some cases CDEP vehicles need to go into town to pick up materials or tools for projects and shopping can be done at the same time. At some times there is no need for a CDEP vehicle to go to town and there is a need to replenish vital supplies. Allowance needs to be made to ensure that the use of CDEP vehicles to get supplies is recognised as a legitimate use of that vehicle.
 - Transport for Law and Culture. Their needs to be a specific funding program that is accessible to each family group to cover costs associated with the long trips taken each year for ceremonial events. There also needs to be funding available for extended camping trips into homelands so that individuals can learn about country.
 - Transport for access to consumer services. Another major issue is the availability of transport to be able to access various consumer services. The ability to be able to do banking, access health services, purchase consumer durables such as clothes, white goods, entertainment equipment etc in a major service centre that might be in excess of 400 kms away is another issue that needs to be addressed. Such trips may need to be made a minimum of three or four times per year. Each region should have one or more buses and drivers which are dedicated for this purpose.

- Diet. Another major issue is the availability of fresh foods and education in learning how to prepare healthy meals.
- Regional Council Representation. The present regional council system which only allows for some sixteen people to sit on council in any one region such as ours should be changed so that a man and a woman from each family would have a right to attend meetings and vote. Each family group could nominate one man and one woman to sit on the council. Rather than the regions being so big they could be broken up into sub regions where each town centre such as Derby, or Fitzroy Crossing or Gibb River has a council which periodically sits in each town. Each of these councils could have a man and a woman who could be a witness to the outcomes from each of these meetings when larger area regional meetings are required. There is no reason why video conferencing links could not be established so as all of these three councils could not sit at the same time to be able to vote on important issues.

Such a raft of measures as expressed above allow for people to be able to do the many things required to be able to realise a full and meaningful life whatever shape or form it might take for that individual.

- People would be able to move between different communities as they need to.
- Each family's rights of access to resources would be protected.
- Each individual would have a say concerning the project development at his or her place of living.
- The PFS structure would allow for each family group to be a sovereign ATSIC grantee group in their own right preventing problems from occurring between different families.
- The PFS structure would be efficient in terms of the smaller number of bodies ATSIC would need to deal with to monitor funding of programs.
- Multi family infrastructure-equipment purchases could be done in a way that did not cause arguments.
- Individuals would have control of the direction of family projects which would be a motivational factor in encouraging greater participation in community projects.
- A PFS organisation could easily be designed to be responsive to the changing needs of a family group.
- A community development structure that encourages outside people to enter a community as a mentor to provide logistical training and projects supervision will promote reconciliation and cross cultural learning for all involved.
- Funding parity between CDEP & Mainstream work for the dole projects will provide an atmosphere of equality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures in Australia.
- Addressing transport as a separate program will take pressure off vehicles that are required for CDEP purposes.
- A project structure that promotes the availability of funding for law and culture projects will help to provide circumstances where knowledge can be passed on and made relevant and peoples sense of cultural identity and self esteem can be raised.
- One of the major issues being faced by Aboriginal people is early death as a result of poor diet.
- Improved access to consumer services will lead to a standard of life that has better parity with non-Aboriginal Australia.
- Proper representation of each family at regional council will ensure equal access to information and decision making processes.

National Native Title Tribunal

An ethical and efficient system of service delivery that provides equal rights to those enjoyed by non-Aboriginal Australians.

When the “Bunuba families” are mentioned, we refer to the nine Bunuba speaking families who run Bunuba Aboriginal Corporation, Junjuwa Community Inc, Bunuba Inc, Bunuba Pty Ltd and Yarranghi Cattle Company, from Fitzroy Crossing Western Australia.

Preamble

We do not pretend to suggest that the solutions offered in this document are global solutions that would suit the needs of all indigenous people in Australia today. It is up to each individual and each family to work out what will work best for them. Whilst we note similarities that other people are experiencing right across Australia we speak primarily about the issues that we the Nyirranggu Muay people are facing in the Kimberley region as a result of National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) policies and structures.

