



Australian Government
**Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations**

National Office

GPO Box 9879 CANBERRA ACT 2601

Mr Jonathan Curtis
Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Curtis

Please find enclosed the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations response to questions on notice from the Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Henry".

Rhonda Henry
Assistant Secretary
Indigenous Policy Branch

18 February 2005

Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 01

Question:

Would the Department care to comment on remarks made to the Committee by the Manager of CDEP at Moree when asked about any differences in implementation of CDEP since its move to DEWR? The Manager claimed that field officers were not able to come out and visit where they previously were. He also said that the local ICC representative was unable to make decisions (potentially with the benefit of local knowledge) and that only the state representative was able to do so.

Response:

Visits by DEWR staff to CDEPs are an important part of contract management and programme management responsibilities. The comments are being followed up with our New South Wales Office.

In relation to CDEP programme decision making the delegation rests with DEWR State Managers. Prior to exercising delegations State Managers rely on advice provided by DEWR ICC staff and contract managers to ensure that the benefit of local knowledge and community contact is incorporated into any decision relating to CDEP.

Following the transfer of the CDEP programme from ATSSIS to DEWR the initial priority has been to ensure a smooth transition with minimal disruption to participants, organisations and communities. This has been successfully achieved.

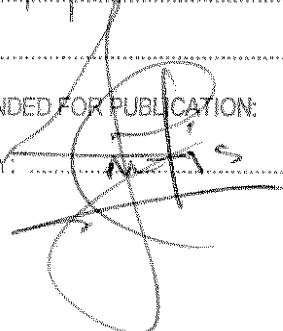
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
ADMINISTRATION OF INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

REC'D: 18/2/05

FROM:

RECOMMENDED FOR PUBLICATION:

SECRETARY:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink is written over the 'FROM:', 'RECOMMENDED FOR PUBLICATION:', and 'SECRETARY:' fields. The signature appears to be 'M. J. S.' with a large loop at the bottom. The date '18/2/05' is written in the 'REC'D:' field.

Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 02

Question:

How do you believe such changes have impacted on the capacity of local CDEP to deliver an effective service?

Response:

Refer to DEWR - 01

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 03

Question:

What studies looking into the viability of Indigenous labour markets does DEWR do for each CDEP?

Response:

DEWR produces a range of labour market data which is made publicly available. DEWR also undertakes labour market analysis to identify areas where CDEP organisations may be contracted as Indigenous Employment Centres and is developing a regional database for information covering labour market supply and demand information. This information is being used to support workshops to identify opportunities to improve workforce participation and employment outcomes in local labour markets.

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 04

Question:

How do such studies inform the implementation of CDEP in each area?

Response:

The use of local information on labour market demand will play an important role in identifying job opportunities for CDEP participants in the future. This information will be available to DEWR staff in both Indigenous Coordination Centres and DEWR Regional Offices.

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 05

Question:

If such studies are not done, on what basis does DEWR judge that Indigenous employment opportunities are available as are required to make CDEP a success and reach DEWR goals of employment equity?

Response:

See response to DEWR 03.

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 06

Question:

One of the most experienced researchers on Indigenous Australia is Jon Altman of ANU. He has said that the re-allocation of programs from ATSIC to departments is 'rewarding departments that have not performed and penalising ATSIC in many areas where it has performed. It is unclear what mechanisms have been put in place to ensure accountability by mainline departments to administer these Indigenous specific programs more effectively than ATSIC between 1990 and 2004'. What mechanisms is your agency working with that will ensure greater accountability than under ATSIC?

Response:

DEWR does not accept this comment. By far the highest employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians are achieved through mainstream Job Network services, with high levels of accountability for performance.

For 2004-05, it is estimated that Job Network will achieve around 36,000 job placements for Indigenous Australians, representing around 5.4% of all job placements.

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Hearing of 4 February 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 07

Question:

How will your agency provide greater transparency than ATSIC did in showing who gets what resources in the Indigenous programs in your portfolio?

