



Premier of Queensland

For reply please quote: MN157375/PD16/IGR

18 APR 2008

Senator Trish Crossin
Chair
Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
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Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Dear Senator Crossin

Thank you for your letter of 18 March 2008 inviting the Queensland Government to participate in the *Inquiry into the Stolen Generation Compensation Bill 2008*.

First, may I reiterate the Queensland Government's full support for the parliamentary apology made by the Prime Minister in the Commonwealth Parliament on 13 February 2008. The national apology follows the Queensland parliamentary apology made by my predecessor, the Honourable Peter Beattie, in 1999.

The Inquiry is seeking information in relation to compensation schemes introduced in other jurisdictions to compare with that proposed by Senator Bartlett. As you may be aware, the Queensland Government has in recent years introduced two significant compensation schemes. Brief details are outlined below. In providing this information, the Queensland Government is not expressing a view on the policy merits or otherwise of Senator Bartlett's proposal.

In 2002, the former Premier set aside \$55 million to be used as reparations for Indigenous Queenslanders whose wages or savings were controlled by previous Governments (the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparations Scheme). After the initial allocation of this funding, less than \$20 million had been distributed; consequently, in March this year I announced that successful claimants would be eligible for further reparations payments under the scheme with the remaining funds used to provide annual scholarships to up to 140 young Indigenous Queenslanders.

In addition to this scheme, in May 2007 as Deputy Premier I announced the \$100 million Redress Scheme for children who were abused in institutional care in Queensland. The scheme completed the Queensland Government's response to the Forde Inquiry into the Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions. Through the scheme, payments will be made to people who experienced abuse or neglect as



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children in a detention centre or licensed institution in Queensland as covered by the terms of reference of the Forde Inquiry.

For further information, please see the attached Ministerial Statements referring to these matters.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this inquiry.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area.

ANNA BLIGH MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

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Premier

The Honourable Anna Bligh

Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Qld Premier endorses national apology

Statement by Premier Anna Bligh to the Queensland Parliament today:

"Today is a day of national significance.

It is a powerful and emotional day for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians alike. A day when we as a nation consciously make our own history.

This morning I was pleased to attend a breakfast reception held at Parliament House for Indigenous leaders and members of the Stolen Generation and their families.

This was an emotional experience for all present – I was overcome by emotion as I addressed the people in the room. This morning the faces that were looking back at me were all filled with tears.

Again it struck me that the pain being acknowledged today is not ancient history – it is a raw and ever present reality for so many Queenslanders who live in our neighbourhoods and whom we represent as part of our electorates.

There were many hurting hearts in that room, as there are right across the country, and the power of that emotion was tangible.

This morning I acknowledge the presence in the public gallery of those Indigenous Queenslanders who have attended Parliament for this momentous occasion.

Today this country took an historic step towards true, national reconciliation.

Today, the Federal Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, has made an unreserved apology to Indigenous Australians who were members of the Stolen Generation, to their families, and to their descendants and recognised that every one of them had been affected in their own way.

In the national Parliament this morning, Prime Minister Rudd has fully acknowledged and apologised for the pain and suffering experienced by Indigenous Australia as a result of laws and actions that were sanctioned and legislated by Parliaments around this country – including the Queensland Parliament.

Laws that tore apart Indigenous communities - that forcibly removed children from the guidance and love of their parents, family and their culture.

The Prime Minister has provided an opportunity for all Australians - Indigenous and non-Indigenous - to turn a new page in reconciliation.

While the national apology of itself will not fix the problems experienced by Indigenous people, it is an important and significant beginning.

To truly embark on reconciliation, past practices must be severed with a loud declaration of apology. We cannot face the future with hope unless we recognise and acknowledge our full history – the finest moments and the most shameful ones.

Those who had an opportunity to listen to the proceedings in the federal parliament this morning could not help but be struck by the significance of the moment and the powerful symbolism in the federal parliament. In my view, that symbolism was all the more potent because it was such a bipartisan moment in the history of Australian politics.

The symbolism of Prime Minister Rudd and the opposition leader Brendan Nelson joining together in a genuine act of unity and partnership was exactly what the recommendation for an apology was all about when it was first made.

