

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Government Senators' Dissenting Report

The Government Members of the Committee are pleased to present their Interim Report on the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission Amendment Bill 2004.

The Government Members are disappointed that the majority Interim Report provides no information other than the number of submissions received and public hearings conducted.

The majority Interim Report does not mention that in the submissions and hearings there has been little support expressed for ATSIC. The Chairman of the Committee has already made this finding public through the media.

The leader of the ALP has said that ATSIC should be abolished and therefore agrees with the Government's position as outlined in the Bill.

The Bill does nothing more than abolish the ATSIC Board and provide a year for consultation to arrive at more acceptable representative arrangements to replace ATSIC at the regional level.

The Government Members believe therefore that the Bill should be returned to the Parliament for passage as soon as possible. The Committee could, if it chose, continue its deliberations on service delivery and replacement options on the basis that any further legislative or administrative changes thought necessary could be left to an incoming Government.

Senator Nigel Scullion

And on behalf of:

Senator David Johnston (Deputy Chair)
Senator Bill Heffernan

31 August 2004