

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 156

Topic: Closing the Gap Report

Hansard Page: 15/02/2013 - CA16

Senator Scullion asked:

Are there any particular programs or initiatives (a list) that are intended to accelerate the Closing the Gap, as identified in the most recent Prime Ministerial statement, that can be made available to the committee?

Answer:

Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage is a long-term challenge supported by significant investment by the Australian and State/Territory governments across a broad range of program and policy areas. Initiatives intended to accelerate Closing the Gap include, but are not limited to:

- Remote Jobs and Communities Program - \$1.5 billion over five years, commencing on 1 July 2013. This initiative represents a new approach to employment and community development across remote and very remote areas of Australia and includes the consolidation of a range of previously separate programs, putting in place a single provider of employment, participation and community development services in each of 59 remote servicing regions and a Community Development Fund for projects that will benefit communities and support economic and participation opportunities in the RJCP regions.
- Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory - \$3.4 billion over 10 years. This is a comprehensive ten-year plan to support Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to live strong and independent lives. The package provides funding for a range of services required to help close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage, including for:
 - Schooling
 - Health
 - Community safety and justice
 - Child, youth, family and community wellbeing
 - Tackling alcohol abuse
 - Housing
 - Municipal and essential services
 - Alice Springs transformation
 - Remote engagement and coordination.

Details of the funding for each of the measures comprising the Stronger Futures package is also outlined in the 2012-13 Budget paper Continuing Our Efforts to Close the Gap.

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- National Partnership Agreements (NPAs) with the States and Territories – covering both Indigenous-specific and mainstream areas of expenditure, these include the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing (\$5.5 billion over ten years) which is delivering 4,200 new houses and 4,876 refurbishments with the latter component already met two years ahead of schedule. The Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement (\$291.2 million over six years) aims to increase access to services for Indigenous citizens and build community governance capacity in 29 priority locations across remote Australia.