



Ms T Matulick
Committee secretary
Senate Select Committee on
Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

DOC 08/69721

Dear Ms Matulick

I write in response to your letter of 2 December 2008, regarding the Senate Select Committee on Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities' *Inquiry into regional and remote Indigenous communities*.

I am pleased to make a submission on behalf of TAFE NSW. The attached submission has been emailed, as requested to indig.sen@aph.gov.au.

The TAFE NSW contact officer is Ms Kathy Rankin, General Manager, Training and Education Support. Ms Rankin will be available to appear before the Committee to give evidence, if required. Her contact details are: telephone number (02) 9561 1173, facsimile number (02) 9561 1123 and email address kathy.rankin@tafensw.edu.au.

I look forward to the report from this important inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Marie Persson
Deputy Director-General
TAFE and Community Education

10 February 2009

**SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL AND REMOTE INDIGENOUS
COMMUNITIES
INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL AND REMOTE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES**

**TAFE NSW SUBMISSION TO THE
FEBRUARY 2009**

Submitted by:

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TAFE NSW provides comments (below) on the Terms of Reference within its purview.

Term of Reference (b) The impact of state and territory government policies on the well being of regional and remote Indigenous communities

1. The NSW Government response to recommendations of the 2003 Summit on Alcohol Abuse, in the area of developing the capacity of the drug and alcohol workforce, included a focus on the Indigenous workforce. The Government has implemented a number of strategies to build the capacity of workers who provide alcohol and other drug services to Aboriginal communities in NSW.
2. The Board of Vocational Education and Training funded a TAFE NSW proposal to develop and deliver targeted customised training for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health workers in rural and remote as well as metropolitan areas of NSW. The TAFE training is designed to build foundation skills, facilitate the achievement of national qualifications and create learning pathways for Aboriginal health sector staff who deal with alcohol and other drugs issues.
3. TAFE NSW worked with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council on the project to develop a customised *Statement of Attainment in Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drug Work* based on three national units of competency and accompanying resources. Culturally appropriate delivery and assessment strategies were also developed. As part of the project in 2006, courses were delivered to participants in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Port Macquarie and Sydney, with an overall completion rate of 98 per cent. The project evaluation included a number of recommendations considered essential for the conduct of similar future projects:
 - specialist Aboriginal units work with 'mainstream' services throughout the project
 - training be developed in a culturally appropriate manner

- non-Aboriginal staff undertake Aboriginal cultural awareness training prior to working on projects
- regular meetings be held to plan and review progress
- resource development include input from Aboriginal representatives from various parts of NSW to ensure that rural and metropolitan perspectives and the various cultural contexts of Aboriginal communities are incorporated
- resources and courses be endorsed by the Aboriginal organisation to assure the Aboriginal community that the course is culturally appropriate, meaningful and respectful
- promotion and recruitment of participants be conducted through respected Aboriginal community and organisational networks
- where possible, the most effective methodology for delivery is for a 'lead' Aboriginal teacher to work with another Aboriginal teacher or non-Aboriginal teacher, who has undertaken cultural awareness training and works with Aboriginal participants in a culturally secure manner.

Since the completion of this project, the *Statement of Attainment in Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drug Work* has also been delivered by TAFE NSW in Boggabilla, Deniliquin and Orange, with funding provided by TAFE NSW.

4. In 2008-09, TAFE NSW-Illawarra Institute is funded to undertake a needs assessment with the local Aboriginal community to determine the community's training needs in the area of Alcohol and Other Drugs.

5. TAFE NSW provides a range of courses and programs to support the learning needs of young mothers and young women who are sole parents. At TAFE NSW-Western Institute a course for very young Aboriginal mothers, *Bush Babies*, was developed in early 2007 and delivered in 2008 at the Institute's Orange College. The outcomes for the 2008 *Bush Babies* at Orange were: 12 young women enrolled in the program with two withdrawing during the year. Four participants successfully completed all units of competency and six participants will complete outstanding units in early 2009. Of the four participants who completed the program, one has applied for a welfare-related position with the Department of Community Services and one has applied to join the NSW Police Force. Four of the participants from last year's offering are continuing their study in 2009 as Diploma students. The program is being replaced by similar programs in 2009, subject to demand. The TAFE NSW-North Coast Institute delivered the *Footsteps Forward* program. It provided training and support to young mothers in parenting skills, health, finance and in literacy and numeracy to enable them to access further education. The program was delivered in partnership with a range of community agencies including Community Health, Department of Community Service, Families First, Mission Australia and Durri Aboriginal Medical Service. As a result of this program a supported playground was initiated through a local agency which continues to provide ongoing support to young mothers.

