



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

**HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES
STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS

Reference: Capacity building in Indigenous communities

TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2002

THURSDAY ISLAND

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS
Tuesday, 5 November 2002

Members: Mr Wakelin (*Chair*), Mr Danby, Mrs Draper, Mr Haase, Ms Hoare, Mrs Hull, Dr Lawrence, Mr Lloyd, Mr Snowdon and Mr Tollner.

Members in attendance: Mrs Draper, Ms Hoare, Mrs Hull, Mr Wakelin

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

Strategies to assist Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders better manage the delivery of services within their communities. In particular, the committee will consider building the capacities of:

- (a) community members to better support families, community organisations and representative councils so as to deliver the best outcomes for individuals, families and communities;
- (b) Indigenous organisations to better deliver and influence the delivery of services in the most effective, efficient and accountable way; and
- (c) government agencies so that policy direction and management structures will improve individual and community outcomes for Indigenous people.

WITNESSES

FORDHAM, Mr Michael, General Manager, Torres Strait Regional Authority	39
GARNIER, Mr Henry, Chair, Island Coordinating Council	39
WAIA, Mr Terry, Chairperson, Torres Strait Regional Authority	39

Committee met at 9.11 a.m.

FORDHAM, Mr Michael, General Manager, Torres Strait Regional Authority

WAIA, Mr Terry, Chairperson, Torres Strait Regional Authority

GARNIER, Mr Henry, Chair, Island Coordinating Council

CHAIR—I welcome the witnesses from the Torres Strait Regional Authority and the Island Coordinating Council. Would you like to make an opening statement?

A PowerPoint presentation was then made—

Mr Fordham—There are a couple of chapters within the ATSIC Act that cover the responsibilities and so on of the Torres Strait Regional Authority. The goals contain no great surprises, I guess—economic development, health and community services, environmental protection, native title and so on.

The board consists of 20 members, basically 18 of whom are chairs of their communities. Each of the outer islands has their own local government structure. They elect a chair and, in most cases, a couple of councillors. The chairs then come and sit on the board of the TSRA. We add two to that to include members for Port Kennedy, which is this half of Thursday Island—the front half—and Horn and Prince of Wales, which are the islands you see across the way here. They then internally elect the chair—Terry Waia—the deputy and alternative deputy. They also have portfolio members for health, housing, infrastructure, arts and culture, language, media and so on.

The region is basically—as you have probably worked out now—the bit wedged between the top of Australia and New Guinea. It is a fairly vast area with over 100 islands. Only 20 islands are populated. Terry Waia, the chair, is from Saibai Island, which is near New Guinea. To give you some idea, Saibai Island is about as close to New Guinea as we are now from Horn Island. Poruma, or Coconut Island, where you are going today, is right in the centre.

Mrs HULL—Where is the one we are going to today?

Mr Fordham—Right here. They have two names. Poruma is the traditional islander name—and they are moving back to using those names—and Coconut is the European name. Terry is from Saibai. Tomorrow you will be going to Moa Island where there are two communities: St Pauls and Kubin. Uncle Henry is from Hammond.

Ms HOARE—What is the traditional name for Thursday Island?

Mr Fordham—Waiben or Waibene. Muralug is Prince of Wales. Ngurupai is Horn Island.

Ms HOARE—So the islands which are named on the map are populated?

Mr Fordham—That is right. This is the latest census data. There are about 8,000 people in the region. That includes for us two communities on what we call the Northern Peninsula Area or NPA, which is the very tip. Seisia and Bamaga are two islander communities, and there are

three other Aboriginal communities over there that identify with ATSIC. Seisia and Bamaga are communities that moved out of Saibai back in the 1930s and 1940s predominantly when their gardens dried up from drought. They literally jumped in their canoes, headed south and set up camp there. Bamaga is quite a large community of about 1,000 people. Seisia is a bit smaller.

Mrs HULL—You say there are 22,680 islanders living outside of the Torres Strait region—whereabouts do they live?

Mr Fordham—The majority of those live in Cairns and in Townsville. About 5,000 live in Cairns and 5,000 in Townsville. I think a couple of thousand are in Brisbane. After that they are scattered everywhere from Broome to Perth and from Adelaide to Darwin.

Ms HOARE—We probably all have a couple at least in our electorates right across the country.

Mr Fordham—I have no doubt you would. I am surprised they have not made themselves known.

CHAIR—They have a good spread.

Mr Fordham—You will have access, I would imagine, to the Office of Evaluation and Audit report of the TSRA which was done about a year or so ago. The interesting indicator in it is that Torres Strait Islanders have a much greater sense of wellbeing than most other Indigenous people, but their health statistics are probably the worst in the country. Diabetes and heart disease are the main killers. If you have a look at some of that stuff there, you will see that hospital admissions were twice that experienced on the Queensland mainland, life expectancy is 23 years less than for non-Indigenous Australians, and women are expected to live 30 years less. Health is still a huge issue. There is a similar scenario with housing. We are still way behind the eight ball in terms of housing. Overcrowding is a problem. Basically, wait lists are reducing but are still pretty significant.

Mrs DRAPER—Where it says 13 per cent of Torres Strait Islander Aboriginal people owned or were purchasing their homes—

Mr Fordham—That is not just in this region.

Mrs DRAPER—That is a fairly good percentage comparatively.

Mr Fordham—It is pretty good—

Mrs DRAPER—Yes.

Mr Fordham—considering the problem that there is only freehold land on Horn Island and Thursday Island.

Mrs DRAPER—Okay. That is great. Where you have got a wait on housing—

Mr Fordham—Again, that is just Horn Island and Thursday Island. They do not keep good wait list data for the outer islands because it is community housing.

Mrs DRAPER—So in terms of waiting on housing that is community housing—

Mr Fordham—No, on Horn Island and Thursday Island it is predominantly ATSI housing or Queensland Housing. If you walked in there today you could expect to be housed in three years time, if you are lucky.

Mrs DRAPER—At a community level rather than in private rental—

Mrs HULL—Private rental as against—

Mr Fordham—Yes. There is virtually no private rental market. The private market here, for example, for a fairly basic two- or three-bedroom house is about \$500 or \$600 a week. Those are our five outputs that we are budgeted under. As far as economic development is concerned, we have fairly similar sorts of programs to ATSIC. Predominantly we focus on loans to people. We have a comparatively big loans portfolio anyway both for housing and for businesses. Some businesses that are underway at the moment are the small lodge at Poruma, a guesthouse at Masig or Yorke Island, extensions to a motel in Bamaga, which is booming with tourism up the Cape. There is a guesthouse at Dauan, hydroponics at Badu, and a fishing boat at Masig which has been running about six months. They are into line fishing and doing very nicely. We do not have any great problems with loan repayments or anything like that. Our arrears are within good market bounds.

Arts and culture is more of a recent focus, to be honest, with TSRA. We now have an ex-National Museum curator working for us to help develop the cultural centre which will be on the Four Winds site just up the hill here. Uncle Henry put in a lot of work trying to secure the site. Unfortunately, in the end we had to buy it from the Queensland government but, under the Federation Fund, we have ended up with \$1 million and found some money of our own. That is just about to start and that is the brochure I have given you. If you wander into the bank, you can see a model of it. We hope to start in January.

You are no doubt well aware of the CDEP program. In Torres Strait we are fairly flexible with it. It is used for almost anything and it operates as a very good labour subsidy. For a lot of our MIP programs—our infrastructure programs—the councils have won the jobs in competition with southern builders, mainly because of that subsidy, but it is win-win all round for us. For example, at Badu at the moment, there is a \$6 million sewerage scheme under way. The council has won probably about \$1.2 million worth of work out there. They have borrowed money off us to buy some more plant that they need—they have certainly got a good loans record so there is no problem with that—and they have been able to win that work and employ a whole lot of people. It is available to everyone. Interestingly, and I have got no idea why, they have just started a Work for the Dole scheme here. They did not come and talk to us, I have no idea what they are doing here so—

Mrs DRAPER—Why don't you go and see them and talk to them about it?

Mr Fordham—We have tried to make some appointments with them. Those companies are contracted so they do not actually have a rep here permanently, but we will get to the bottom of

it. We do not care whether you are white or Indigenous for CDEP; it is not an issue. CDEP, by the by, is about half of our budget. Our budget is \$50 million of revenue and about half of that is CDEP. We still run a community training program; ATSIC does not. We put in about \$1.4 million this year towards it. Again that can be used for any training. At Poruma, they are doing some deckhand training and coxswain's tickets, and some of it will be used to run arts and craft classes. One young fellow is training as a pilot. It varies depending on what people bid for. We coordinate funding with the department of employment and training at the state level.

The main focus of native title at the office is the sea claim that we have lodged over the whole area. It has been registered and accepted by the tribunal and it is about to go to mediation, which is the first step. Parties are currently registering their claims against it—or their interest, I should say. With the land claims there are nine determinations through the Torres Strait of native title. The final five were to be heard on 23 September but unfortunately, after a number of delays, the state have now done a backflip on their policy and their understanding now is that public works extinguish native title. That is contrary to what everybody else thought. At the moment we are probably about to go to court on that issue. It is proving a bit of an issue for us.

Ms HOARE—What kinds of interests are being lodged against the sea claim?

Mr Fordham—We do not know yet formally, but informally groups like, for example, the prawn entitlement holders and the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, and the Commonwealth will of course be opposing. Obviously it will be for mining rights and stuff like that.