Unfortunately, for very many political reasons, that recommendation led to a 10-year argument in this country. From the outset, what was needed was unity and partnership so that we could take these difficult and intractable issues forward.

On this issue I want to commend Prime Minister Kevin Rudd for his leadership and the opposition leader, Brendan Nelson, for his leadership of the conservative side of politics. As I watched both leaders of our nation in the parliament, together greeting Aboriginal leaders and together managing this issue, I thought it a very potent symbol of unity and partnership.

This House is no stranger to such an apology.

On 26 May 1999 the Queensland Parliament said 'sorry' to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the past policies under which their children were taken away from them.

I acknowledge the leadership of my colleague Judy Spence, who was the Minister responsible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy at the time, for her leadership on that issue.

It was a significant day in this House where we acknowledged and apologised for the part our Parliament had played in Indigenous suffering.

Unfortunately, for many reasons, the apology of May 1999 did not enjoy the bipartisan support that we witnessed in the Federal Parliament today.

At the conclusion of my statement, I will move that my statement be noted.

I have advised the Leader of the Opposition of my intention to have the statement noted. This allows the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Southern Downs, the opportunity to make his own contribution to the debate this morning.

I offer this opportunity to make his own contribution to the debate this morning. I offer this opportunity in a genuine and sincere effort to give the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity to join his federal colleagues in overcoming the previous reluctance of his side of politics on this issue.

I make this offer in a genuine and sincere effort to see replicated here the sort of unity and bipartisanship

that we witnessed this morning. I hope that offer is accepted in the spirit of sincerity with which it is made.

For me, another very powerful aspect of today's apology, which I think is a very important statement, is that the wording was as focused on the future as it was on recognising the past. It focused on a future where such injustices are not repeated and where our Indigenous Australians enjoy the same opportunities and the same quality of life that all Australians expect.

And importantly – a future where all Australians, whatever their origin, put to rest the pain of yesterday and work together to create a tomorrow of equality, respect and mutual responsibility.

I endorse the national apology today and, as I did on 26 May 1999, I acknowledge the resilience of Indigenous people.

Their determination to survive the unjust policies of the past is a testament to their personal strength and the proud nature of their culture."

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

Media: 3224 4500

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Premier

The Honourable Anna Bligh

Monday, February 11, 2008

Premier urges Queenslanders to support Sorry Day

Premier Anna Bligh today encouraged Queenslanders to support the Prime Minister's apology to the Stolen Generation, which will be made on Wednesday, 13 February.

Ms Bligh said Queensland was among the first states to move towards an apology for the injustice of past government policies.

"On 3 June 1997, Peter Beattie as Leader of the Opposition first moved for a full apology by the Queensland Parliament.

"The then-Coalition government used its numbers to amend the motion with the words "sincere regret", replacing an outright apology.

"However, following a change of government - on 26 May 1999 the Queensland Parliament agreed to a full apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the past policies under which Indigenous children were forcibly separated from their families.

"This was an incredibly important step in the reconciliation process in Queensland and Wednesday's national apology is one that is long overdue.

"It is an opportunity for all Australians - Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians - to turn a new page in reconciliation.

"While the national apology won't fix the problems experienced by Indigenous people overnight, it is an important beginning.

"It offers us a new opportunity to take our thinking in this area forward.

"To achieve genuine reconciliation there has to be some acceptance that things have gone wrong in the past, and that's what Wednesday's apology is about," she said.

A breakfast reception for more than 100 Indigenous leaders and members of the Stolen Generation will be held at Queensland's Parliament House on Wednesday morning - hosted by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Mike Reynolds - and the Premier will make a statement to Parliament in response to the national apology.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags will be raised at Parliament House, the Executive Building (Brisbane), Mineral House (Brisbane), Roma Street Parkland, the Townsville State Government Building and Cairns Court House.

The ABC will offer extended coverage of the apology (7.55am Qld-time) live on ABC1, via live stream online at www.abc.net.au and live on ABC Radio.

