

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.2 – Assistance for Individuals including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E522_06

Senator Evans provided in writing.

Question:

Provide a brief discussion of the elements of the trial the Department is leading? What specific initiatives are being implemented.

Answer:

Elements and Initiatives of the Murdi Paaki COAG Trial

As the lead agents for the Murdi Paaki Council of Australian Governments (COAG) trial, the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education and Training (DET) have agreed to work together with the Indigenous people of the Murdi Paaki region to:

- Establish partnerships and share responsibility for achieving measurable and sustainable improvements for Indigenous people living in the Region;
- Support and strengthen local governance, decision making and accountability of all parties; and
- Learn from a shared approach – identify what works and what doesn't and apply lessons to future approaches both at the community level and more broadly.

A key element of the Murdi Paaki trial as such, is the emphasis which is placed on consultation with communities at both the local and regional level, through the region's Community Working Parties (CWPs) and the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA). Following community consultations across the region it was agreed key regional priorities fall into four broad categories:

- Improving the health and well being of children and young people;
- Improving educational attainment and school retention;
- Helping families to raise healthy children; and
- Strengthening community and regional governance structures.

At the local level, priorities are identified by the CWPs as the primary local Indigenous community governance structures. Through their Community Action Plans CWPs identify community priorities, in partner with the lead agents to address them. At the regional level, community priorities are clarified and negotiated with the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA), comprised of the 15 Chairpersons of the Murdi Paaki CWPs.

A feature of the Murdi Paaki COAG trial is the negotiation of Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) on community agreed priorities. SRAs are a means by which the governments, each community or the region agree to work together to progress specific community identified needs. There are currently 14 SRAs in place in the Murdi Paaki region, and the table attached provides an overview of initiatives which are being addressed through these agreements.

Regional SRAs		
Regional Priorities (August 2003)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving the health and well being of children and young people; 2. Improving educational attainment and school retention; 3. Helping families to raise healthy children; and 4. Strengthening community and regional governance structures. 	<u>Murdi Paaki Regional Council (MPRC)*</u> , <u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> and Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly(MPRA)
Information Technology (IT) support (3 December 2004)	To provide a computer, including software, internet access and a printer, as well as IT training to the Murdi Paaki Community Working Parties (CWPs).	<u>MPRC</u> , <u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> and MPRA.
Secretariat and Administrative Support (3 December 2004)	To provide secretariat and administrative support for Murdi Paaki CWPs.	<u>MPRC</u> , <u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , and DEWR.
Air Cooling (6 April 2005)	Installation of evaporative air cooling units in a number of communities with community owned housing. The project incorporates training for local Indigenous people in fabrication and maintenance of the units.	<u>MPRC</u> , <u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , and Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation (MPRHC), FaCS, Bourke ICC, DAA, OIPC and CDEP.
Regional Assembly (1 August 2005)	This SRA formally recognised the MPRA as the principle regional structure in the Murdi Paaki region following the cessation of the ATSIC Murdi Paaki Regional Council.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , and <u>MPRA</u>
Murdi Paaki Partnership Project (26 October 2005)	This regional SRA formally launched the joint Australian and NSW Governments Murdi Paaki Partnership Project. Through the Project eight full time community facilitators will be employed to work in a paired arrangement with two of the 16 major communities in the Murdi Paaki region.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>MPRA</u> and <u>all 15 chairs of the Murdi Paaki CWPs</u> .
Bourke Local SRAs		
Community Assistance Patrol (CAP) (3 December 2004)	CAP will work with at risk people on the streets of Bourke at night, and will provide transport to a safe, non-threatening environment.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Bourke CWP</u> , <u>Local Government (shire council)</u> , law enforcement, NSW AG's, NSW TAFE, DoCS, FaCS, AG's, DEWR
Education and Training Project (3 December 2004)	The project will examine and implement flexible, innovative approaches to the use of existing resources, to improve educational outcomes (including attendance, retention and attainment) of children and young people, and re-engagement in learning opportunities in the Bourke area.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Bourke CWP</u> , and TAFE.

*Underlining indicates that this party was a signatory to the SRA

Brewarrina (Ngemba) Local SRAs		
Re-engaging Indigenous youth (3 December 2004)	To improve educational outcomes, including attendance, retention and attainment, and improve the health and well being of children and young people by investigating and subsequently implementing educational reform.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Ngemba CWP</u> , Brewarrina Central School and OIPC.
Brewarrina Aboriginal Women's Homemaker Program (6 April 2005)	To empower the Aboriginal women of Brewarrina and contribute to the overall wellbeing of the Brewarrina community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a support network for the women of Brewarrina; • providing assistance to operate the local public school canteen with the focus on nutritional food; • eventual development of an Arts and Crafts business; and • training through TAFE. 	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Ngemba CWP</u> , Brewarrina Central School, NSW TAFE, CDEP, DEWR and OIPC.
Community Bus (August 2005)	This SRA provides for the purchase of a small bus for use by community groups.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Ngemba CWP</u> and OIPC
Maintenance of Community Parks (August 2005)	Establish two garden parks in the areas of Barwon Four and Brewarrina West with seating, tables, a BBQ and a shaded area for community gatherings.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Ngemba CWP</u> and OIPC
Enngonia Local SRA		
Distance Education Outreach program (6 April 2005)	The provision of education through an outreach program. The project will initially provide schooling Year 7 – 9 students.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> , <u>Chair Enngonia CWP</u> and CDEP.
Ivanhoe SRA Local SRA		
Ivanhoe Evaporative Cooling SRA (26 October 2005)	Under the local SRA, up to 20 evaporative air cooling units will be installed in community controlled housing stock.	<u>DEST</u> , <u>NSW DET</u> and <u>Chair Ivanhoe CWP</u> .

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