CHAIR—When you say 'go to appeal'—

Mr Fordham—For the land.

CHAIR—For native title, the Queensland government. Are we talking the High Court?

Mr Fordham—No. Ultimately it may well get to that, but there is already a precedent with the sitting of the full federal court in Western Australia in the Gajerrong case where the ruling was that public works did not extinguish native title—that they coexisted.

CHAIR—There is a precedent.

Mr Fordham—There is precedent there. So we cannot imagine that we would ever get past the full Federal Court. We do not want to go anywhere near any courts, frankly. We did not think we would need to. The state is suggesting that somehow the Commonwealth needs to rewrite section 47 of the Native Title Act. I would hardly think the Commonwealth is ready to jump at doing that. We can talk about that off the record.

Ms HOARE—When we were here a couple of years ago there was an issue—and I am sorry that I cannot remember the detail—with an underwater gas—

Mr Fordham—It would be the PNG gas pipeline with Chevron.

Ms HOARE—Where is that at?

Mr Fordham—That is the \$64,000 question. Comalco had signed up a gas deal down south. PNG needed some capital from the Commonwealth—from our side, as I understand it—to build an offshore processing facility, and they did not get it. Australia's reasoning, I think, was that they could get enough gas through Timor and it was commercially viable, and if the thing was ever going to stand on its feet it needed to be totally commercially viable. That is a reasonable proposition, in my mind. You keep seeing stuff in the business pages of the papers saying that they have signed up another customer, and they only need some more petajoules of gas and the thing will happen. But there is still a lot of uncertainty with the supply on the PNG side because they need to aggregate gas fields. There is a lot of unrest in PNG, so investors are not that keen to throw, literally, billions of dollars at a project that might have that level of uncertainty. So it is far from definite. My understanding, because it precedes me, was that while Torres Strait Islanders had a number of issues with it they were pretty much negotiated through and people were happy for it to proceed. So I could not imagine it being a great problem. I think there is a fair degree of disappointment, certainly in Cape York, that it has not happened.

Under these programs here we fund the radio station, a legal service, a women's group, shelters and that sort of stuff. With housing, environment, health and infrastructure, the main focus is a major infrastructure program. I have some stuff on that in here, I think. Current issues are native title. We discussed that a moment ago.

Mrs DRAPER—You spoke about funding for shelters and that sort of thing.

Mr Fordham—We fund a group called Mura Kosker Sorority, which is a women's group. We provide core funding for that. That group runs a women's shelter, which is just down the road here.

Mrs DRAPER—There is also a hostel just next door.

Mr Fordham—There are a number of hostels. They are AHL hostels—Aboriginal hostels, separate. They also run Kazi Asserered Le. That is a child-care group. They run some of the child-care facilities as well as children's programs.

Mrs HULL—Is the hostel associated with, say, domestic violence or basic women's health issues with respect to their safety?

Mr Fordham—The shelter is—not the hostels.

Mrs DRAPER—Just the shelter?

Mr Fordham—Yes. Anyone can go and check into an AHL, an Aboriginal hostel. The shelter though—

Mrs HULL—Is purely for?

Mr Fordham—Purely for domestic violence.

Mrs HULL—So is it adequate? Is there a need for further shelters for women?

Mr Fordham—My view is that there is. The problem that we have with a lot of service delivery in Torres Strait is that the bulk of the community, which numbers about 3,500 people, is centred in TI and the inner islands. Most of the infrastructure goes into here. I do not mean this in a demeaning way, but when you start to get infrastructure like women's shelters it is a matter of: where do you put it? The problem is that you have to identify a case on an outer island, locate a worker or someone who knows of it, then get them into TI. That is not cheap; \$1,000 for a charter is nothing. So there are a lot of families out there that are just not getting those services. We do not really know the extent of that problem—

Mrs DRAPER—That was my next question.

Mr Fordham—because it is not really open. Frankly, the stats in Torres Strait look good, so we have trouble gaining access to a lot of the programs. That is a bit of a problem now with Queensland's focus predominantly on Cape York. They are taking a fairly heavy-handed legislative approach in some ways, but there is also a bit of anecdotal evidence that a lot more of the resourcing is going that way and Torres Strait is in danger of being left behind, because the view is that everything is rosy up here. Whilst there is a fair amount of capacity and people are interested and keen, you still need to put some real resources behind that.

Ms HOARE—What about community education, in relation to getting the message out there through community leaders that domestic violence is not acceptable? The reason that I ask is that I have done a bit of work through the Pacific Islands, and they do it through posters, the education system and the education of girls in the schools. I was sitting on the plane on the way over with one of your teachers. It seems as though there are schools on most of the populated islands.

Mr Fordham—They are primary schools. There is not a huge education program out there. There is a gap. We should be honest about it.

Ms HOARE—Can it be filled?

Mr Fordham—Probably relatively easily if you have some resources and a bit of drive there. I can say this in front of Henry and I am fairly open about this in front of the board. There is only one woman on the board of the TSRA. She is the deputy. But they need more. You need to bring them through the system. There is no doubt that the women of the Torres Strait are very capable and a quite powerful force, but they are sitting outside the square.

Ms HOARE—But the schools are funded by the Queensland government.

Mr Fordham—Yes, the schools are.

Ms HOARE—So the Queensland department of education should have a responsibility there also.

Mr Fordham—But then again, to be fair to them, the resourcing that I see for schools up here, for all of the rhetoric, is pretty poor. Go and have a look at the ovals here. They are not school ovals; they are brown pits. The buildings are falling down. If you are bringing people in, the teachers' housing is appalling. The paint is literally coming off the ceilings. It is shocking.

CHAIR—Did the people who were here last night come and see you and talk to you about education and the linking?

Mr Fordham—Who was here last night?

CHAIR—I cannot say; I do not have the card with me. But they were a national program. They are linking Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people.

Mr Fordham—I think that they were in here yesterday.

CHAIR—They were here on Friday night at a function; they said with the federal member, who we saw yesterday. I did not know whether it was some function particularly or there was some acknowledgment over the weekend of this education, development of leaders, leadership and that type of thing.

Mr Fordham—I cannot recall. I certainly did not talk to them.

CHAIR—They approached me this morning in the motel down at Jardine. My secretary does not know about it yet, but I want her to get back to them.

Ms HOARE—We were talking about the schools and their lack of resources.

Mr Fordham—It is one of those classic whole of government things, really, isn't it—the department of families, education, health and so on? There are a couple of issues. For example, the department of families has one person, maybe two, in the whole of Torres Strait, so you can imagine that that individual is fairly busy and much under fire, because family stuff is pretty dear to their hearts. If you start delving and getting involved, then you are in a pretty dicky situation.

Ms HOARE—What is the state electorate?

Mr Fordham—It is Cook; the transport minister, Mr Bredhauer, is the member. These are some photos of some of the stuff that has gone in under MIP. It is basically essential health infrastructure, focused on water and sewerage at the moment but moving more towards solid waste, rubbish dumps and what you do with rubbish in an environment like this—because some of the islands are low-lying mud and some of them are coral caves like you will see at Poruma. So waste disposal is a big issue, and solid waste is one of the focuses now. Another focus is community expansion, which is subdivisions; basically, making sure that there are sealed roads, that there is a bit of room for housing growth and that sort of stuff. That gives you an idea of some of the work. Those plants that you see—there is one on the former slide and one over there on the bottom right—are desalination plants. On a lot of the central islands there is not enough room to put in any real water supply so they run desalination plants and top up the water supply that way. It is basically turning salt water into fresh.

CHAIR—That would be fairly expensive, though.

Mr Fordham—They have changed a lot over the years. They are a fair amount of dollars in capital but they are not that expensive to run any more. The issue is more the maintenance and the techos—you have to have the techos.

CHAIR—Yes. The costs of getting people there and all the rest of it.

Mr Fordham—Yes; and again, having them based here on TI—housing and all that sort of stuff.

CHAIR—Water is a real issue, then; it really is a significant issue—modern living and its demands on the water system and all the rest of it.

Mr Fordham—The national debate about drought at the moment is interesting. The allowance up here on average is about 300 kilolitres—I am not sure what the figure is—per head per annum. I think down south, in a city like Cairns, Brisbane or somewhere else, people are running on about 1,000 kilolitres. So we are giving people in the region a third of that amount.

Mrs HULL—What do you do with the salt from the desalinisation?

Mr Fordham—It just goes back in. You end up with buckets of salt, and it just goes back into the ocean. You do whatever you like with it, really. It is not a huge amount. That program is basically made up of \$5 million from us a year and \$5 million from the state to coordinate it. This is now its fourth year, moving into its fifth year, of existence. For that, there are reliable, clean water supplies in every community and sewerage in one form or another—anything from proper septic systems to packaged treatment plants to full sewer. There has also been significant town planning—that is, GIS mapping. We know where everything is, all the services are laid and we have set the groundwork for subdivision planning as well as a whole lot of other smaller things that you will see around the place.

CHAIR—What is the annual rainfall here?

Mr Fordham—It varies a lot. I have this HEMPT video to show you; it is another little program we have been running. In TI it is about 1.5 metres a year of rain. Tully is the worst place in Australia; it is about two metres a year. Cairns is about 1.2.

CHAIR—I worked in the sugar industry at Cairns many years ago.

Mr Fordham—The central islands get their rain at a different time and at Saibai you get your rain at a very different time up there, don't you? It can rain any time.

Mr Waia—It is really close to New Guinea.

