



Queensland
Government

Premier of Queensland
and Minister for Trade

Please quote: MN44507 & MN 45774/RG07/Social Policy

- 9 JUL 2003

Senator Nick Bolkus
Chair
Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600


Dear Senator Bolkus

Thank you for your e-mail of 22 May 2003 and your letter of 29 May 2003 concerning the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee (the committee) inquiry into the progress towards national reconciliation.

Your e-mail suggests that none of the States or Territories have made a submission to the inquiry. However, I wish to confirm that I wrote to the committee on 2 October 2002 providing information about my Government's commitment to reconciliation.

On 26 May 2003, I launched four projects under the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan. These projects included: a communications campaign targeting businesses, sporting organisations, schools and government; reconciliation awards for business and tourism to showcase reconciliation activities in business contexts; a reconciliation business forum to promote reconciliation action to business leaders; and, a leadership program targeting young Indigenous leaders. Details of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan and projects are available from www.reconciliation.qld.gov.au.

Your letter seeks further advice about details of programs aimed at addressing Indigenous disadvantage. For your information, I previously forwarded to the committee a copy of "Meeting Challenges, Making Choices", the summary of the Queensland Government response to the Cape York Justice Study. The response addresses eight domains of activity including: Alcohol, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation; Children, Youth and Families; Crime and Justice; Governance; Economic Development; Health; Education and Training; and, Land and Sustainable Natural Resource Management. Further information about the Cape York Justice Study and the response is available from www.indigenous.qld.gov.au/mcmc.htm.

Executive Building
100 George Street Brisbane
PO Box 185 Brisbane Albert Street
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3224 4500

A key project identified in "Meeting Challenges, Making Choices" is the review of Indigenous Community Governance currently being undertaken by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DATSIP). The review aims to identify the most appropriate legislative model for community governance. It was motivated by concerns expressed in the Cape York Justice Study about accountability in community councils and the concentration of power vested in certain interest groups within Aboriginal community councils. Details of this project are available from www.indigenous.qld.gov.au/publications/green_paper.htm.

The Queensland Government has also undertaken important work to address issues relating to Indigenous homelessness, public drunkenness and use of public space. Regional blueprints for action have been developed with a range of initiatives such as: enhanced Queensland Government service responses including case management; community patrols that will link in with services; tenancy and living skills programs; improved availability of medium term accommodation; and, assessing the feasibility of safe gathering places. Details of this work are available from www.indigenous.qld.gov.au/publications/homeless.htm.

Finally, the Queensland Government has developed a monitoring and evaluation strategy for "Meeting Challenges, Making Choices" including a performance monitoring framework and an evaluation project being undertaken over the next two and half years. These two projects will work closely with the Commonwealth Government's evaluation of the COAG Trial Site in Cape York. In addition, the Queensland Government has participated along with other jurisdictions and the Productivity Commission in the development of a framework for reporting on Indigenous disadvantage. It is anticipated that the first report from this initiative will be available later this year.

I trust this information is useful. If you require further information about any of these matters, please contact Ms Anna Moynihan, Director, Social Policy, Department of the Premier and Cabinet on (07) 3404 3649.

Yours sincerely



PETER BEATTIE MP
PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR TRADE