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The Secretary
Standing Committee on Aboriginal & Torres Strait
Islander Affairs
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Email: atsia.reps@aph.gov.au

RECEIVED
10 MAY 2005
BY: ATSLA

Inquiry into Indigenous Employment

Dear Madam/Sir,

I refer to your letter requesting submissions regarding positive outcomes and best practice in Indigenous life around Australia. Bankstown City Council recently assisted the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care (DADHC) in filling a void identified in their Regional Planning process in relation to frail older Aboriginal people.

This assistance took the form of Council accepting a \$40,000 grant and employed a full-time Aboriginal Project Officer on contract (May to November, 2004), in order to establish a frail aged day care program for Aboriginal elders. The purpose of the program was to increase the capacity of a local Indigenous organisation to manage funds and operate home & community care services.

As a result of the Project Officer's employment, a frail aged day care service now operates at Condell Senior Citizen's Centre each Wednesday from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. Bankstown City Council would like to expand this service, however there is no recurrent funding forthcoming.

In addition, in November, 2004 Council adopted its Social Plan, which contains a commitment to "investigate options for funding for a Community Development Officer for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Communities". Information on funding programs such as the Elsa Dixon Program has been received. This program contributes approximately 30% of initial salary costs of the worker, however Council has not yet pursued this further due to budget restrictions.

With regards to both of these initiatives, it is important to note that one off grant situations, while they assist in setting up such programs, often do not allow for continuation of them. Further, there is evidence that a more support from the Indigenous community in general would ensure a greater success of such programs.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Joanne Green, Manager Human Resources on (02) 9707 9529.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Colley
General Manager.