CHAIR—Is there any local catchment, in terms of a tank and that sort of thing?

Mr Fordham—Most of the houses still have the rainwater tanks. They were all left there and upgraded and so on. This thing on the left bottom is what we call a 'package treatment plant'.

Down south, people on the old acreage estate are using these envirowflows or biocycle systems. They are basically a big version of that.

CHAIR—Do you know the cost per kilolitre?

Mr Fordham—Of water?

CHAIR—Yes.

Mr Fordham—No, we do not.

CHAIR—It is an issue where I come from. We are acutely aware of brackish versus salt water, sea water. The cost, say, is \$1. You can go to \$5 or \$6 or get it down to \$3, depending on your energy cost and that sort of thing.

Mr Fordham—One of the issues we are facing at the moment is that the state, through the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, have been maintaining this stuff under the—I think it is—competition policy. They are now a regulator, not a supplier. So they are wanting to hand the stuff over to us. We are funding half of it anyway. The board is not that keen but, in looking at the whole issue, it has raised issues like that. We have been asking: how much is it costing to produce the water? What are the capital costs? What is the depreciation? Have you got an asset management plan? All those sorts of things. That is where we are at the moment—trying to get all that stuff out of them.

The bulk of the work—and I guess this is some of your governance structure stuff—for housing and infrastructure is coordinated under what we call JTSHIC, the Joint Torres Strait Housing Infrastructure Committee. Terry chairs the committee and the other members of it, in the core of it, are the state Department of Housing and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, and then there are a range of other agencies that sit around the various committees and tables, from Health to Natural Resources and Mines to Main Roads, Transport and so on. It is really, at the moment, about trying to coordinate what funding is coming in and who is doing what so that we do not discover that we are building a sewerage scheme and digging up half the community and then Main Roads are planning to put in a road and so on. It is moving slowly towards what they call ‘notional pooling of funds’. In the case of the MIP stuff, which is the core of that water sewerage program, it is very much into actual pooling of funds. So it comes into the one trust account. It is managed by the TSRA and reported back to whoever put the funds in.

Ms HOARE—Mike, do you need a similar thing for the delivery of government services—what we were talking about before—so the department does not come in and whack in a Work for the Dole program, and people know what is going on?

Mr Fordham—You do; there is no question that you do. We have a variety of—I am telling you guys to suck eggs, I know—partnership agreements, framework agreements, interdepartmental committees; call them what you like. But you need at least an MOU with each agency in some shape or form.

One at the moment, for example, that has just gone totally astray is sport and rec. It is a fairly key activity, or service if you like, for a place like this. They have produced some great

footballers, and everyone loves footy. You only have to look around to see that there are lots of opportunities in that area, and it is good for health issues and so on. We put a fair bit of money into sport and rec in the region, we built a lot of the infrastructure and we had been cooperating really well with the state. We had developed a joint strategy, but there was no MOU. Who knows what happened or went wrong, but the next thing we knew was that the state was closing their office down, taking the person out, and they are now working out of Cairns. They then announced all this funding—\$15,000 here and \$10,000 there—which did not come anywhere near us. It is not enough money to employ any workers or do anything constructive with, so the communities then come back to us and say, ‘Great—we have this 15 grand, we want to put Freddy on. Freddy has been really good at organising the footy. But we can’t do anything with \$15,000; it’s not enough to employ him.’ It is all that sort of stuff. You really do need to be open and honest and come to the table and share that sort of information, otherwise you are stuffed. That is where we are at the moment. We have taken to sort of bashing them up in the media a bit and had a little success. They were up here begging for a bit of mercy last week. We do not know where we are going to get with them.

Ms HOARE—Good luck!

Mr Fordham—But the whole thing is important. One of the programs that we are just finishing off—you will see a bit of this or hear a bit more of it tomorrow at Kubin—is Fixing Houses for Better Health. It is a Commonwealth DFACS program. There was very little take-up of the program; I am not exactly sure why. But when we saw it and heard of it we put in a bid and were able to grab 746 grand. It really is good, basic capacity building; on the ground stuff where the community members themselves go around and assess the state of all their housing, gather all the data, analyse it and do some repairs then and there on the spot if they can—they literally have tool kits and fix leaking taps or whatever. We had an electrician running around behind them, fixing faulty wiring and stuff like that. More importantly, it gives you a really good insight into the state of the housing, and the community has ownership of it. We did three communities: Kubin, St Pauls and Mabuiag. St Pauls run a good construction gang, so they are the ones going around doing the major maintenance follow-ups after the initial assessments and repairs are finished. They are just heading into that now.

CHAIR—What numbers of Indigenous tradespersons are we talking about? How many people would have some kind of trade skill, do you reckon, just in rough percentages? To get people right through would be a real challenge.

Mr Fordham—Yes. It varies a lot from community to community. In Saibai, for example, Terry, how many trades do you have out there? You have a carpentry gang and a construction gang. How many apprentices do you have at the moment?

Mr Waia—I have got 19.

Mr Fordham—That is in a community of about 700 people.

Mr Waia—With those apprentices, we have built about five houses ourselves—the idea being that, if money is forthcoming next round, we do not contract out. We do the right thing by the what’s-a-name, but if we have a whole new gang applying for it then we can keep all the money in the community and employ all the people.

CHAIR—It develops their skills and keeps them employed—by not contracting out.

Mr Waia—Yes.

Mr Fordham—Some of them have varied trades. On Dauan, for example, which is a little dot between Boigu and Saibai, again right up there near New Guinea, they have motor mechanic apprentices. They employed an ex-army guy who just came and set himself up in the community and now has trained three motor mechanic apprentices. They not only work in that community but also go to other communities. Some communities have plumbing specialists; some of them have electricians. It is really a matter—in my view anyway; Terry and Henry can probably confirm it—of whoever is willing to stay in the community, because they have to be there a while, obviously, to train apprentices, and there is a commitment on both sides. So it is about whatever skills and capacity they have that they can hand on. It is not, as you can imagine, easy to be there in the community the whole time.

Mrs HULL—Can I ask firstly about the general unemployment level across the board and, secondly, about the average rate of pay?

Mr Fordham—The actual unemployment numbers I do not have. We can find them for you. But it is going to be around 60 per cent or 70 per cent, probably, on most of the outer islands—the true unemployment level. If you take CDEP et cetera, it is down to about five per cent or less because most people are on CDEP. Whoever is eligible is on it and they all work for it. You will see when you go to the communities that they literally clock on and clock off. They have work plans that we agree to and approve and they work.

What happens with stuff like the carpentry gang or, in St Pauls, a block making plant or at Kubin where they do some artwork and so on, is that generates funds for the CDEP. They have a core pool of funding that we are giving them. That employment pool then generates funds and they pay top-ups. You will hear the word top-ups a lot. With councils, for example, the environmental health workers, some of the council clerks, the garbage men—everyone—are on CDEP and being paid a top-up. It depends, really, on what they are doing as to what they are paid but about 50 per cent of them would be getting award wages, whatever the relevant award would be. Then it scales down from there. I will get you some actual figures on CDEP, anyway.

Mrs HULL—That would be really good. The reason that I ask is that just in my mere short time there I noticed that mostly everything is enormously inflated in cost at the supermarkets and such. It is obviously very difficult if you are only on an award wage to be able to live adequately.

Mr Fordham—The 50 per cent on award wages would be optimistic. Most of them are on CDEP plus a bit of top-up. I will get you some actual figures from one of the CDEPs because we will know what they are paying their people.

Mrs HULL—That leads me to say that this inquiry is about capacity building. That is really indicative of the difficulties that you are going to face if you are looking to implement health policies and a whole host of different, better regimes in the community. It has to have some reasonable access to food that is not inflated in cost.

Mrs DRAPER—That brings me to my question. My background: in my former life I was a nurse, so of great interest to me is what is happening with health and women's shelters and that sort of thing. Obviously, we are all aware that two problems for our Indigenous communities are, No. 1, diabetes and, No. 2, heart disease. I have had the opportunity to visit the Tiwi Islanders and the main concern there in terms of diabetes was the genetic disposition for diabetes. In terms of health priorities and and/or outcomes what do you see as the causes generally for the people in the Torres Strait?

Mr Fordham—For diabetes?

Mrs DRAPER—I know I am making an understatement here but it is important from my perspective to hear what you guys have to say about that.

Mr Fordham—If you look at some of the OEA stuff and some of the health figures, they are suggesting that it is genetic at the core. The rest of it is about diet and exercise. They are the cold, hard facts, and sad facts as well. The problems that they have faced with that here is that there is no dialysis at all in Torres Strait. They are putting in two or three chairs over in Bamaga on the tip of the mainland. All of the people go south, basically. Once you are at that point, you are out of here. The perception of Torres Strait Islanders is that when you are on a plane like that to go south you are going to south to die.

The other problem is—I am not sure of the exact term—the form of diabetes, in the main, is that where people lose limbs. A lot of people become wheelchair bound and that is pretty difficult in a place that has never been designed for disability access. Again, they end up south, living in Cairns or Townsville. That is FHBH.

Regarding HEMPT, I will get someone to show you a video on this. It is a recent program. It is a really good news story for us. It is a partnership arrangement between us, the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, which is state, Main Roads and the ICC which is obviously Uncle Henry's organisation. Each of the councils puts in a bid rather than everyone wanting to buy a bulldozer and all sorts of heavy equipment. You have all probably heard stories of stuff lying around in the bush, being used once and never being used again. It is about having a pool of equipment, leasing it into the region and having skilled people who can maintain it but also operate it and train people to operate it.

