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AUG 2005
BY: TISA

Mr Barry Wakelin
Chairperson
House of Representatives Standing Committee
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

15 July 2005

Dear Mr Wakelin,

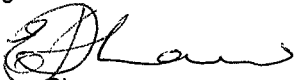
Thank you for the opportunity to address the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inquiry into Indigenous Employment on the 12th July.

In preparation for the Public Hearing I spoke to a range of people who had relevant experience on the issues within the Terms of Reference and documented their responses.

I wish to submit the attached paper on my stakeholder's responses for your perusal and considerations.

The Institute for Aboriginal Development look forward to reading the full report via Hansard and acknowledging the potential future changes for progress.

Regards



Eileen Shaw
Director
Institute for Aboriginal Development Inc.

Presentation to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs – Aboriginal Employment

12th July 2005

Aboriginal employment must continue to be strategised with a holistic approach in conjunction with education / health / housing / culture – not in isolation.

This paper is the combined considerations of staff of the Institute for Aboriginal Development.

The four differing areas should be acknowledged and strategic approaches should differ accordingly. (Youth / Adult / Rural / Urban)

YOUTH

- Are treated as adults through their passage to adulthood in Aboriginal society
- Elders prefer youth to study and work in their community to alleviate having to face alcohol / drugs / wrong kinships
- Use Adult Aborigines as role models and choose their employment paths from occupations that they see their relatives in – these are now broadening
- Aboriginal housing, health and life skills needs more support to enable good work attendance
- Work Experience (TAP) were of value so people consciously selecting an employment or career path

ADULT

- many do not have the literacy and numeracy for employment and continue educational pathways for other goals ie; ability to run their own lives
- Mainstream educational systems failed them yet with the provision of culturally appropriate educational venues they have taken up education again
- If the goals of adults is not to gain employment – the value is still there in relation to recognising the benefits of education and encouraging and supporting the next generation to achieve academic success and employment
- Aboriginal housing, health and life skills needs more support to enable good work attendance
- Aboriginal organisations need more funding to enable employees to continue education and training for a career path internally and externally
- Identified positions in State / Territory / Commonwealth Departments should continue – more support via mentoring / training – merit principle for recruitment to continue

RURAL

- Limited employment possibilities must be acknowledged – supported by government enterprise development programs to reward initiatives for small businesses
- Support required for drug and alcohol solutions ie; DASA and CAAPU should continue
- Job share and CDEP work in Aboriginal communities to ensure operations continue during absences to fulfill cultural obligations

URBAN

- Training for Aborigines Program (TAP) enabled a "buddy system" so that isolation was not such a large problem
- Support required for drug and alcohol solutions ie; DASA and CAAPU should continue
- Commonwealth government should sufficiently fund independent Aboriginal educational institutions to educate Aboriginal people to enter the workforce
- NT government should sufficiently fund recognise the value of independent Aboriginal educational providers value outside of the Desert Peoples Centre, Batchelor and Charles Darwin University
- Work Experience (TAP) were of value so people consciously selecting an employment or career path
- Job Clubs – assisting Aboriginal people through the application / interview processes worked but was discontinued
- All promotional promises during recent NT elections relating to education referred to commitments to youth with none given for adults. Currently there are a large number of disadvantaged adult Aborigines whose right it is to expect an education yet they have been failed by the mainstream education system during their school years
- Employment attendance and retention by urban Aboriginal people depends largely on their home environment being conducive to supporting them. The Life Skills Program provided theory and practical instructions and participatory learning and should be reactivated