Response:

All programmes and services administered by DEWR are subject to a high level of public accountability through the publication of performance targets in Portfolio Budget Statements, performance results in the Annual Report as well as regular published reports on the outcomes of employment programmes - including Indigenous specific programmes.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 08

Question:

Worldwide research on Indigenous service delivery indicates that Indigenous control is central to program success. How will your Indigenous programs be controlled by Indigenous people? What evidence can you point to in your areas of responsibility that suggests your department is more appropriate to administer your programs than would be an Indigenous-controlled organisation such as ATSIC or a successor to ATSIC?

Response:

DEWR continues to invest in community organisations through many of its programmes. For example, CDEP, Job Network and the Structured Training and Employment Projects all contract community organisations to deliver services.

DEWR has committed to working with other Government agencies in a whole-of-Government approach to ensure that Indigenous communities are an integral part of the process to put in place Shared Responsibility Agreements.

The final report of the ATSIC Review of November 2003 found a number of issues:

- A leadership deficit at the national level;
- A lack of coordination between the national and regional and local levels;
- Duplication and overlap in roles and responsibilities between levels of government and uncoordinated service delivery;
- A need for outcomes focused arrangement to drive performance in service delivery to Indigenous people;
- Insufficient or no genuine local level engagement with Indigenous people; and
- A need for greater accountability and scrutiny of performance

Employment service providers contracted by DEWR have a record of achievement in servicing Indigenous Australians. In 2003-04, Job Network placed 22,000 Indigenous Australians into employment.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 09

Question:

What evidence is there that mainstreaming provides opportunities that were not already present?

Response:

The Framework for the new arrangements is based on five key principles:

- collaboration between Australian Government agencies
- leadership from Ministers, senior agency staff and Indigenous representative bodies
- flexibility in the allocation of funds to meet emerging needs and priorities
- a focus on need at the regional level taking into account the diverse circumstances in different regions
- enhanced accountability to ensure that Indigenous people receive value for money from programmes directed to them

DEWR has achieved considerable success in drawing on mainstream services to contribute to Indigenous-specific strategies that result in improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes, such as the record 22,000 Indigenous job placements achieved during 2003-04. For example, the Indigenous Employment Policy draws on mainstream Job Network services and supplements them with Indigenous-specific programmes such as Structured Training and Employment Projects, the Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Programme and the Indigenous Small Business Fund to provide support and tailored services to Indigenous job seekers.

The new arrangements will provide an opportunity to extend this success through the co-location of key employment and business development programmes in a single portfolio, combined with an agreed whole of government approach which will see all agencies focus on how they can best contribute to flexible responses to meet the priorities of Indigenous Australians on a regional basis. The Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations has also foreshadowed consultation on possible improvements to CDEP aimed at improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians, including through better linkages with mainstream services and resources.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 10

Question:

AIATSIS has recommended that agreements entered into with Indigenous Organisations contain substantive commitments, including timetables, resource commitments and implementation plans (submission 144, p.4). Is your agency entering into agreements with Indigenous organisations? Do they include these features?

Response:

The nature of agreements are specific to individual circumstances. Nevertheless, it would be normal that contractual arrangements involving public funds would contain substantive commitments including timetables, resource commitments and implementation plans.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 11

Question:

What coordination took place between IBA and your agency on business development related programs before the mainstreaming of services? Has that changed as a result of the new arrangements?

Response:

Prior to 1 July 2004, coordination between IBA and the department on business development related programs was on an as required basis. For example:

- Departmental staff would, where appropriate, refer any enquiries on larger business development projects to IBA.
- DEWR and IBA developed relevant recruitment and training strategies in businesses funded by IBA. For a period, both agencies shared costs of staff dedicated to maximising opportunities within IBA funded businesses and other businesses which IBA might be able to influence.

Since the new Indigenous Servicing arrangements have been in place there have been regular meetings between DEWR and IBA to better integrate the business services provided by both organisations. For example:

- An agency agreement has been entered into between the Commonwealth represented by DEWR and IBA in relation to the Business Development Programme (BDP) which was also transferred to DEWR as part of the mainstreaming of services. The agreement provides for IBA to assist in the management and delivery of the BDP pending the transition of the programme to IBA.
- IBA and DEWR have also worked closely together in the development of Indigenous economic development directions.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 12

Question:

When will your agency have in place the reporting arrangements for measurement and assessment of its new programs (first bullet point, p.54 of the Whole of Government submission)?