The NNTT policy thrust in the case of the various families who speak the Bunuba language in the Kimberley region in Western Australia is a disgrace. The thrust of the various court decisions to push for multi family community claims in preference to recognising sovereign family claims which is forcing many different families to share ownership of land and resources is inconsistent and anomalous with the practise of separate family ownership of land that mainstream non-Aboriginal Australians are allowed to enjoy. This is a blatant case of racial discrimination and as such it is in breach of the spirit of many human rights principles and conventions. These court decisions were not based upon the law and culture of **all** Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people, they are based upon decisions made in specific community settings and they should not be extrapolated by the NNTT as being the norm right across Australia. In many parts of Australia sovereignty rested with the family. This is certainly the case with the Bunuba speaking families. In our case though the Kimberley Land Council and some greedy people from the Bunuba families conspired together to trick people from three other families Bunuba families to sign affidavits saying that community title existed over top of the sovereignty rights of each individual family. The elders who signed the affidavits cannot read so they had to take the work of the people whom wanted them to sign. They most certainly would never have signed these papers if they had have known that they were in effect handing their country over to the corrupt Bunuba power brokers. What we see resulting from these court decisions is a legitimising of the damaging social groupings that have been forced upon people as a result of removal from pastoral stations when slavery was abolished in the late 1960's. This policy thrust of forcing many different families into ghetto villages on the edge of rural towns might be an administrative convenience when it comes to administering a welfare economy but it is causing great distress to people all over Australia. The majority of the people caught in these large, economically depressed communities, especially the younger generation are in effect caught between two worlds. The doors to both worlds are closed. It is no longer possible to be able to enter into the realm of the ancient past and live proper way. The food plants and animals are long gone so even if land was handed back returning to country is not an option. Traditional cultural values of sharing and mutual respect are seen as being at odds with the selfish posture and the aggressive tactics that people currently need to employ in order to be successful in gaining power and wealth in the very competitive environment of communities today where families have to fight each other for limited resources. This is the very essence of the forces that are tearing apart the social fabric on Aboriginal communities today. Neither is their business or work opportunities enough in the current economic environment to be able to provide full employment for people in remote regions. The majority of the pastoral leases and local businesses are in the hands of non-Aboriginal people. Single families control the vast majority of the few pastoral leases that have been handed back while the other families who own country under the lease end up being marginalised.

There is an argument put forward by the NNTT that recognition of individual family rights would negate the ability of an individual to be able to participate in the control of multiple activities across a whole region that the individual might be able to claim links to as people can in the current environment. This is a mischievous argument that fails to recognise the equal abilities of Aboriginal people in comparison with people from mainstream Australian culture who seem to be able to manage to be able to be involved in more than one enterprise at a time. If people are going to be able to have control over their own destiny there has to be structures that support the family and individuals within that family which preside over the false right of a family or a group of families who stand over the rights of other families. There may be some people who will be satisfied to be involved in one enterprise alone. Just the same as in non-Aboriginal culture it is up to the individual to choose where they want to invest their interests and energy in terms of being a part of the various families they have various links with through birth and marriage. Having a diversity of options where different enterprises are run by different people also means that individuals who do not get along with people from one family group can link in with people from another family group they are close to in the same geographic region which is something that is often not possible today with the power being in the hands of a small elite.

There needs to be a clause in the act that allows families to extract themselves from combined claims in such cases as ours where people have been tricked into signing affidavits that contain false information. At present the NNTT has no way of being able to act on information that is presented to them that contradicts affidavits that assert community title. The present court decisions that drive the NNTT policy thrust to progress large multi-family claims that reinforce the power structures of corporations that are run by violent and corrupt individuals at the expense of families who have a clear case for individual sovereignty is not ethical. It results in the demoralisation of the members of the families who are marginalised. Such policy outcomes find the NNTT in breach of the United Nations Anti Genocide Convention of 1946 of which Australia is a signatory. Page 14 of this document illustrates this point. Australia is at great risk of further international condemnation for its anti humanitarian position in regards to indigenous rights and opportunities. There is a growing groundswell of sympathy in the wider Australian community for a more humanitarian approach to Native Title that needs to be accommodated by future court decisions and changes to the Act.

If the NNTT does not address the rights of the family they also run the risk of having to re-visit claims after they have been granted. It is not hard to imagine an instance of a family or more than one family within a particular claim area wanting to challenge a claims validity as a result of its failure to protect the rights of individual families and their land ownership rights. The instances of corporations acting inappropriately in terms of distribution of funds or the sharing of power is well documented in our case and is an illustration of how vulnerable the present approach to large Native Title claims is to future legal actions.

There are some great opportunities for families to be able to regain access to their land over the next few decades. Many pastoral leases are coming up for renewal over the next thirty years. There is much work that needs to be done in terms of planning and strategising to prepare for this time when pastoralists will be strongly campaigning to be able to keep their leases. There needs to be a well funded media campaign to educate the mainstream non-Aboriginal Australian public about the linkage between the past and the present in terms of the social and economic problems that Aboriginal people are facing today. This campaign needs to strongly advocate the handing back of country as a strategy that will allow Aboriginal people the opportunity to create enterprises that will enable the break from welfare dependency. Development of training opportunities for Aboriginal people needs to be made available so that individuals can make the most of these opportunities when the time does come that they can walk back into their own country. There also needs to be strategies to ensure that there are opportunities for the non-Aboriginal people who have owned and operated pastoral leases in some cases for many generations. Pastoralists and Aboriginal people need to start working together now to develop strategies that are good for everyone and for the environmental health of the country to prepare for these changes. There may be a role for present leaseholders in providing training for people in the management of

pastoral companies under the control of traditional owner family groups. This is going to be a vexed issue that is going to take a lot of careful thought and a lot of time if good outcomes are going to be achieved.