6. A federally funded research program is operating through a partnership between TAFE NSW - Riverina and Western Institutes, Batchelor Institute (in the Northern Territory) and Charles Sturt University. It is looking at pathways for education and training in early childhood, especially for Indigenous workers. The program will audit

the pathway from TAFE to University, develop training models and resources, and then deliver a pilot program in mid-2010.

7. The Department of Education and Training's *Aboriginal Education and Training Policy* recognises the important role education and training plays in the employability and well being of Indigenous citizens and communities. TAFE NSW offers a range of courses in regional and rural areas to address this policy. The courses provide targeted training and skills for employment and enterprise opportunities for Indigenous learners including:

- Certificate III in Education Support – Aboriginal (an Indigenous persons -only course)
- Certificate III in Vocational and Study Pathways (an Indigenous persons -only course). It is designed to provide Indigenous people with skills and knowledge for entry into a range of vocational and also study pathways. In particular, learners are able to meet the entry requirements for NSW Police Service, Department of Corrective Services, NSW Ambulance Services and employment in other government agencies
- Diploma in Aboriginal Studies provides Indigenous people (and non Indigenous people) with knowledge about their cultures/heritage and a pathway to University and/or employment in sectors such as Education, Health/Community Services, Tourism/Arts and Governance/Leadership
- Certificate II in Skills for Work provides a pathway to work, community participation, and further education and training (for example, the Certificate in General and Vocational Education (a Year 10 equivalent qualification), the Certificate III in Employment, Education and Training, and training package qualifications). For Indigenous learners, specific Indigenous content and units can be incorporated to meet the needs of local Aboriginal learners and communities
- TAFE Statement in Pathways to Education and Employment is designed to increase access to education, training and/or employment for offenders, including Indigenous offenders, being supervised on community based legal orders. The course assists learners to identify realistic education/employment options and appropriate educational pathways, and provides basic skills and the confidence to pursue work opportunities
- TAFE Statement of Attainment in Mentoring includes units of competency with specific Indigenous content that are relevant for Aboriginal mentor training. The training is relevant to a range of community Government vocational and education settings and has been adopted by Centrelink as a strategy to retain and support their Aboriginal staff.

Term of Reference (c) The health, welfare, education and security of children in regional and remote Indigenous communities

The Department of Education and Training is the lead agency in a number of Actions in the *Interagency Plan To Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities*. Action 72 focuses on the development of strategies to build the school counsellor/student support workforce to meet the needs of Aboriginal students and victims.

In its response to Action 72, TAFE NSW has included advice on child sexual assault issues, endorsed by the Department's Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate, in all TAFE NSW's human services courses and units relating to child protection.

TAFE NSW has commenced the development of a training program, Statement of Attainment in Aboriginal Sexual Assault Counselling. The program targets generalist community services and health workers in both government and non-government organisations and members of Aboriginal communities who are involved in child sexual assault issues. It is anticipated the development of the training program will be completed in 2009.

Term of Reference (d) The employment and enterprise opportunities in regional and remote Indigenous communities

TAFE NSW used Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program funding to develop and deliver a highly successful retail training program for secondary schools, targeting rural and remote Aboriginal youth in Year 10 in the New England district of NSW. While highly successful, the Program did not continue as recurrent funding was not available.

Strategies used in the program contributing to the Program's success included:

- Ongoing involvement and support of all stakeholders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, for the duration of the Program
- Participation of Aboriginal people in the project planning, design and delivery of the Program
- Use of a model of integrated classroom learning with highly structured work placements
- Off-the-job training included an online virtual classroom allowing online interaction between students and school sites which are geographically distant from one another
- The employment of an Aboriginal project officer for the duration of the program who managed the selection of students, the organisation of induction and block release study, visits to schools, Aboriginal communities and retail outlets participating in the program
- Use of support and involvement of the community.

The TAFE NSW contact officer is Ms Kathy Rankin, General Manager Training and Education Support. Ms Rankin will be available to appear before the Committee to give evidence, if required. Ms Rankin's contact details are: telephone number (02) 9561 1173, facsimile number (02) 9561 1123 and email address kathy.rankin@tafensw.edu.au.