

RECEIVED

17 SEP 2009

Economic Development
Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

What can the Queensland Government do to improve employment opportunities for groups such as youth, mature -age, Indigenous and disadvantaged workers?

- It is a well known fact that the majority of Indigenous Australians, particularly from a more traditional background or rural and remote areas whether in Qld or elsewhere, need first of all basic life skill training; Such as routine, hygiene and cleanliness, budgeting skills, home life preparations and organisation. Without these basic skills how can they possibly hold and complete a course of study or hold and stay committed to a job.
- Aboriginal people need intensive support through primary, secondary schooling and then into Tafe or University. Indigenous and Non-Indigenous cultural practices are extremely different, for e.g. bereavement processes are significantly different in both cultures which cause misunderstandings in the workplace. Indigenous people need confidence building, mentoring, and TRUST building. I believe it is small steps taking with indigenous people such as short courses, programs set in place with workplaces to take on indigenous employees.
- Whether we like to believe it or not there is a lot of racism out there still and misunderstanding that alone is a hurdle to jump.
- Reconciliation Action Plans & cross-cultural awareness training should be adopted and put into place as a mandatory element for a step in the right direction; this alone is putting measures in place for the acceptance of indigenous employees into workplaces.

- Free numeracy and literacy courses provided to Indigenous people, that is the other issue that needs to be recognised is the straight up financial and access disadvantages with Indigenous people disabling them from being able to access skill building courses, accredited courses etc to gain the qualifications to enable them to become successfully employed either part-time or full-time.
- Indigenous people don't feel comfortable going into a Non-Indigenous Job Agency and not speaking to an Indigenous face to access the service.
- Cherbourg Community (previously a mission) is a community filled with skilled and talented people who hold certificates in building, plumbing, carpentry etc. For E.g. Cherbourg community members have been known for the best coffin making (carpentry) from all around Australia, there is an ex dairy farm in the community, but when Government left the mission all the resources left the community. Even though there are many community members who hold certificates in a variety of industries they can get no work, there is nowhere for them to work. Even where there are things that need to be done around the community the work goes outside the community to a majority of Non-Indigenous people. Let's give the work to the Indigenous community!!
- The positions to cover Indigenous Affairs and Land Management, people with the appropriate knowledge, should be open to more identified position availability.
- Profiles of Indigenous workers with their skills, education and work experience should be made available to all employers in need of culturally appropriate and identified positions to be filled (such as in Child Safety, Juvenile Justice, Corrective Services) so that they are accessed through an easier process.
- People in the jail systems who may have been within that structure for a long period of time or who simply who are in that system due to social issues, family problems, cultural disconnection, mental health issues; when they are released or come out from that living situation don't have the preparation or skill building opportunities to find employment and keep them out of jail. A recommendation would be given to implement work readiness programs and skill building programs into the jail prior to release.