Monday, 11 February 2008

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Joint Statement:

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure
The Honourable Anna Bligh

Minister for Communities, Disability Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
The Honourable Warren Pitt

Thursday, May 31, 2007

\$100 million Redress Scheme for Children Abused in Queensland Institutions

The Queensland Government has implemented a Redress Scheme to complete its response to the recommendations of the Forde Inquiry into the Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions.

Deputy Premier and Treasurer Anna Bligh said up to \$100 million was available for distribution by way of ex gratia payments to eligible former child residents of Queensland institutions and detention centres.

"I know that money can never really compensate for the harm that some residents suffered in institutions.

"Our hope is that this Redress Scheme will offer some support and assistance and will help bring some closure to individuals and families.

"This Redress Scheme will offer payments of \$7000 to those former residents who experienced abuse or neglect while in care.

"A second payment of up to \$33,000 will be available in cases where there is evidence of abuse or neglect that was more serious.

"It is only because of our strong economic performance in 2006-07, which is producing a healthy surplus, that we are able to establish this one-off scheme."

Ms Bligh said the focus of the Queensland Government up until this point had been on the pressing need to reform the current child protection system.

"This year our Child Safety Department has completed the implementation of the 110 reforms recommended by the CMC Report, and child protection is now funded in Queensland above national levels," she said.

"I am very pleased to be in position now to complete our response to the Forde Inquiry. It has been a long journey but I hope this brings those who suffered closer to a place of peace.

"I want to commend the work that has been done by the Department of Communities and, in particular, the contribution by the Historical Abuse Network in reaching where we are today."

Communities Minister Warren Pitt said the Redress Scheme aimed to provide material assistance to former child residents in acknowledgement of the harm they suffered while in institutional care.

"The government has decided to proceed with this initiative instead of an alternative proposal based on a services access card," Mr Pitt said.

"The government has given preference to this initiative as it provides direct material assistance in the form of monetary payments."

"We will consult with the Historical Abuse Network on the best way to administer the scheme."

He said Queensland was the only jurisdiction in Australia to establish a formal process of ongoing dialogue between the government and former residents.

"We have introduced a range of community based support services, specifically to address the needs of former residents and improve their access to government services," he said.

Mr Pitt said the scheme was consistent with the sentiments of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee's 2004 report, *Forgotten Australian: A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children*.

Applications for the Redress Scheme need to be lodged between 1 October 2007 and 30 June 2008.

For further information or to request an application kit, call the Redress Scheme information line on 1300 769 291 between 8 am and 8 pm Monday to Saturday.

Media contacts:

Deputy Premier and Treasurer's Office: 3224 6900

Minister Pitt's Office: 3235 4280

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Premier

The Honourable Peter Beattie

Thursday, May 16, 2002

State Govt Offers Reparations to About 16,400 Indigenous QLDRS

Premier Peter Beattie outlined to Parliament today State Government plans to make reparations to about 16,400 Indigenous Queenslanders.

"Last Thursday the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, Judy Spence, and I met with representatives of the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Legal Services Secretariat, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board and others," said Mr Beattie.

"At the meeting, the Minister and I made an offer on behalf of the Government aimed at easing the lasting pain caused by past Government policies relating to the control of Indigenous savings and wages.

"The most potent symbol of these policies is the Aborigines Welfare Fund.

"We intended to maintain confidentiality around the offer until we reached resolution, so that the people who were affected by the policies - many of whom are ageing - could consider it without the static of an emotional public debate.

"However details of the offer entered the public arena, and were this week obtained by the Courier-Mail.

"It is now only proper that I place on the record the facts of the Government's offer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

"Importantly, we are dealing with two separate but related issues.

"One is the Aborigines Welfare Fund, into which a portion of Indigenous people's wages were paid between 1943 and the 1960s.

"The fund was frozen by the Goss Government in 1993, when it totalled less than \$5.5 million.

"It has since been managed by Queensland Treasury, and now contains \$8.6 million.

"We will continue to negotiate with the Indigenous community how this fund will be disbursed.

"The other issue is that of reparations for the decades of control by former Queensland administrations of the wages and savings of Indigenous people.

"Our monetary offer of up to \$55.6 million is about reparations for an estimated 16,400 people alive today.