So you have the pool. Then, for a year in advance, people put in bids for the projects they want. We are getting better at it but that coincides wherever possible with the MIP projects. If Badu or Bamaga or some other place have won or are bidding for an MIP project against southern contractors, we will put the HEMPT pool into that project so that their bid includes use of that pool. We put up \$400,000, DATSIP put up the other \$400,000 and Main Roads put \$400,000 in kind into it. You will see some of the projects again on the outer islands. The road between Kubin and St Pauls, when you travel across the islands, has been upgraded under the program. They have just left Hammond, Henry, haven't they? They did paving and street works there.

Mr Garnier—And a football oval.

Mr Fordham—Did they? You did well. We will show you the video. It is extremely successful. It is dropping the cost for us as well. The Boigu airstrip upgrade has just been

completed. Boigu is one of the top western islands. The airstrip was a horror. It was mud and was closed for most of the year because of rain. The tenders that came in for that were about \$1.5 million for the upgrade. By putting the HEMPT pool into it and getting them to do it themselves, it has cost us \$1.1 million. So we have our \$400,000 investment back already.

CHAIR—We were just making an observation about the way you leverage your funds against state funds and other funds, as well as getting the value by doing it yourselves.

Mr Fordham—We are always scrounging for money off someone. Have you got any money? As I said before, the framework agreements are one of the terms. The main ones we have are the health framework agreement—us, state health and Commonwealth health. The big issue there is accessing primary health care funds. There are very few primary health care funds which come from the Commonwealth into Torres Strait at the moment. There is no mechanism for it and that is what we need to work through. It is very much state delivered health. Cultural development—that is, the arts and cultural—

CHAIR—Before you go on, can we just draw that out. There is no primary health?

Mr Fordham—There is a program called PHCAP—Primary Health Care Access Program—that you will hear about. They have been providing about \$200,000 for one worker and a few other bits and pieces here. In a lot of other Indigenous areas PHCAP will fund their different health services, like Apunipima Cape York Health Council, some of the Central Desert health councils and so on. They vary from just being a consultative body to being a service deliverer themselves, employing nurses and doctors, and doing all sorts of stuff. In Torres Strait we need to get a bit of a vision as to how that goes. Obviously, the state are doing quite a good job: they have primary health care centres and so on out there. But there are a lot of issues, particularly when you think in terms of diabetes and—

CHAIR—Do you have any AMSs—what we call Aboriginal medical services—funded by the Commonwealth?

Mr Fordham—No. That is what I am saying: there are none. They come through the PHCAP process.

CHAIR—None whatsoever? But you are aware of the Territory pooling arrangements?

Mr Fordham—Yes.

CHAIR—There is nothing of that kind at all?

Mr Fordham—No. We are in the very early days of trying to turn on the tap.

CHAIR—That is why I was trying to understand. There is no particular arrangement with the Queensland government or the Commonwealth government that I know of. There is slightly different funding under the health care agreements, but I am not aware of anything that would be specific to the Torres Strait. So it does seem like quite a different set of circumstances, which no doubt you are well aware of.

Mr Fordham—Yes, we are. It is not the Commonwealth's fault, in my view. They are saying that one of the prerequisites needs to be a level of community control, ownership, input and so on. I think Queensland has a few difficulties with some of that.

Mrs DRAPER—Do you have any health workers or nurses here on the island?

Mr Fordham—Each community has a health centre. The staff will vary from a health worker to RNs—some of them have RNs; Saibai has an RN—and there are five or six doctors.

CHAIR—Can you explain how they work within the community? Do they transfer around communities on visiting programs?

Mr Fordham—Yes, they do. The plan is that each community gets a visit from a doctor every fortnight or every month, depending on the community's size.

CHAIR—Like a flying doctor-type situation?

Mr Fordham—Yes, all out of TI.

CHAIR—But not like the RFDS, though?

Mr Fordham—No. There are a couple of issues there. They are all based here in TI and they move around. So some of them—

CHAIR—Do you know if those doctors access Medicare?

Mr Fordham—They do.

CHAIR—So there is some Commonwealth funding through that mechanism.

Mr Fordham—The only other Commonwealth funding that is accessed like that is pharmaceutical benefits, in that no-one pays for listed drugs—you do not pay anything.

CHAIR—Has work been done on analysing that, per capita per annum? You would be well aware of how that then draws out the actual costs and comparative costs across the country. You may or may not be aware, but it is really interesting to draw those costs out in terms of how isolated or regional communities do not draw on the Commonwealth anywhere near as much.

Mr Fordham—I have read that, yes. I have never seen anything that is specific to the Torres Strait.

CHAIR—I can show you stuff that is very specific, though not to the Torres Strait or to Aboriginal communities. Certainly, in terms of regional communities, it can be a factor of three.

Mr Fordham—I was reading something recently about the more advantaged areas. Because the doctors are attracted to live there, they then can start billing the Commonwealth more.

CHAIR—Exactly. We investigated a little further. We as parliamentarians follow our electorates. We are interested in electorate specific issues. If you go to a major metropolitan electorate as opposed to a rural or remote electorate, it can, as I say, be a factor of three. It is quite remarkable. PBS would probably not be dissimilar. It is a real story of equity, and that of course is the motivation behind the pooling: to get some justice and equity of access to those who are not in those metropolitan circumstances. But back to you.

Mr Fordham—There is at least a health care worker in every community; some have RNs, and then there is a pool of doctors here. There is quite a good hospital just down the way here. People have to either go in there or go south. One of the big issues for the health service here—it has a big impact on the health service and, indeed, on the whole health structure—is the New Guinea impact. That is about the treaty and our proximity to the border. There are 15 villages included in the Torres Strait Treaty. There is free movement of people, trade and all sorts of stuff. There are some quarantine restrictions, but obviously that has great potential for bringing in diseases and so on. There are quite often cases of people just presenting at health care centres in the Torres Strait who are in desperate need of medical help. They have to be medivaced in—at \$1,500 an hour in the day time and \$4,500 an hour at night to run the chopper. About half of them then go south. I am not sure of the exact numbers to this point in time this year, but you would be looking at 80 or so people at least.

Mrs DRAPER—Who picks up the tab for the \$4,500 an hour at night?

Mr Fordham—Queensland Health.

Mrs HULL—Did you say that you have six doctors working from Thursday Island?

Mr Fordham—I think there are about six.

Mrs HULL—Are they all GPs? Are there any specialist services?

Mr Fordham—The specialists come in on a visiting basis.

Mrs HULL—Are they visiting medical officers—VMOs?

Mr Fordham—Yes.

Mr Garnier—It is quarterly.

Mrs HULL—If you have six GPs basically working off the island, and they look at each island getting a visit around every fortnight, how does that equate to having an almost full-time service here?

Mr Fordham—How do they do it?

Mrs HULL—Yes.

Mr Fordham—From what I understand, there is a primary health care centre up the street which is basically for when you want to see your GP. There are normally two there, plus a

whole lot of health workers and nurses. There are one or two doctors down at the hospital, and there are two floating around out there. At any time, there will be others moving through the place.

Mrs HULL—So others could come onto the island here and be seen any day every day if they wanted to be? There is always a doctor here?

Mr Fordham—Yes, if you have \$1,000 to fly in. Otherwise, you wait. It is interesting when you think about women having Pap smears and stuff like that. They have to wait for a female doctor, for example. A lot of the RNs are doing that now. There are all those sorts of programs. Worse still, for kids, is that the screening does not appear to be being done. Otitis media and those sorts of things are just not being picked up. I do not know whose fault it is or what the gap is there. There seems to be a need for a bit of focus on that.

CHAIR—I think there is a real issue of governance in that.

Mr Fordham—We talked about the cultural centre. We also provide funding on an ad hoc basis under RDAF. Again, we have leveraged some funds out of the state. People put in bids for funding. It will be for their kids going off on dance tours, for someone doing an exhibition down south and they need some dollars to travel there, for materials to start up another exhibition or whatever. The arts up here are a real success story. There are some very notable and well-known artists. For example, at the moment the Kubin people have an exhibition in the middle of Melbourne and they will do very nicely out of that. Then they are going over to New York, I think. Rosie Barkus is here with the silk screens. Rosie cannot print enough of those, and she sells them for \$500 or \$600 a piece. Alec Jipoti has just had an exhibition in Cairns and he sold 12 at \$1,500 a piece. There is a fair bit of capacity there.

Ms HOARE—As an aside, will we see the art in the places we are going to over the next couple of days,?

Mr Fordham—Yes. I do not know whether there is anyone around because they would all be down south, but they might be back.

Mr Waia—Maybe.

Mr Fordham—We will be able to show you their little art studio. It is certainly nothing flash. They do it with linocuts. Hopefully we will be able to get to show you how they do it there. It is absolutely amazing.

Mrs HULL—It will be great to see.

Mr Fordham—It is fascinating. You no doubt know that the Haddon collection came from the National Museum and then up to Cairns and then on. Among the issues is a moratorium on mining and drilling in Torres Strait. That is under the treaty. There is an environmental management committee. We still do not have any decision on what is going to happen. Basically the board is looking for an indefinite moratorium with some sorts of mechanisms by which it can be lifted.

CHAIR—Okay. We might continue on.

