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26 April 2005

Ms Cheryl Scarlett
Secretary
Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2000

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RECEIVED
02 MAY 2005
BY: ATSI/A

Dear Ms Scarlett,

Re: Inquiry Into Indigenous Employment

The City of Marion has a firm commitment to actions which support 'practical reconciliation' initiatives. Through the Living Kurna Cultural Centre, established in 2001 and through working with our neighbouring councils to develop the Tappa Iri Reconciliation Agreement we are working in partnership toward improved outcomes for aboriginal people.

In terms of employment for aboriginal people, our main experience has been through three positions at the Living Kurna Cultural Centre. Whilst you are seeking submissions on positive outcomes, it would be true to say that the employment outcomes for aboriginal people at the LKCC have not been positive for a range of reasons.

Due to the experiences of the past three years however, we have been able to more clearly identify issues and factors which have not contributed to a successful employment experience. We remain hopeful that, having identified these issues, we can work in a more constructive way to support aboriginal people in our employment.

The identified issues include:

- Support is needed for aboriginal employees to navigate conflicts and differences between 'whitefella' bureaucracy requirements and aboriginal cultural ways.
- Role clarification is very important, with clarity about the role of governance and the separate responsibilities of employed staff
- Patience, understanding and commitment to cultural awareness development is required



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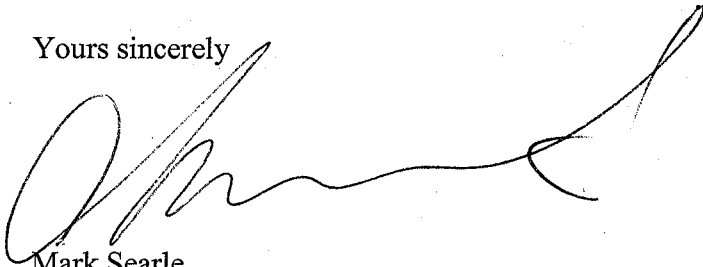
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- Provision in Human Resource Management policies and procedures for things like “sorry business” so that there is a shared understanding and respect of employer expectations and employee leave provisions.

I wish the Standing Committee well in their inquiry and look forward to reading of the outcomes. It is hoped that the findings of the inquiry will help contribute to improved employment opportunities and conditions for aboriginal people and communities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Searle', written in a cursive style.

Mark Searle

Chief Executive Officer