Some strategies that the NNTT might be able to embark on which would help to solve the problems faced by indigenous families might include:

- A program to create maps which identify the sovereign land areas of each family group. This program should be commenced as soon as possible.
- A survey of the wishes of individuals and families in regard to the question of whether they would prefer to be part of a joint multi family claim or whether they would like to have a separate family claim.
- The lands that are not going to be claimed for native title where the traditional owners have deceased need to be identified. These potential lease areas could be made available for lease on the open market giving non-Aboriginal pastoralists an opportunity to purchase a pastoral lease. To ensure maximum financial gain and openness these leases should be sold within an open tender process where people can raise their bids in an auction type of situation. Any funds accrued from the sale of these leases should go towards the establishment and running of organisations that assist Aboriginal families to set up enterprises on land that is handed back.
- A NNTT advocacy and facilitation working group should be established to interact with the Department Of Land Administration and the Pastures Board to alter the boundaries of present pastoral leases to match the traditional separate sovereign land ownership areas of family groups. Where a family landowning area exists that extends two or more leases that are separately owned the areas should remain separate till they can be attained from the then lessee/s and converted to a single lease title.
- Lands under Native Title Claim that are formally recognised as pastoral lease should have their classifications changed. There are many other land use opportunities available to Aboriginal people today that are outside of the normal Cattle and Sheep running enterprise. Many of these communities run CDEP programs under which people are being trained in eco-cultural-tourism, horticulture, aquaculture, community administration and many other skills. These sorts of possibilities will lead to families being able to develop financially viable business opportunities on smaller parcels of land than what is required to run a viable pastoral company. The pastures board should be playing its part to assist Aboriginal people to break away from dependency on welfare assistance. Enterprises such as those described above are much more labour intensive and therefore they offer greater employment economic development growth opportunities for Australia. As such they should be supported.
- Each family group which has existing Native Title should be offered separate land title and separate native title.
- Repealing of the wider repercussions of the “Risk”, “Tilmouth” and Ward decisions and their outcomes.
- A new clause in the Native Title Act that allows for family groups to be able to break away from established claims so as they can have separate native title.
- Funding that enables the employment of expert people to deal with un-resolved issues concerning past land management and accounting practises that have occurred as a result of marginalisation of families who should have had proximity to companies or other enterprises that have operated on that family’s traditional country.
- An extension of services under the previously mentioned Partnership Facilitation Service (PFS) model that is specifically designed to provide flexible assistance to establish various types of family enterprise projects would provide opportunities to be able to break away from welfare and CDEP dependence.
 - This service would be able to utilise the same accountants from within the PFS model who would be employed to oversee the ATSIC grants .
 - This service could utilise a scheme that is similar to the Federal Government New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) to develop management plans and build skills in the family business.
 - There would need to be strategies to ensure that all family members had proximity to the business according to the effort they wished to contribute to its operation.

- There would need to be safeguards to ensure that distribution of profits was equitable and ethical.
- There would need to be a variety of training opportunities made available to individuals depending on people's goals. For example, tourism, pastoralism, contracting, tree planting, land based or aquaculture food production etc are just some of the projects that people might be interested in getting involved in.

The purpose of this submission has been:

- To provide hard evidence of the failure of the various government agencies when it comes to providing structures and policies that provide true opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- How easy it is to philosophically describe and link past practises of genocide with present day structures and policies that have the same sort of effect and how recent health and criminal justice statistics provide concrete evidence of this failure.
- How if a bit of good will was exercised on the part of government agencies there are positive alternative outcomes that might be achieved.
- That the present situation that forces families to share resources and ownership of land only leads to conflict.
- That Aboriginal families are well placed to be able to provide a social and economic environment that will provide the best possibility of success today.

Closing Comment

Australia is a country that relies on the good will of its trading partners in order to be able to participate in a sensitive trade economy. Consumers and nations all over the world are becoming increasingly aware of their ability to be able to make choices in terms of their buying patterns that in effect penalise countries that abuse human rights principles. Australia is vulnerable to such criticism with the United Nations already having condemned Australia repeatedly over the last decade for its treatment of indigenous people. Urgent action is required from government in partnership with Aboriginal people to bring about the legislative and structural change that is required to deflect criticism that will prevent further damage to our international reputation. We hope that the Australian Government and the Australian people will accept and understand what we are saying in this document. We do not want to criticise except to be able to prove the point that there is an urgent need for a whole raft of reforms. We seek to be able to build strong mutually consenting relationships with people regardless of their cultural background. We invite you to come and sit with us for a while so that we can together begin the important work required to bring about true reconciliation.