Response:

DEWR currently has reporting arrangements in place for the CDEP Programme as per the 2004-05 Performance Funding Agreement between DEWR and CDEP Service Providers where the Service Providers are required to report on achievement of objectives and describe outcomes.

In the 2005-06 financial year, DEWR will be a partner in the Commonwealth's Whole of Government common funding process. Reporting arrangements for this process are currently being developed, and will be in place for the Common Funding Agreement 2005-06.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 13

Question:

Senator Carr asked at *Hansard* page No 23:

Of the staff which transferred to DEWR from ATSI/ATSIC, how many were Indigenous?

Response:

The number of Indigenous staff which transferred to DEWR from ATSI/ATSIC is 81.

Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 14

Question:

Senator Carr and Nettle asked at *Hansard* page No 20, 23-24, 34:

What was the breakdown of Indigenous staff (by classification) before ATSI/ATSIS staff transferred to DEWR and what is the breakdown now?

Response:

Please find below a breakdown of Indigenous staff (by classification) in DEWR as at 30 June 2004 (that is, before ATSI/ATSIS staff transferred to DEWR).

Classification	Total
APS2	2
APS3	18
APS4	10
APS5	12
APS6	19
CADET	3
EXEC1	11
EXEC2	2
GRAD APS	2
Grand Total	79

Please find below a breakdown of Indigenous staff (by classification) in DEWR as at 11 February 2005.

Classification	Total
APS1	6
APS2	7
APS3	29
APS4	30
APS5	36
APS6	25
CADET	1
EXEC1	18
EXEC2	5
Grand Total	157

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 15

Question:

Senator Nettle asked at *Hansard* page No 20:

One senior public relations officer transferred to DEWR from ATSIIC. Has this person been tasked to do work not relating to Indigenous issues?

Response:

It is unclear to whom this question relates. Several public relations staff transferred to DEWR from ATSIIC.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 16

Question:

Senator Johnston asked at *Hansard* page No 23:

- a) What is the job market on Palm Island? and
- b) What are DEWRs responsibilities on Palm Island?

Response:

a) There is a high rate of unemployment and very few long-term employment opportunities on Palm Island. There is no major industry on the island and many of the public works programmes that are undertaken by the State Government require skilled tradespersons. There are few resident tradespersons and these projects provide only limited opportunities for labourers, trainees and apprentices.

The largest employer on Palm Island is the Palm Island Aboriginal Council. Due to financial difficulties in 2004, the Palm Island Aboriginal Council undertook a redundancy programme to significantly reduce the number of existing Council staff. The Council also reduced their public works programme. As a direct result of this action there are fewer opportunities to develop projects on the island which provide employment opportunities for residents.

b) DEWR funds the Coolgaree Aboriginal Corporation to deliver the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) on Palm Island. Coolgaree is currently funded for a total of 295 places which includes 258 places on the Island and the remainder for Palm Island residents who currently reside in Townsville.

A Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA) is currently being developed with the Palm Island community which will support a Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP) funding contract with the Coolgaree CDEP. This project will provide training and employment for up to 30 CDEP participants undertaking community parks and gardens projects. The project is being developed in conjunction with Coolgaree CDEP, Palm Island Aboriginal Council and the Queensland State Government's Community Renewal initiative.

Job Network is represented by Jobfind Centre who have a full time site on Palm Island which is staffed by a local resident and supported by a senior officer from Townsville who visits Palm Island on a weekly basis to provide on-going training and support to the local staff.

The Townsville based Community Work Coordinator, Success Employment and Training works closely with Jobfind and has established a project on Palm Island.

DEWR has previously funded a number of Indigenous Employment Programme projects on Palm Island including:

1. Palm Island Aboriginal Council Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP) which provided employment for up to 48 Indigenous jobseekers as part of the ATSIC Army Community Assistance Program (AACAP).
2. Palm Island Aboriginal Council STEP which provided employment for up to 10 apprentices in a range of building and construction trades on QBuild (Queensland State Government) projects on Palm Island.
3. Coolgaree CDEP STEP which provided employment for up to 10 apprentices in a range of building and construction trades on public works projects on Palm Island.
4. Coolgaree CDEP Indigenous Small Business Fund (ISBF) which provided funding for the engagement of a consultant to complete a business plan for the Palm Island sea sponges aquaculture project.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 17

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 24:

Can DEWR provide copies of the Indigenous Employment Policy (IEP) evaluation to the committee?