"I stress: up to \$55.6 million - the final payment will depend on how many legitimate claims we receive.

"This is a without prejudice offer of a one-off payment. It builds on the process we began in 1999, when we offered one-off payments for non-payment of award wages to Indigenous people.

"We are not acknowledging legal liability.

"We would give priority to old people, who suffered most while living "Under the Act" - an expression that captures the series of legislative regimes that controlled virtually all aspects of their lives.

"Eligible people would be in two categories: * people born up to the end of 1951 and aged 50 or over - old people in Aboriginal society - who are offered \$4000. There about 11,400 of these people; or * people born up to the end of 1965, who are offered \$2000. There are about 5000 such people.

"We are also offering written apologies, a statement in the House, and a protocol for commencement of all official Government business requiring acknowledgment of traditional owners.

"We know that the monetary offer may not meet the expectations of all potential claimants. Indeed, historian Dr Ros Kidd has said they should qualify for as much as \$500 million.

"Without researching each case individually and intensively, it is impossible to say for certain how much each worker is "owed".

"So this offer is made in the spirit of reconciliation, as a demonstration of our genuine desire to heal the past - so we can move on.

"Governments have been trying to resolve this since the days of the Goss administration. In the meantime, old people have been dying.

"Never before has there been such an offer. And it is also a realistic offer.

"Already we have had one Welfare Fund-related out of court settlement, and another person is preparing for court action.

"The Government has already spent at least \$1.5 million researching the history of wages and savings in preparation for legal challenges.

"ATSIC has expended at least \$800,000 through funding to QAILSS, which has done research in preparation for litigation.

"QAILSS has said it has some 4000 potential litigants waiting in the wings to sue us. Look at the Federal Government's experience with the stolen children.

"Canberra has spent more than \$12 million on just one case alone - the Gunner and Cubillo case, which went all the way to the High Court and helped no-one but the lawyers.

"This could cost Queenslanders \$100 million or more in legal expenses. Settling it away from the courts will save the taxpayers of Queensland.

"And who can blame these people for feeling angry - even bitter? In an increasingly litigious age, who can blame them for wanting to take us to court?"

"They worked and paid taxes. Effectively, they paid tax twice, because a portion of their earnings - as much as 10% of gross pay - was creamed off into the welfare fund.

"People living "under the Act" were not informed of how much money was in their accounts, were not trusted with any significant sums of money and had to seek permission to spend even small amounts.

"This was all in living memory. It happened to people younger than me.

"People in this House may never have known such humiliation, but many of us will understand the anger.

"We have a choice. We could deliver some overdue justice to ageing people and advance the cause of reconciliation. Or we could see them in court and watch the lawyers grow rich.

"The court cases would be protracted, the old people would continue to die, and the lawyers would get rich.

"Each Welfare Fund case is different, so each would need to be prosecuted separately.

"Considering the Commonwealth's \$12 million legal bill, a bill of tens of millions for the Queensland government is perhaps conservative.

"In the reconciliation debate, people sometimes ask: When will it end? When can we stop saying sorry and move on?"

"Resolving the Aborigines Welfare Fund will clear a major hurdle on the road to reconciliation.

"I have asked that the other parties respond to the offer by August 9. I hope the offer will be accepted, so we can forget the threats of litigation and move on together.

"I say to the Labor Party, when people ask what's the benefit of having 66 seats in Parliament: Being able to fix problems created more than 100 years ago, and bring justice and fairness to a group or people - that is one of the benefits of having such a majority."

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Minister for Energy & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy The Honourable John Mickel

Tuesday, January 24, 2006

STOLEN WAGES FUND DRAWS TO A CLOSE - 31 JANUARY 2006

After almost three years, the Queensland Government's Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparations offer - or Stolen Wages - will draw to a close next Tuesday 31 January, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy John Mickel said today.

After extending the offer a further month over the Christmas - New Year holiday period, Mr Mickel reminded claimants to submit applications to ensure they meet the extended 31 January 2006 deadline.

"Since the reparations process began in February 2003, and up to 23 January 2006, 8654 claims have been lodged, of these, 7837 claims have been assessed, of which 67 per cent are eligible for a reparation payment," Mr Mickel said.

