

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 1 November 2005

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(285) Output 3.1: Whole-of-Government Coordination of Policy Development and Service Delivery for Indigenous Australians

Senator Evans asked:

1. Do representative bodies exist in every region for negotiations on an RPA?
2. If not, what is the department doing to bring together such bodies?

Answer:

1. Consultations have taken place in indigenous communities about representative arrangements. It is up to Indigenous people to determine their own representative arrangements. Proposals approved to date for funding are the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly and the Ngaanyatjarra Council.
2. The Government is not imposing representative structures on Indigenous people. Extensive consultations with Indigenous groups have occurred over the past 18 months across most of the country, usually in conjunctions with the relevant State/Territory government. It is expected that a number of different types of representative bodies will emerge reflecting the diversity of locations and of Indigenous peoples around the country. Each proposal will be assessed on its own merits. The emphasis will be on engagement with government to work together to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples generally through setting priorities for joint effort through an RPA.