Mr Fordham—Fisheries is a pretty significant issue for us at the moment that you might have heard a bit about. Terry was formally given a seat, which has gone through the Senate, on the protected zone joint authority. The Queensland minister, the Commonwealth minister and the chair of the TSRA sit on the protected zone joint authority. Under that, we are reforming all the consultative structures. It is a very convoluted and fairly expensive sort of exercise to run. It brought a lot of angst. There are a number of significant issues with fisheries up here. There are depleting stocks, licensing and the need for greater involvement of the islanders and so on.

Morning tea is here, so I will finish this really quickly. You might want to come back and ask us more questions about greater autonomy later—about exactly where that is at.

Mrs HULL—That would be really good.

Mr Fordham—We could dig out some old—by now, old—videos on the Bamaga Accord. That is that.

CHAIR—Did you prepare the submission to our inquiry?

Mr Fordham—Yes.

CHAIR—We will address some comments on that later. Thank you.

Mr Fordham—While we grab morning tea, I will get this other HEMPT video on and we can watch it while we are there.

CHAIR—Welcome back. Thank you for that general overview and for the fairly informal way in which we have just worked our way through the history of the Torres Strait. Hansard is transcribing this hearing so that we have a record of your comments and can sift through them and try to understand what the issues are. We are an extension of the parliament in that sense. I compliment you on the submission to our inquiry. We thank you for the effort that has gone into it. It was signed by Terry Waia and we thank you, Terry, for your input and for that of your general manager as well. The issue that I want to go to is on page 17—the conclusion of your submission, which is not a bad way to come to where you think it is at. Could you take me through where the negotiations are at? I understand that this is more a state issue in terms of the suggestions of the parliamentary committee of 1997 about bringing the various groups together. There was a suggestion that there was common membership on those three bodies. Can you comment on where that is at and how you see that adding to your community capacity and your general governance issues.

Mr Fordham—The three bodies you are talking about are the TSRA, the ICC—the Island Coordinating Council—and Torres Shire. Initially Torres Shire saw themselves as being a local government authority and not involved in any prospective mergers. They saw that they were there delivering local government services, if you like, alongside any of the other outer island councils. The merger of the TSRA and the ICC was progressed, in the main, initially at an IDC that looked at all of the legislative crossovers. From what I can see, they got involved in a whole lot of bureaucratic stumbles and tied themselves up in a whole lot of spaghetti and seemed to fade away into the distance. I honestly do not know what came out of it. I have had a bit of a look through it and, to be honest with you, if anything was ever going to happen, it

would be one of those sorts of files that you would probably rather shred than try to make sense of.

What happened later was that the board decided that Henry, Terry and Pastor Pedro Stephen, as the mayor of Torres Shire, who also sits on the board as the member for Port Kennedy, would form a greater autonomy task force. They went around and consulted with every community on a number of occasions and ultimately came up with what is known as the Bamaga Accord, which was a new model for governance for the Torres Strait. In the main, it was about a new electoral structure taking into account some of the issues that the community saw. It was also focusing very much internally on the administration side in strengthening, developing and putting a whole lot more meat onto the framework agreements. That, in short, is what that was about.

Unfortunately, like a lot of politics, particularly in Torres Strait, the message got a bit garbled at times. There was a call for a variety of things, including a public meeting held in July last year. At that public meeting, it was decided to put the Bamaga Accord on hold and to form another steering committee comprising Pedro Stephen, again as the mayor of Torres Shire, and about four or five others. We are not really certain that that committee has achieved a whole lot at this stage. Having said that, the Bamaga Accord—and we can show you some of the glossies and videos on that if you like—is still there. It is still on hold, and it can be dusted off at any time.

The other unfortunate part of that—and it was happening in concert—was the development of the TSRA Act, which was an act of our own. Unfortunately, people linked the autonomy issue with the act and thought that if we were to go forward with the act that would automatically mean we were going forward with autonomy. Obviously, some people thought the autonomy thing had not really got a whole lot of meat on it, that it had not been consulted on properly, and that it meant a whole lot of things for a whole lot of people. Autonomy means anything from where we talk about it in terms of framework agreements, partnerships and a different electoral structure to people talking almost of secession, independent states and goodness knows what. There is naturally a degree of nervousness in the community there. People then link that back and say that if they get this act that means all that is going to happen. It was a difficult one to explain. So the act is also on hold at the moment.

CHAIR—Thank you. I think I get the picture. That is the political structure and those are some of the challenges there. Moving right away from that, which I think is part of your conclusion on page 17, in terms of the relationships, as you said, we have a whole lot of titles, frameworks, partnerships and collaborative agreements or whatever you want to call them. We have reporting of state departments on an annual basis, and that forms part of your process in terms of working with state and Commonwealth organisations. If you could change or get a different focus on one or two or three things, in terms of the bureaucracy and the administrative arrangements, what might those things be? What are we doing at the moment? We have talked about a number of things this morning in very specific areas. Health was one area that was obviously standing out that needed to come forward and have things done a bit differently, as the community decides to do that. Is there anything in a general sense that stands out? Maybe we need to look at the progress, because clearly there has been progress made and progress is still happening. Is there anything impeding that, particularly in terms of administrative, bureaucratic or management types of issues?

Mr Fordham—Yes. From the administration side, a lot of the framework agreements and partnerships—in fact all of them that we operate under—really rely simply on goodwill. It is about getting people here, enthusing them about our aims and ideals and making it clear that you can have a few wins, if you like, and encouraging them or begging them in the end to put money and resources into a coordinated effort. The notion of people reporting back or being compelled to participate or anything like that is a long way from where we are still. The bilateral agreements talk about coordination of advice in very limited language. For example, the health one specifically limits any discussion on funding programs and specifically limits any discussion on allocation of dollars or resources. On the face of it, it is not much different to, say, a committee that runs a hospital, to be really blunt. They are nice to have around because you are saying you are doing all the right things, but you really would not want them there actually making any decisions.

Having said that, there are a number of agreements and they do vary. For us, the MIP one is probably the pinnacle of the agreements in that it is about saying, ‘Here is a really clear and literally concrete objective.’ It is pooling funding into one spot, jointly developing the programs, monitoring, administering and then reporting back to government, and then governments on both sides are analysing it, which they did at the end of the three years before they put money into the next three-year program. That to me, from a bureaucrat’s perspective, is the pinnacle of where you want to be. There is clear accountability and very little bureaucracy that surrounds it. We have run it with one contracted engineer, essentially, on a full-time basis, and we project manage and often contract out. We get maximum community input into the thing because we package the work in smaller levels. We have lots of flexibility. We are not needing to comply with a whole lot of departmental programs or boxes or anything like that, whereas in others it really is a matter of trying to fit within a program that someone else has devised where, okay, there is a bit of a chink in the armour or there is a gap that we might be able to dive into and grab.

I think the Torres Strait is lucky in that the TSRA exists on a fairly flexible basis. There is a fair bit of flexibility with our dollars. We can, if you like, be the flexible bucks that will match up with the program dollar. Wherever we see the program, and it needs 50:50 or whatever, we can put them in. If there is a gap in funding, as with our training—and we talked about the apprentice program before, which is a real success—there is nowhere that you can get funding to employ tradesmen to act as ‘train the trainers’. If you can find it, please let me know. But you cannot. You can get money for all sorts of other things. There is lots of rhetoric around training, but the reality is that there are no dollars out there of any real use to us here. What we tend to do is get DEST to put in whatever money they can on whatever program basis they can. Our money is then used to employ the tradesmen that do the training, or we will bring the trainer up and pay for their travel and accommodation and all the practical things that have to happen that, if it was left to purely the program stuff, would not happen.

CHAIR—I would like to pick up on that because it seems it will be very important, if you look out 20 years, for the Torres Strait Islander people themselves to be the trainers at some point. That would be the ideal, so it needs to be thought about in stages. What you have said to me is that it is very difficult to get that one vital ingredient to build the foundation. Can anyone comment about the involvement of the Torres Strait Islander people themselves and the vision for the next decade or so in that training area?

Mr Waia—I think the St Paul community at the moment can send their people out to train other Torres Strait Islanders in administration, for example. We have taken on their carpenters to build our child health centres. At the same time, they train a lot of our own people. By doing that, it is showing others that they can come forward and that, if this guy can do it, so can you. That is the whole outlook, and that has been happening. On Saibai at the moment we have got people from down south having the full qualification to train our people and at the same time having someone with him who is trained. So when these guys go, then you have got all the people to continue that work. Again, regarding the payment of our people, it stays in the community and also encourages other people to do that kind of training here instead of down south somewhere.

Mrs HULL—Mike, you spoke in your overview about a Work for the Dole program coming across without consultation with you. In your submission you indicated that for all government agencies it would be ideal if they would report back in to the authority so that you could be sure that you were delivering the objectives of the authority. How far have you progressed with that? Is there any movement toward identifying how that can possibly transpire?

Mr Fordham—A lot of the stuff in the Bamaga Accord was about getting government's consensus on that sort of a process. At the moment, as I said before, there is nothing in any legislation, in any policy directives or in anything like that to compel agencies to come and talk to us at all. They do not have to. Anyone can arrive in the Torres Strait and just do whatever they feel like. I guess the smarter ones do not. I would say we have come a long way, but it is very much about us selling what we are doing. There is not necessarily anything wrong with this, either; it is just good old PR and marketing, and it is about us garnering their goodwill and saying, 'You've got a program; we can help you deliver it in some way.' We will try then and maximise the wins on both sides.

