

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 1

COAG role

Recommendation 1

1.74 That the Council of Australian Governments, as a matter of urgency, revisit the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in order to:

- prioritise the recommendations that have not been implemented; and
- establish as a standard item on the COAG agenda the implementation of these recommendations.

Recommendation 2

1.75 That the Council of Australian Governments, as a matter of urgency:

- reaffirm petrol sniffing as a priority area under the National Framework of Principles for Delivering Services to Indigenous Australians; and
- establish a Standing Committee of COAG to monitor and evaluate programs addressing petrol sniffing and to report annually to COAG on progress.

ATSI Social Justice Commissioner role

Recommendation 3

1.76 That the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner be funded to conduct a review of the implementation of the Royal Commission and Coroners' recommendations in 12 months time and every twelve months following until the Commissioner can report that the recommendations have been sufficiently addressed.

Chapter 2

Data collection

Recommendation 4

2.57 That the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council through the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and the National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data, work to improve data collection on substance abuse including petrol, by Indigenous people as a matter of priority

Recommendation 5

2.58 That State and Territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages require that, where abuse of petrol or other inhalant is a contributing factor to a death, the inclusion of inhalant abuse and the type of inhalant used be recorded on death certificates as recommended by the Northern Territory Coroner in 1998.

Chapter 3***Indigenous Coordination Centres*****Recommendation 6**

3.65 That the Commonwealth evaluate, as a matter of urgency, the effectiveness of Indigenous Coordination Centres' implementation of the whole-of-government policy with a view to improving coordination of government programs.

Eight Point Plan**Recommendation 7**

3.67 The Committee notes that the Eight Point Plan is being developed for a designated area of Central Australia and considers that this is an important step in addressing petrol sniffing. The Committee considers that, as a matter of urgency, the Plan must be implemented more widely and that effective community consultation must be part of the implementation process. The Committee recommends that:

- the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments, as a matter of urgency, commit to the implementation of the Eight Point Plan in all areas across Australia that have a substantial petrol sniffing problem;
- a transparent strategy be developed for the Plans further implementation including timing, evaluation and adaptive management processes; and
- effective consultation be undertaken with Indigenous communities before the Plan is implemented.

Long term funding and support**Recommendation 8**

3.69 That the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments address the sporadic nature of funding and disruption of successful programs by:

- committing to longer term funding models;
- actively assisting communities to access government programs and meet the governance requirements; and
- providing long term support to successful programs in Indigenous communities.

Chapter 4

Law and policing

Recommendation 9

4.67 The Committee, in concluding that the importance of consistent policing strategies in the effective regulation of volatile substance abuse in Indigenous communities can not be understated, recommends that each State and Territory Government ensure that legislation is in place that empowers police and justice officials to intervene and prevent petrol sniffing.

Recommendation 10

4.68 That the Attorney General's Department, with the cooperation of the State and Territory Governments, conduct an audit of current legislation used to police and combat petrol sniffing with a view to ensuring a consistent and cooperative approach in legislation across all jurisdictions by 2008.

Recommendation 11

4.69 The Committee recognises that the violent acts of petrol sniffers are at times being directed towards vulnerable community members and considers that community safety and personal protection are the right of all people. The Committee therefore recommends that Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments commit to:

- continuing to implement strategies as a matter of priority to achieve a permanent police presence in all Indigenous communities;
- recruiting Aboriginal Liaison and Community Officers;
- establishing and supporting community night patrols; and
- considering multi-functional police centres as a best practice strategy.

Safe Houses

Recommendation 12

4.70 Community safe houses provide an appropriate place to temporarily house users of volatile substances and other drugs who threaten the safety of other community members. The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth conduct an audit of existing safe houses, identify Indigenous communities in need of safe houses and as a priority, provide additional funding to establish safe houses in these communities.

Recommendation 13

4.71 Women and children who are at risk of harm from intoxicated adults and sniffers need safe places to protect them from violence, hurt and abuse. The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth provide additional funding to establish safe houses, in addition to the safe houses in the previous recommendation, for women and children at risk in Indigenous communities.

Chapter 5

Community-based programs

Recommendation 14

5.61 The Committee strongly supports the development of community-based programs and recommends that State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments provide long-term funding for community-based programs and when providing funding ensure that:

- strong agency support is provided;
- programs are established which build the capacity of community members such as training in youth work and training that builds skills of program management and governance;
- appropriate levels of funding are made available to ensure the operation of youth programs during times of need, for example into the evenings and during school breaks when petrol sniffing is more prevalent; and
- adequate resources are provided for trained, skilled and committed staff to be retained in communities on a permanent basis rather than a fly-in-fly-out roster system.

Recommendation 15

5.62 The Committee recognises that there are some elements that are critical to the success of community programs and recommends that:

- government funded programs must provide for these critical elements including community ownership, the involvement of families and youth in their development and combined with the provision of essential support and expertise;
- the Commonwealth identify, evaluate and provide ongoing support to allow the continuation and further development of those community-based programs that have proven particularly successful; and
- the Commonwealth develop and implement a communication strategy that facilitates information sharing and the development of such programs in other communities.

Recommendation 16

5.63 The Committee acknowledges the success of Yuendumu programs including the Mt Theo outstation and while recognising that this model will not fit for all communities, recommends that the Commonwealth provide long term funding and support to assist other interested communities to develop similar programs.

Rehabilitation facilities

Recommendation 17

5.64 The Committee notes that as part of the Eight Point Regional Strategy for Central Australia, the Commonwealth is undertaking an assessment of the most feasible options for rehabilitation facilities for petrol sniffers. The Committee considers the provision of rehabilitation facilities for petrol sniffers a priority and recommends that Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments urgently provide adequate levels of additional funding for new and existing rehabilitation facilities.

Chapter 6

Opal fuel

Recommendation 18

6.58 That the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments establish priorities for extending the roll out of Opal fuel to the current production capacity of 20 million litres. The strategy should include:

- the identification of critical roadhouses and townships in close proximity to Opal communities;
- promotion of the Petrol Sniffing Prevention Program to roadhouse and townships; and
- identifying and combating barriers that prevent a complete roll out of Opal throughout the Central Australian region.

Recommendation 19

6.59 That the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments agree on a complementary subsidy approach that ensures Opal can retail in Queensland for the same price as regular unleaded.

Recommendation 20

6.60 That Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments develop systems to secure premium and other sniffable fuels at key roadhouses and townships which can then be applied in larger centres such as Alice Springs.

Recommendation 21

6.61 That the Commonwealth:

- undertake a study with BP Australia to determine the potential to increase the current 20 million litres production capacity at Kwinana; and
- approach other refineries to use their existing production capacity to produce Opal.

Recommendation 22

6.62 That Commonwealth Government discuss with BP Australia what role they may have to assist the distribution of information on Opal and the distribution of Opal identification stickers.

Recommendation 23

6.63 That the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments examine the procedure at Maningrida whereby contracts are used to prevent contractors bringing regular unleaded petrol into their communities and facilitate the adaptation and spread of this technique to other communities.