

Chapter 7

Future focus of the committee

7.1 This report has been prepared on the basis of written submissions and an inspection visit to three communities in Western Australia.

7.2 Submissions received so far have informed the committee of a broad range of issues facing regional and remote Indigenous communities and the inspection visit provided the opportunity for the committee to hear about and observe some of the issues that were of most concern to the people of Fitzroy Crossing, Balgo and Derby.

7.3 The committee acknowledges the diversity of Indigenous communities and the complexity of the issues that have been raised during the inquiry so far. The committee invites further submissions under its terms of reference and will conduct public hearings as well as inspection visits in a range of locations before its next report, due to be tabled in the Senate on 30 March 2009.

7.4 Future work of the committee will address a range of issues, including:

- Reporting on the Commonwealth government's response to the review of the NTER;
- Housing;
- The impact of alcohol and other substance abuse restrictions on community wellbeing, particularly on the safety of children;
- CDEP reforms;
- Mental health services;
- Access to adequate education facilities;
- Coordination of services between governments;
- Policies affecting outstations and small communities; and
- Support for Indigenous enterprise and employment.

Senator the Hon David Johnston
Chair