Response:

Yes. Copies of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 evaluations have been forwarded to the Committee Secretariat.

**Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 18

Question:

Senator Carr asked on *Hansard* page 27:

Did DEWR receive instruction from Minister Ruddock that all Indigenous funded programs should adopt a purchaser-provider model?

Note: Senator Carr stated that Minister Ruddock wrote to the Prime Minister on 7 April 2003 stating that Indigenous funded program grants will adopt purchase/provider model?

Response:

No.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 19

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 29:

What locations are DEWR trialling the lifting of Remote Area Exemptions?

Response:

DEWR is currently trialling the lifting of Remote Area Exemptions in Yirrkala and the Tiwi Islands.

There are a number of other communities involved in trials being administered by the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC).

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 20

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 31-32:

Did the Government adopt the ATSIC CDEP Policy of March 2004?

Response:

No.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 21

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 32-33:

Did ATSIC undertake a major review of CDEP in the last 18 months? If so, can DEWR provide the Committee with a copy of the review?

Response:

The review of CDEP undertaken by ATSIC was part of an ongoing policy development process and did not result in any report.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 22

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 33:

How is your department going to seek feedback from communities?

Response:

DEWR utilises several mechanisms to consult with and receive feedback from Indigenous people. The main mechanism is through regular visits to Indigenous communities and service providers by DEWR staff members. DEWR has a presence in all Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs) throughout Australia. The ICCs will be DEWRs first point of contact for Indigenous communities.

Other mechanisms used by DEWR include:

- The National Indigenous Council
- National Employment Services Association Indigenous Special Interest Group (ISIG);
- Indigenous Employment Centres (IEC) Consultative Committees;
- IEC Regional Workshops;
- National IEC Conference;
- Regular Programme Evaluations;
- COAG Trials; and
- DEWR Complaints Line

On 21 February 2005, the Hon Kevin Andrews MP is planning to launch a comprehensive consultation process on the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP). Face to face consultations will be held in 37 locations across Australia. This will give people an opportunity to discuss and provide direct feedback about future directions for CDEP.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 23

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 33-34:

What communities have relevant members of the DEWR Executive visited since July 2004?

Response:

Relevant members of the DEWR Executive have visited the following communities since July 2004 to hold discussions with Indigenous Australians:

- Shepparton, VIC
- Cape York, QLD (several communities)
- Toor-Rong Aboriginal Corporation, Healesville VIC
- Gordonvale, QLD
- Mornington Island, QLD
- Wollongong-Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, Windang, NSW
- Nowra - Shoalhaven Community Development, NSW
- Moruya-Cobowra CDEP Aboriginal Corporation, NSW
- Wallaga Lake CDEP, NSW
- Adelaide CDEP, SA
- Robinvale, VIC
- Horsham, VIC
- Warnambool, VIC
- Sale, VIC
- Bairnsdale, VIC
- Mildura, VIC
- PEEDAC CDEP, Perth
- Broome, WA
- Cairns, QLD
- Dhugamin CDEP, Harvey Bay, QLD

DEWR is the lead agent for both Shepparton and Cape York in the COAG Trials. As such, members of the DEWR Executive have made frequent visits to communities in these regions.

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EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question Number: DEWR - 24

Question:

Senator Crossin asked at *Hansard* page No 34:

How many Secretaries Group meetings have occurred since July 2004 and who attended each meeting?

Response:

There have been seven meetings of the Secretaries Group since July 2004.

Date	Attended by
6 July 2004	Bob Correll attended as acting Secretary
3 August 2004	Peter Boxall
7 September 2004	Peter Boxall
5 October 2004	Peter Boxall
2 November 2004	Peter Boxall
12 November 2004	Peter Boxall
1 February 2005	Peter Boxall