

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
MUST BE ADDRESSED TO
THE GENERAL MANAGER

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4th May 2005

RECEIVED
10 MAY 2005
BY: ATSI/A

Ms Cheryl Scarlett
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Affairs
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission No.	54
Date Received	10-5-05

Dear Ms Scarlett

Re: Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

I refer to your letter of 23rd March 2005 seeking information on the possible strengthening of Indigenous Employment.

Council has a Depot workforce of 25 to 30 people which currently includes seven Indigenous people, two employed permanently, two part time and three working on externally funded employment schemes.

From this experience, four factors have been identified which contribute to positive outcomes, as follows:-

1. Responsiveness and Flexibility

To maximise outcomes from employment schemes, Council needs to respond positively to employment proposals and to be flexible in its operations to provide suitable employment opportunities.

Employment proposals have been received on an ad-hoc basis with limited opportunity for pre planning. This is workable for Council provided the schemes include some external supervision and/or support for the participant and do not involve Council in unprogrammed expenditure.

2. Employee Support

It is understood that Indigenous employees can be exposed to harassment both in the workplace and in the community linked to their having made a choice to work. Employers need to take positive steps to train the workforce on unacceptable behaviour and to consider providing counselling as necessary.

3. Drivers Licences

The possession of a Class C drivers licence is considered a basic requirement for employment within local government. Without a licence, employees are limited in their ability to travel to the work site and to operate equipment such as tractors & mowers. A program supporting prospective Indigenous employees to attain a licence would be very helpful.

4. Continuity of Employment

Participants of employment schemes are known to be discouraged by the short term nature of the schemes. They are looking for longer term arrangements beyond three to six month term.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the inquiry. Should you require additional information or wish to discuss Councils response please phone on (03) 50 201300 or mobile 0427 201300

Yours faithfully



Roy Hetherington
Director of Infrastructure & Development
For the GENERAL MANAGER