

Appendix 1

List of Recommendations

Recommendations from Second Report

Recommendation 1

3.27 The committee recommends that COAG make a concerted effort to improve the quality and scope of existing data collections on regional and remote Indigenous communities and urges all departments and agencies to routinely utilise the expertise of dedicated statistical agencies such as the ABS and AIHW when collecting and analysing data to ensure that it is consistent and accurate across all jurisdictions.

Recommendation 2

4.71 That the Commonwealth government increase access to alcohol and other drug detoxification, treatment and rehabilitation services across the Northern Territory, ensuring that there is ongoing support for individuals after they have accessed programs and services.

Recommendation 3

4.203 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government review its overall communication strategy for regional and remote Indigenous communities with the view to making information available to communities on an ongoing and regular basis and in an accessible way. In the instance of the SIHIP program the communication strategy should provide information on how the decision to fund housing in the priority communities was made, as well as regular information on how the construction of this new housing is progressing.

Recommendation 4

4.228 That in communities without access to a local store licensed to accept the BasicsCard, alternative arrangements should be made so that people are able to access income managed funds at their local store. This could be in the form of a temporary arrangement with the store until the licensing process can be completed.

Recommendation 5

4.232 The committee recommends that in order to be licensed as a merchant for the BasicsCard, FaHCSIA make it a condition of license that roadhouses

within the Petrol Sniffing Strategy Central Desert Region and feeder sites to this region sell Opal fuel.

Recommendation 6

4.256 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth commit to longer term program funding so that organisations can enjoy greater funding certainty and offer staff greater job security. This is especially the case in relation to organisations who have established relationships with funding bodies and good risk management strategies in place.

Recommendation 7

5.31 That the Commonwealth and South Australian governments provide additional funding and appropriate support to the Homemakers Centres in the APY Lands so that all seven centres are operating at an effective level and that the Commonwealth government consider supporting similar Homemakers Centres in other remote Indigenous communities as a matter of priority.

Recommendation 8

5.49 That the Commonwealth Attorney-General's office undertake discussions with the South Australian government with a view to the South Australian government undertaking a review of the Magistrates Court Circuit on the APY Lands to ensure its ongoing effectiveness.

Recommendation 9

5.112 Recognising that access to numeracy and literacy training in regional and remote Indigenous communities is limited but given that it plays a fundamental role, the committee recommends that the Commonwealth government, in consultation with state and territory governments, prioritise the implementation of basic and appropriate adult literacy and numeracy programs in order to address the current identified need.

Recommendation 10

5.125 The committee recommends that the Northern Territory government review the high levels of custodial sentences in the Northern Territory and the reasons for recent increases as well as determine whether the non-custodial options available to magistrates and judges are sufficient.

Recommendation 11

5.133 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government coordinates, in cooperation with the relevant states and territories, a review of the number of deaths and serious injuries caused by family violence in Indigenous communities as well as the current unmet need for appropriate facilities and resources in the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara cross border region.

Recommendations from Third Report

Recommendation 1

2.42 The committee recommends that COAG consider at its first meeting in 2010 how communication and consultation with all relevant stakeholders in the delivery of the COAG targets can be improved. Furthermore, progress in improving communication and consultation should be publicly reported.

Recommendation 2

2.68 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government take a more active role in driving reform of the criminal justice system with the aim of reducing the alarmingly high level of contact of Indigenous Australians, particularly Indigenous young people.

Recommendation 3

3.142 While recognising that some measures contain specific strategies to address workforce shortages, the committee recommends that the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments develop a comprehensive strategy to address workforce shortages in all areas associated with the NTER measures.

Recommendation 4

3.143 The committee also recommends that progress made in addressing workforce shortages should be included in the Monitoring Report.

Recommendation 5

4.22 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth support the Western Australian Police in continuing to ensure that the message to use greater discretion in policing in remote communities is communicated to and well understood by officers in the field and that they have the appropriate guidelines, training and support to do so.

Recommendation 6

4.46 The committee recommends that all Commonwealth, state and territory government departments provide appropriate remuneration packages to staff in remote communities in order to attract and retain a skilled workforce.

Recommendation 7

4.55 The committee recommends that the Western Australian government consider conducting a comprehensive analysis of non-custodial sentencing options to reduce the unacceptably high incarceration rates in regional and remote Indigenous communities, with particular attention to the social and economic costs and benefits of alternatives and the factors driving significantly high rates of reoffending.

Recommendation 8

4.66 The committee recommends that the Western Australian government consider undertaking an audit of the substance and scale of rehabilitation programs and post-custodial release programs to address the unacceptably high rate of Indigenous recidivism in the state.