Defence, for example, is trying to put in a fairly sophisticated radar network at the moment. They had a go at it themselves on their own and it was not particularly successful. They are now coming and talking to us, and we believe we will be able to help them and that it will be successful. That is not necessarily a program; it is a bit of construction. But there will be wins on both sides. We will want to see some wins in it for the community so that the community maintains that infrastructure and is involved in building it and, in terms of their native title that they will be giving up, that there is some form of compensation.

Ms HOARE—Do you have an idea as to how that could come about and as to how we could form a model so that the agencies who then do come in would have consultation with you as to what you were doing so there is no overlapping? What would be the benefits of delivering that model?

Mr Fordham—I think in terms of the models, you can have the Rolls Royce model, but maybe a sort of autocratic model would be one just built into the legislation so that people have to do it. That would be good. Maybe you could build it into the legislation in a more positive or general way. The other way is about policy directives and things like that. It is also about having government being well aware of us being a third layer of government for a region. The benefits, of course, are that in the end, while there are still some significant issues here—the most basic are health, housing, women's issues and those sorts of things—there are a lot of opportunities in terms of economic development so that the region can become much more self-sustaining, so that you can have some wins. Government agencies are there to serve the people in all parts of

Australia, and that is what they should be doing. We figure we can add value to them as much as they can to us.

Ms HOARE—I am interested, on a different tack now, to see what the role of the Island Coordinating Council is and what the relationship between the ICC and the TSRA is at the moment. We have heard a bit about the Torres Shire council but I am interested to know about the other relationship between the Island Coordinating Council and the authority.

Mr Fordham—I think we should both answer that. I will jump in and answer first.

Ms HOARE—I am also interested to hear about not only the relationship but the roles of each as well. We have heard about the authority but not so much about the council.

Mr Fordham—The way that it tends to work is that the ICC is a service delivery arm. It is one of our primary service delivery vehicles. It has the same members, except for two, that sit on the ICC. We provide a significant amount of the core funding that goes to run the ICC, as well as program funding. Typically, if we want to run a program, we will provide the bulk funding to the ICC, who will then deliver it. The HEMPT program that you saw there—the heavy equipment pool, for example—is a joint partnership. The ICC's role in that is to go around and coordinate the work program. They will then prepare all the reports and do all the reporting back to us on how that program is going. In terms of the relationship, we are all in the same building here, we share the same IT network, they do our payroll and we do other bits and pieces for them, so it is a very close relationship.

Mr Garnier—When we were targeting the Bamaga accord, that was the arrangement in regards to management—that is, to marry the ICC administration with the TSRA. We are already linked up to their computer but, because of the change in what the people wanted, everything has more or less come to a standstill. At the moment we are not going anywhere. The new body that they have set up must become available to us and give us some information before we can either progress it or dump it altogether. Mike covered all the things I was going to say with regard to the relationship between TSRA and ICC. We work well together, and with the Torres Shire also. That is the way we intend to go.

Ms HOARE—So, if I have got this correct, you are saying that the ICC, the Torres Shire and TSRA had already worked some way towards the Bamaga accord, before it was put on hold, in relation to the closeness of the relationship and sharing administration, office space and computer systems? So you have gone some way toward that?

Mr Garnier—Yes, but it is not only that. The Hammond Council, which represents the community I come from, does have a relationship with the Torres Shire. Our water is piped from Thursday Island across to Hammond. The Torres Shire got the contract to do that, so there is already a relationship between us. They have done a good job that the government and the council are happy with. So there is that flexibility there already. We are negotiating a takeover from DNR in regard to water management in the Torres Strait. DNR can only be regulated, whereas someone else has to take over the responsibility of running the infrastructure. ICC and the Torres Shire have put their hands up. If the ICC does get it, then the Torres Shire can be the one to implement the program.

Ms HOARE—So there is some competition between the two delivery agencies?

Mr Garnier—I would not say ‘competition’.

Ms HOARE—Healthy competition.

Mr Garnier—Where there is finance up for grabs, everybody will want to grab all of it.

Ms HOARE—Sure.

Mr Garnier—The ICC has always been a good deliverer of services in the Torres Strait. I feel, as the chair, that the ICC is a body that can implement that program.

Ms HOARE—Thank you; you deserve to be applauded.

Mrs HULL—Could you indicate what you think would be the major factors that would be holding you back from achieving capacity building in your communities? What would be the things that would be really desired in order to achieve capacity building—for the communities to be able to take responsibility and provide outcomes for themselves?

Mr Waia—I think it is more for the information to be out there with our people. At the moment, I am spending time trying to explain certain things that are happening in the Torres Strait. That is what has actually been happening in regard to the autonomy process that we were in. When this Bamaga Accord came in, we went out to try to explain to our people, because there is confusion in the word ‘autonomy’ itself. As I said, it may mean 10 different things to 10 different people.

Part of the autonomy that they are talking about is really in existence; it is happening. The individual islands have their own enterprises set up, and we have native title in place. We have bodies running the native title matters within the communities. Before the infrastructure of housing, if anyone wanted a house to be built on their particular land, the agreement had to be set between the island council and the native title owners. In the past it was there in a traditional respect, but when native title came around it had to be countersigned on a particular document. This is where we have to tell people that this is how things have been done so that we can have something on paper which says that it has happened. It is those kinds of things that we have to face, and we need to educate our community about the changes coming in. Things must be done under the law.

I think autonomy is already in the Torres Strait in terms of people wanting to talk about different things. Our job, as leaders, is to push home that there is particular autonomy happening. For example, ICC and TSRA have a lot of Indigenous staff, so we have come that far. The other thing is that people are talking about the politics of it all and who should be sitting around this table. The communities are missing out this time, but we have been explaining to them that things are happening day to day, that this is autonomy.

Mrs HULL—What is the best method of delivering information to those who do not understand? What is the best way in which you can go into communities to deliver information in clear and concise terms so that there are not different understandings of autonomy and there is no confusion and fear of what that means?

Mr Waia—Hopefully we have a situation where all the chairmen come together in authority meetings, and we expect them to go back and explain to their respective communities what is happening. But as the TSRA we will also place ourselves out there if we are invited to sit with the people, together with their own chairmen, to explain what is happening and we will be open to questions. That is always the case, but it is really up to the community to invite us out there. I also come on our local radio every morning and try and get a message across to everybody.

Mrs HULL—In our jobs in politics, some local members are better than others at going out into the communities and delivering messages. Some are not able to effectively deliver messages. It is obviously the same on some of your councils where there may not be the ability or the desire to be as vigilant in delivering the message. How could you see that being overcome? I come from the Riverina in New South Wales and I am constantly facilitating processes with the Indigenous communities. They all say, ‘Oh, yes, we know all about that,’ but it is not until I get them all together in the same room that I start getting differences ironed out and find out that they have not understood it completely. When they get a different and clearer understanding it sometimes resolves the conflict. It is usually in the delivery of Aboriginal health services that we find it has been very difficult for people to understand what is and what is not available, what they are and are not entitled to. So I am wondering how you could put together a plan so that there is a follow-up if your council members are not delivering a clear and concise message to the communities when they go back. They cannot invite you if they do not know about it, so is there a way in which you could implement some better and more strategic direction in those communities?

Mr Waia—As you can see, the Torres Strait is a very expensive place to travel around because you have to fly. Usually in our culture if that is to happen everybody would want to come, so there is the cost factor. That is why I am trying to say to my members: ‘Please, invite us. Whatever you want explained to your community that you cannot explain, please tell me so I can bring someone from this organisation who can go into detail and explain a particular thing you want to know.’

Mrs HULL—So you need to be invited before you can go?

Mr Waia—Yes.

Mrs HULL—What happens if you never get invited?

Mr Garnier—The TSRA and ICC do not interfere with internal matters unless invited. Each member of the board, whether it is the TSRA or the ICC, has the opportunity to come and sit at a roundtable and take the message out from there and give it to their community. It is the way that the message is interpreted, because there are a lot of old people out there who do not understand much English, and other members are mostly young men who do not speak fluent language like we used to. That is why the message does not get to the grassroots people unless we can find ways of employing a linguist or someone like that to go out and sit with the people and discuss the issues. That is what all the confusion has been about with regard to the Bamaga Accord, because of the way that it was explained to the people; that is why they did not understand. There were a few vocal politicians among us who did not see eye to eye with the board itself and talked a lot on radio and things like that. That is why it was decided that the Bamaga Accord should be put on hold and looked at.

Mrs HULL—That is what I am basically getting to. It seems to me that there is a fundamental problem there which needs to be addressed right at its very basis. Unless we can get an appropriate message that is clear and concise and uniform across all the different communities, it will be very difficult to build anything. Perhaps the committee need to look at that as well as at how we suggest what models might be undertaken in order to achieve that in the long term.

Mr Fordham—Yes, I think it would be a shame if you looked at where we are at currently with autonomy and the Bamaga Accord and said that there is no point in pursuing any other forms of capacity building. It is not a failure by any means, from what I see. We are at the point of taking three steps forward and two back. In Torres Strait that is just the way it is, and that is why it has been left on hold for now. I do not think there is any great angst with the leaders who are here that for a while it will sit there while people distil it and chew it over. The only other way you could do it is if you were willing and able to throw lots and lots of dollars at mega consultation programs. We do not have those sorts of dollars. For us it is about trying to push whatever dollars we have to the front-end stuff; that is what we have to try and live with.