"As at 23 January 2006, 4821 claimants had been paid \$17.276 million.

"The increased rate of lodgement is evidence that the efforts of Departmental staff and the recent advertising campaign have raised awareness of the closing date.

"To ensure that potential claimants were not unduly disadvantaged by closures over the Christmas / New Year holiday period the offer was extended."

Mr Mickel said the Queensland Government was the first jurisdiction in Australia to make a reparations offer for past government control of wages and savings.

"We have made available up to \$55.4 million for individual reparation payments as part of this historic

"initiative," he said.

"These reparations make a monetary offer and a written apology to those people whose wages were under past control - or 'stolen wages' as it is known."

Mr Mickel said while no amount of money could fully compensate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for past injustices, the offer has been made as recognition of those who had their wages or savings controlled by the Queensland Government under a 'Protection Act' any time up until the 1980s.

"The offer acknowledges the history of unfair treatment of Indigenous Queenslanders by successive governments and symbolises this Government's recognition of past injustices," he said.

"The reparations offer is a gesture of reconciliation.

"It's not a replacement for money which people believe they are owed."

Mr Mickel said the Reparations Offer is not expected to be fully finalised until June 2006, so it is unknown at this stage what funds will remain after all remaining claims are assessed.

"Unspent funds will be used to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders," he said.

"Once the claims are finalised, a decision will be made by Cabinet."

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy has been promoting the reparations offer through an awareness campaign, newspaper and radio advertising across Queensland, the Northern Territory and in Indigenous publications.

The Department has also delivered information sessions, distributed promotional materials at events and has visited communities, hostels, nursing homes and prisons with significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

Anyone who believes they may be eligible should phone the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy on 1800 809 097 or go to the DATSIP website www.datsip.qld.gov.au

Media inquiries: Ian Gray (07) 322 51819 or Elouise Campion (07) 322 47 332

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Minister for Communities, Disability Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

The Honourable Warren Pitt

Tuesday, September 04, 2007

Indigenous Queenslanders urged to have their say on unspent "stolen wages"

Indigenous Queenslanders are being asked to have a say on how the unspent funds from the State Government's wages and savings reparation offer might best be used.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Minister Warren Pitt said almost \$36 million of a \$55.4 million fund set aside by the Beattie Government as reparation for wages and savings withheld from Indigenous employees remained unspent.

The fund was a without prejudice offer made in 2002 to Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers who had been financially disadvantaged by previous Queensland administrations' "Protection Acts" between 1897 and the 1970s.

While \$19.6 million has been directly paid in reparations, the government needs to determine the best use for the remaining funds.

Mr Pitt said he had attended a workshop involving members of the Stolen Wages Working Group in late July where possible options for the use of the remaining funds were discussed.

The working group's predominant view was that the unspent funds be disbursed to previously successful claimants.

It was also acknowledged that recognition was required for all those past and present impacted by the controls on wages and savings, and the continuing consequences of poverty and dysfunction. Accordingly,

additional initiatives were supported for a 'fair deal' such as educational scholarships and local and oral history projects.

The working group is made up of Elders, reparation claimants and other community members affected by past administrative controls over Indigenous wages and savings.

"The workshop was very productive and helped all involved focus on possible options and to get a clearer picture of what could be done to find the best use for the remaining funds," Mr Pitt said.

"I made a commitment to the working group that their views would be taken on board, but I also assured them that I would seek the views of the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Queensland."

He said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders would be asked in the coming weeks to express their views on two possible options for the remaining \$35.87 million.

One option is the distribution of the full balance to previously successful claimants.

A second option is the distribution of part of the balance to previously successful claimants with the remainder of the balance used for the benefit of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the establishment of an Indigenous-controlled foundation.

"I urge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to take this opportunity to have their say on how the remaining reparation money might be allocated," Mr Pitt said.

"This forms part of the government's commitment to reconciliation and acknowledges past injustices to Indigenous workers by previous Queensland administrations."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders who wish to have their say on the unspent funds can obtain further information from the Department of Communities on 1800 809 097.