Recommendation 9

4.67 The committee recommends that the Western Australian government consider developing a comprehensive, culturally appropriate strategy to address Indigenous incarceration rates and recidivism that is based on sound international and domestic evidence.

Recommendation 10

4.78 The committee recommends that COAG increase the level of consultation and engagement with local governments in formulating its strategy to deliver cost-effective and appropriate municipal services to remote communities and develop an explicit communication strategy to ensure that local government in Western Australia is aware of its responsibilities.

Recommendation 11

4.102 As a matter of urgency, the committee recommends that all levels of government clarify who is to provide municipal services to remote Indigenous communities and arrange for the adequate resourcing of these services.

Recommendation 12

4.157 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth work with the Western Australian government to support the development of an explicit plan to ensure that alcohol restrictions in regional and remote communities, including Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek, be supported by adequate rehabilitation and community support services to address alcohol addiction and problem drinking.

4.158 The committee further recommends that the plan include a consistent approach to alcohol management that includes effective community consultation and decision making.

Recommendation 13

4.163 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments work together to ensure that adequate and long term funding and support for the for the youth service in Balgo is provided.

Recommendation 14

4.184 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth considers the development of a communication strategy to provide simple, practical advice to parents and guardians caring for a child with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and that the status of FASD as a recognised disability is clarified to ensure that parents, caregivers, schools and communities are able to provide adequate support to children with FASD.

Recommendations from Fourth Report

Recommendation 1

2.28 The committee recommends that all Australian Government and state/territory agencies, provide the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare with reports and publications as they are published, as well as statistics on an annual basis, to ensure that the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse is a relevant evidence base for policy makers.

Recommendation 2

2.43 The committee recommends that the COAG work on the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Indigenous Communities include an analysis of alternative agriculture to improve the affordability, quality and availability of fresh fruit and vegetables in regional and remote Indigenous communities.

Recommendation 3

2.50 The committee recommends that the Australian Government expand the remit of the Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services' reporting mandate for basic service and infrastructure in all regional and remote Indigenous communities with over 200 residents. The committee considers that the Coordinator General should be afforded additional resources to undertake such an expanded reporting role.

Recommendation 4

2.57 The committee notes the consultation being undertaken in developing local implementation plans but considers that as a matter of practice, consultation plans which are not readily accessible to the public should be made public prior to consultation being undertaken.

Recommendation 5

2.72 The committee recommends that on a monthly basis the Australian Government publish the number and location of new, rebuilt or refurbished homes completed under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing program.

Recommendation 6

2.73 The committee also recommends that the Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services conduct a detailed analysis of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing in his next six monthly report.

Recommendation 7

2.118 Noting the success of the Sporting Chance Program, the committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate programs for other extra curricular activities such as a program for students interested in the arts.

Recommendation 8

2.176 The committee recommends that the evaluation mechanisms that underpin COAG's investment of the \$100 million Tackling Smoking initiative be publicly released to ensure that this funding provides a tangible difference on the ground in communities.

Recommendation 9

2.219 Given the evidence that the committee has received about problems with funding models, the committee considers that COAG should expedite implementation of the Coordinator General for Remote Indigenous Services' recommendation to examine the use of more flexible funding approaches which aggregate departmental funding into a master contract with each National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery community.

Recommendation 10

3.15 The committee recommends that all state and territory governments consider the publication of a Quarterly Report in line with that published by the Queensland Government and that this information feed into the Council of Australian Governments baseline data collection process.

Recommendation 11

3.34 The committee recommends that the evaluation of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial be made public to inform other governments about the results of the program and its applicability to other regional and remote Indigenous communities.

Recommendation 12

3.84 The committee recommends that the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs expand the policy on attendance currently in the draft Indigenous Education Action Plan to include the need for measures that facilitate reintegration of students who have missed large amounts of schooling but recommence attending school as the result of attendance measures.

Recommendation 13

3.248 The committee recommends that the Australian Health Ministers Conference develop a framework specifying interoperability between social and emotional wellbeing services and clinical mental health services.

Recommendation 14

3.361 The committee recommends that Queensland Corrections consider including routine hearing assessments in the induction and assessment process for persons newly entering the corrective services system.

Recommendations from Final Report

Recommendation 1

2.59 The committee recommends the establishment of a Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs by the Parliament of Australia.

2.60 The committee further recommends that a Senate Select Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs be established in the 43rd Parliament until such a Joint Standing Committee is established.