As far as capacity building goes, where we would like to try and move—and a committee like yours could help us—is very much in that framework agreement area and the business of however it is that governments—state and Commonwealth—really do see that they have to connect better. The strengths of the Torres Strait and the successes to my mind are to do with the fact that the communities are individual and discrete. They are literally islands, so you do not have that sort of messy business of a whole lot of overlays. We treat the councils as being the primary vehicles. They are like a small rural council. Unfortunately, to my mind, the small rural councils have been screwed; these guys have not. They stand up to it, and they give it a go. We support the councils at that level, and we try to get others to do that as well.

Another thing that is important is that a lot of that capacity is in the Torres Strait in terms of people like me who are based here. We are not based in Canberra or Brisbane or anywhere else. The current move of trying to get directors-general or CEOs of different agencies to champion different communities and all sorts of stuff like that is a farce to my mind. It is all very nice—good on them—but what sort of focus is that? What capacity is that really building in the community? It is building lots more capacity in Canberra and Brisbane where it is not needed. Each one of those people will have people hanging around them providing briefing notes which are distilled, washed, laundered—whatever you want to say. That information will have gone through 10 sets of hands before it will get to where it needs to go. The difference that we have is that I can literally walk from this room now and ring Philip Ruddock's office if there is a problem, and Terry can ring the minister straightaway. We are not laundering any information. Any attempt to do that would be crazy.

There are concerns at the moment with some of the DOFA budget arrangements that have just gone through cabinet, I believe. They are going to require a whole lot more reporting and stuff like that. We have to report back through a material agency, which, if not ATSIC, will be DIMIA, before our budget outputs are agreed to. We may well have to go cap in hand to the department for money. We are resisting that. It is crazy; it is a bit off. If you think there are problems at this end of the scale, go back and have a look at the problems at that end of the scale. I would be suggesting you get as much capacity out to the communities as you possibly can.

Mrs HULL—Mr Garnier made a very good point when he said that linguistics is an issue, as the languages are not being spoken as frequently as they might be. These are issues that could be put back into your community.

Mr Fordham—The issue is more interesting than that actually. The primary language here is creole. English is a second language and, in some cases, it is a third language. On Saibai, for example, they speak creole as well as their western island language and they speak English. So with typical government programs that are produced in Canberra or Brisbane, people understand them if they want to. There is no suggestion that people are dumb; it is not that at all. It is like arriving in Tokyo and expecting to understand how to catch the bus to a particular street in the middle of Tokyo; you are going to have a bit of trouble. So that is what that is about. Interestingly, in education programs, they are not treated as ESL students because basically to be an ESL school you have to have a high migrant population.

CHAIR—Can you describe the degree of difficulty administratively of operating a series of islands? There is quite a challenge with costs. You have the advantage of discrete communities, as you mentioned. But high costs are a feature of this place in terms of administration, aren't they? I know a few people in my own electorate who have lived on islands, and there are additional challenges that those of us who have lived all of our lives on the mainland do not understand. What are the challenges of living on islands? I can see some obvious ones, but you might like to enlighten us a little bit on island life.

Mr Fordham—There are plenty of benefits. It is a long way from anywhere, which is nice. You have seen the really obvious ones, no doubt, by coming here. You have seen that it is two hours from Cairns by plane. If you were silly enough to drive to the tip, it would take you about 20 hours and then you would have to barge the vehicle across. It is expensive, as is the cost of housing. For example, for us to buy a house for a staff member to live in costs about \$400,000. So, if we are bringing people in and we need to house them adequately, there are those costs to be amortised. You have seen the price of food. So there is the cost of living to actually attract professionals here. One of the strengths that the Torres Strait to their credit recognise is that they want to buy professional services in. That is not to say that there is a whole bunch of whiteys running the place; it means they recognise that they want professionals, and they will pay for them. So there are those sorts of costs.

Then there are the costs beyond that of trying to deliver services to a whole lot of geographically disparate communities. The women's shelter issue that we talked about before is a classic one—where would you put it? A lot of government services typically come to TI, see this as the place and so the infrastructure will land here. In the main that is probably the right thing to do, but there is not a lot of rocket science in it or any science applied to it; it is just that they have seen TI, they think it is the Torres Strait and so there it goes. There are the costs of going out. It costs \$1,000 for a charter. An RPT or regular passenger transport service to most of the islands costs \$300, \$400 or \$500. It is a high cost. For example, in supporting the water services, where do we put our plumbers, electricians and so on? There are costs in getting spares out there and in getting all that stuff freighted to here in the first place. It is rather like running any other remote community but you are unable to literally drive the stuff in and out. People cannot drive in and out either, so you have remote airfares and all of those sorts of additional costs. There are no subsidies for any of the transport at all.

Mrs HULL—How do people afford it? I am quite staggered by the costs and that is why I was asking about the wages.

Mr Fordham—I chased that for you. The CDEP varies depending on how they run it but it is about \$10,000 a year. Also, as at Badu at the moment, there are a lot of people employed on top-ups and so they would be getting award wages. How they survive, I do not know. If you were to go to Poruma today and ask someone to take you to the supermarket there to have a look at the prices, you would see that it is pretty horrific.

CHAIR—And here?

Mr Fordham—It is good here. It is cheaper here than the other islands.

CHAIR—But it is expensive compared to what I am used to.

Mrs DRAPER—It is cheaper here than at the airport for some things.

Mr Fordham—A lot of people say, ‘Why don’t they just grow gardens?’ That is fine. I will ask you how you grow a vegie garden in a sand patch or in mud or whatever. Some of the islanders do and they are now into hydroponics, which is a trade-off of water and stuff like that. So it is not simple. It is not as pessimistic as we perhaps are suggesting in terms of the vegies but it is high cost.

Mr Garnier—The bottom line is that Thursday Island would be the dearest place to live in Australia.

CHAIR—It is expensive to get here. I would now like to talk about culture and tradition—how well government does that and whether there are blockages to the way things are done. Is there something in there that we should be thinking about? When we are talking about community capacity we are talking not just about Torres Strait Islander people but about white fellas’ capacity and the government department’s capacity. So it is very much a holistic way of looking at things and how well government is doing that. You have touched on some of those things, but what about the culture and the traditional ways? Are there any obvious areas that we should be aware of that you would like to talk about?

Mr Garnier—I am not in a position to talk about someone else’s culture. I live on Hammond. Traditionally, I am not from there; I am from a central group. So the culture is more multicultural. Hammond is multicultural because people from all over the Torres Strait came and settled there. Hammond is traditionally owned by other people—we were just allowed to settle there—so I am in no position to talk about any culture. Terry would be in a position to do so because he comes from a community on Saibai. It is all Saibai people staying there and they have something like seven or eight clans living on the island, so he would be in a better position to talk about that.

CHAIR—Terry, my question is about community capacity, and that is not just about Torres Strait Islander people but about government, white people and everybody. It is about Canberra and Brisbane—the capacity for everybody to understand and the culture and traditional ways. Are there some things there that we should perhaps think about a little more and do better in the future from a cultural and traditional perspective?

Mr Waia—On Saibai, we are now running seven councils. Members are from each of the seven clan groups that make up the local government authority. We had three councils before where anybody could be a candidate and run for a position. But because of native title the Saibai people have decided that we should have members from each of our clans in the local government authority. I am in the council as a rep for my clan. But we have what we call a 'rotating chair'. We have a bigger clan group and a smaller clan group, and I come from the smaller clan group. It is our turn to run the island. I have been elected within our group to chair that seven clan membership. According to the arrangement now, I have automatically become a member of ICC and, at the same time, a member of the Torres Strait authority.

So we have got that running at the moment, which is good, but we still need more changes to be made. All over Torres Strait, people are talking about electing a person to become a board member of the authority instead of having government appointees. We have just been two people, and they thought that we were appointed by the government to be the members of the authority. Torres Strait people are now saying that we should have another election for different people to represent those islands on the board of authority, but all sorts of different changes need to be made before that happens. So at the moment we are trying to work that way as well, but I think we have something in place that I hoped the other council would look at to see how we are doing things. It is satisfying each client borough and each member of the community, because people now put their representatives into the local government authority and they are satisfied that their people are in there to represent them.

CHAIR—I think you have touched on the administrative model pretty well anyway, but I want to look at the key features of the TSRA model. You may be reluctant to comment on this, because it is really about judgment in other areas and it is quite difficult. There seem to be many strengths in the TSRA model. Some of them are inherent, because of the discrete island communities et cetera, but from your experience—and I am not familiar with your backgrounds, so I do not know what that is—do you see potential for application of the key features of the model in other areas? That is an area of judgment that you may be reluctant to comment on—and you may not have had that experience, but I suspect you probably have.

Mr Fordham—I am not at all reluctant to comment. I have worked in the Queensland Premier's department and the state development and housing departments. Before that I was with the Navy. So I have been around a bit and I certainly know a good organisation when I see it and what makes an effective organisation. I think what makes it effective here is that there is good legislation—or parts of legislation—in the ATSIIC stuff to provide that basis. It is discrete in terms of there being a region and a role; the reporting lines are quite clear; and the funding is provided on a fairly flexible basis and a lot of autonomy is given to the chair, the board and, hence, the GM and the staff. It is not a big organisation—there are only 40 people in total, from anthropologists, lawyers, engineers and field people to the usual corporate areas.