Media contact: Minister Pitt's Office 3235 4280

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Joint Statement:

Premier

The Honourable Anna Bligh

Minister for Communities, Disability Services, ATSIP, Multicultural Affairs, Seniors and Youth

The Honourable Lindy Nelson-Carr

Tuesday, March 25, 2008

RESOLUTION OF 'STOLEN WAGES' FUND GIVES NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO YOUNG INDIGENOUS QUEENSLANDERS

The State Government announced today that claimants under the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparations Scheme would receive a second and final payment.

"Some \$15 million will be paid to more than 5,500 Indigenous Queenslanders whose wages or savings were controlled by State Governments until the 1970s," Premier Anna Bligh said.

"More than 4,200 people will receive a further \$3,000 on top of the \$4,000 initial payment.

"Some 1,300 people will receive \$1,500 on top of the \$2,000 initial payment they received.

"These funds will be rolled out from May, with priority given to elderly people and anyone who is seriously ill.

"The remaining \$21.2 Million and additional \$10.8 Million from the defunct Aborigine Welfare Fund will now provide up to 140 scholarships annually to young Indigenous Queenslanders," Ms Bligh said.

The Premier said the scholarships of up to \$20,000 per student would allow Indigenous students to seize educational and sporting opportunities which might otherwise be out of their reach.

"The Indigenous Queenslanders Foundation will give up to 140 children every year over coming decades the chance to study for a career in the area of their choice including arts and sport," Ms Bligh said.

"The Aborigines Welfare Fund has been frozen for 15 years – I want that money taken out of the too hard basket and put to work to give Aboriginal children hope for the future.

"I passionately believe that the new scholarship funds present a real opportunity for the youngest generation of Indigenous Queenslanders to break out of disadvantage and seize educational and training opportunities which would otherwise be denied to them.

"While some older Indigenous Queenslanders may be initially disappointed in the final payments for 'stolen wages' I urge them to support the Foundation to give their children and grand children the opportunity of the best possible education."

Minister for Indigenous Partnerships, Lindy Nelson-Carr said the Foundation will have a primary charter of providing educational and sporting opportunities to young Indigenous Queenslanders.

"The funds will be invested to support hundreds of young Indigenous people with scholarships for secondary, TAFE or university education," Ms Nelson-Carr said.

"The Foundation will be advised by a Board which will have significant Indigenous representation," the Minister said.

The Premier said improved education was vital for all Indigenous students, especially those living in remote communities.

"We must close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and that means improving general health, education, employment and housing outcomes, and to tackle the hard issues in the remote communities like alcohol and welfare reform."

Ms Bligh said she expected the funds would be distributed in partnership with organisations already proving successful Indigenous education initiatives such as the Yalari Foundation, the Cape York Institute's Higher Expectations Program, the Pearl Duncan and the Lambert McBride tertiary scholarships, as well as various schools around Queensland.

"The scholarships will be available to students throughout Queensland and schools and universities in metro and regional areas and the organisations and schools will be tasked with recruitment and selection of the students.

"I want to make it clear these are voluntary scholarships and only students whose parents are supportive of the move will be allowed to participate."

Ms Nelson-Carr said the final payments from the Wages and Savings Reparations Scheme were an acknowledgement of the wrongs and harms caused by past government policies.

"Queensland was the first jurisdiction in Australia to offer reparation for past injustices concerning wage and savings control and to make a Parliamentary apology.

"No amount of money could really compensate those Indigenous Queenslanders who suffered under the 'Protection Acts'.

"The Government's focus is in ensuring that Indigenous Queenslanders have the same prospects as all Queenslanders", the Minister said.

Those eligible for further payments as part of the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparations Scheme will be contacted in the coming weeks, with payments commencing in May.

The scholarships program is expected to begin operating mid 2008.

The \$10.8M from the Aboriginal Welfare Fund will be used for the education and support of Aboriginal children exclusively. The remainder of the new fund will be open to all Indigenous students.


Scholarships are expected to range from \$10,000 to \$20,000.

The Public Trustee of Queensland will administer the Foundation and the Queensland Investment Corporation will manage the funds. All funding and any interest received will be put straight back into the Foundation.

Tuesday 25 March 2008

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