My view is that it is very transferable. For example, the Cape York instance is, as we know, disappointing for governments and the communities. With similar numbers of people and a raft of pretty significant issues to be faced, I would have thought it fairly obvious that you would want to set something up there. Initially—not that I have put any real thought into this—I would have thought, 'Maybe they figure that it's expensive to run a TSRA.' Our budget is about \$50 million, half of which is CDEP—which is probably less, for example, than the budget ATSIIC has for its Cape York regional office—and there would be other state funds and so on put in. Some of the land councils in the Northern Territory are not unlike the TSRA and, from what I

can gather, they are pretty effective bodies. If you take a lot of the politics out of it and the smokescreen that tends to surround them, they are pretty effective. I think that is transferable to most of the discrete regions of Australia and equally transferable whether they are Indigenous, white or whatever.

Mrs HULL—We spoke about having about 19 traineeships or apprenticeships. How many of those 19 are female?

Mr Waia—They are all male except for one female, who is a painter.

Mrs HULL—That leads to my next question—I figured that would probably be the response. What process do we have in place to better provide for the young women in the communities? It seems to me that you have few opportunities present for younger females. Do they end up being unemployed or not having any real focus applied to them? If that is not the case, exactly what process do we have in place to expand and build the lives of young females?

Mr Waia—Inside the office, for example, we have two young ladies who are housing officers and we have one lady who is an understudy for the CEO. When you look at my office, for example, I have a woman in there.

Mrs HULL—But on the average layer, I would like to understand what we have. For instance, you have 19 apprentices in one area and one is female and the rest of them are male. I would like to know what you have in place for the girls.

Mr Fordham—As far as programs specifically in the Torres Strait, there is nothing; it basically relies on its typical mainstream affirmative action programs. Having said that—and this is a white male speaking—we actually have trouble in that most of the staff here are females and I would suggest that the bulk of the unemployed and people on CDEP are males. There is almost a phenomenon here that the males stay home and raise the children and the females go out to work. That would be the case for probably 40 per cent of the staff here.

Mrs HULL—Is that right?

Mr Fordham—Yes. Go out and ask them, if you like—or I will bring them in!

Mrs HULL—If I can pursue that a little bit, how does that actually evolve? You have raised an interesting aside. If the majority of the females are the employed people and the males stay home and look after the families, how does that actually evolve if there is no program intent right from a very early age to encourage women into a direction of office skills or whatever?

Mr Fordham—I think it is just about opportunities. Traditionally, the women seem to have been the drivers of a lot of the office work and the behind the scenes community stuff, so now a lot more of those jobs are paid employment. They obviously do very well at school. What happens too with a lot of the males, particularly on the outer islands, is that whilst they will be looking after the family a lot of the time, they are also going fishing and diving for cray and so on. When that is happening, the older people will look after the kids. There are quite different family systems to those we are used to.

Mrs HULL—But it is still an accident that these girls become the employed people or better educated?

Mr Fordham—Yes, but is that any different to mainstream Australia today? I do not think it is.

Mrs HULL—No, it is probably not. But the question I am asking is, if there are no targeted programs for the girls—

Mr Fordham—How did it happen?

Mrs HULL—Yes, that is what I am trying to understand.

Mr Fordham—I do not know. I often wonder myself. I look at the ladies here and I know that it is almost the reverse of what you would expect to see—the family comes in to say g'day or something like that and it is Dad and the kids coming in while the mum is at work.

Mr Garnier—One of my staff members is a woman. She has a full-time job while her husband is working on CDEP. That is a perfect example. The opportunity is not here job wise. Men and women get educated, but to get a good job you have to go away from the place. If they are married, there is no opportunity for the husband to get office work so the wife has to go and work while he is either on CDEP or looking after the children. There is no opportunity here.

Mrs HULL—Which is not a bad thing.

Mrs DRAPER—My question is about the female to male population ratio. I know we have roughly 8,000 people.

Mr Fordham—I do not know. I have no idea.

Mrs DRAPER—We could find that out through the ABS couldn't we?

CHAIR—I would expect that the ABS would have some indication of that.

Mrs DRAPER—I am just curious. Just out of interest: in percentage terms.

Mr Fordham—I am not aware that there is any great difference—put it that way. One other thing you need to throw into the equation is the education system. Most of the communities will have child-care centres or preschools. They then go to primary school in their own community. Beyond that they either come into Thursday Island to go to high school or they go south to private schools. At the moment, I think about 50 per cent of the kids go south. So, in any of the communities, you will not see kids from grade 7 to 12 unless it is school holidays. Fifty per cent of those will be in Cairns or Townsville at private schools. A lot of them then go on to uni and so on, and stay down there.

Mr Waia—One of the problems here for students, especially from the outer islands, is that some of them have to go down to Cairns or the other centres in the south because of the lack of accommodation for students in TI, where the high school is. That is another problem.

CHAIR—That is an issue. Thank you.

Mrs HULL—Is there still the phenomenon here of boys not finishing education? That is what I was trying to get to when I asked about completion and opportunities for girls. It appears to be exactly the same: that boys perhaps are not as focused on education. Is there a need for some different delivery action to encourage boys to complete their education?

Mr Fordham—I think you are right, but I think programs like STEP are working quite well here now. They are fairly recent—the last three or four years. We have done things like buy the school a boat so that they can run coxswain training. I think that is what those guys were doing up here—the education people you were talking about—in part. Some of the results are pretty good. The bulk of those going into these programs are the young boys, because they are the ones in danger of not finishing their schooling. You will not see the effect of those programs for some time. I think it is a real issue, probably because I have two sons at home. The stats are not good for boys.

Ms HOARE—I am interested to hear about the younger people who are in the authority and on the councils. It must be a contrast to what we have been talking about—the education of boys. We have had some public hearings at Parliament House in Canberra, and there have been some issues relating to leadership in more remote communities. From what you were saying earlier, Terry, there seem to be good leadership models here in the Torres Strait where younger people—not necessarily women, so much—are being elected to the boards and councils and are being involved with community leadership. I would like to hear from you because there is that issue in other communities. Why is it working so well in the Torres Strait? Why is your leadership model—whatever it may be—working so well?

Mr Waia—I suppose we encourage our young people to take up leadership because we are not going to stay young forever; someone has to take over. In the interests of our islands and the Torres Strait itself, we need to educate young people that someone must carry on—that they must take over from us one day. That is why we are looking to our young people to jump in the queue and learn the ropes. Since, say, 1988 the politics of Torres Strait have developed. Before that, things like this were run by the departments in TI; there were no offices out in the islands. That is why there was very little known about local government. Since 1988, we have been given the incentive to run our own affairs on the islands, and this is where the interest developed. I came on board in 1988, as a chair of Saibai. Since then I have learnt the way forward, and that is why I am eager to go out and help young people and tell them that it is important: ‘You must come on board so you can run the show from here on.’

Ms HOARE—So it is about promoting the idea: ‘This is your future; if you want to control it, and not have some outsider controlling it, then get on board and become involved.’ Even in our own local communities that we represent, we go out to schools and talk to young people. It is very difficult to get them excited about politics, though we try our hardest, so I think we all have some lessons to learn from what you are doing, Terry.

Mr Waia—That is the other thing I do in my community as well. For example, when I am on Saibai I go into primary schools and talk about my role, what I do, to young children and get them interested in what school is all about, which is how to get there. It is an encouragement sort of thing: ‘If you want a good job, good wages and everything else, and to be a good

community member—educated—it is up to you; this is what you can do. You may be me one day. This is where it all starts.’ So that is encouragement towards an education.

Mr Garnier—Also, the elders talk to the young men and advise them on leadership. I have learnt it the hard way over 35 years. I was a professional fisherman by trade until I got into politics in 1991. I was the skipper of a fishing boat for 35 years; that is where I more or less learnt leadership. My father before me was a skipper in his own right, and my grandfather before that, so I was fortunate enough to be born into a family of skippers who knew all about leadership and all that. I more or less had the opportunity to learn from there on. So I had been a leader long before I got into this position and came to be a chairperson of the community. I am trying to hand that down to the younger men in my community by advising them that this is learnt. I find one of the issues is that honesty goes well with leadership. I firmly believe that.

CHAIR—Thank you very much.

Mr Waia—I have to go now. I have to fly to Cairns and interview more people to work for me!

CHAIR—Thank you very much, Terry; it is much appreciated. Thank you, Henry, too, very much, and Mike, for your hospitality, for working with our secretariat and for your submission. It has been lovely to find out more about you.

Mr Fordham—The plan from here is to have a bite to eat. We will try to have a quick whip around at least to the hospital to give you a bit of a look at that and then over to Horn and out to Poruma. Has anyone been to the outer islands at all before?

Ms HOARE—We went to one, I think, when we came last time, but only one.

Mr Fordham—You will fly over the top of Warraber—Poruma and Warraber are two of the smaller communities; the central islands—so you will see that from the air. You will also fly over the main shipping channel for all of the shipping that comes in and goes out of Australia. It all comes right past Hammond Island. You will get a bit of a feel for that. If they are coming inside the reef they go down and around here; if they are going outside it they go past Poruma and Coconut and up that way. You will also get a feel for how important CASA is to the people of this place.

Mrs HULL—How important CASA is?

Mr Fordham—Yes, for light aircraft.

Mr Garnier—I hope you enjoy your trip out to Poruma because that is where I come from originally.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Resolved (on motion by **Mrs Draper**):

That documents presented by the TSRA be received as evidence to the committee’s inquiry.

Resolved (on motion by **Mrs Hull**):

That the committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.