



**Legal, Constitutional and
Administrative Review
Committee**

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The Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee is a committee of the Queensland Parliament with a broad range of law reform responsibilities. The committee is established under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.

Media Release

HANDS ON PARLIAMENT – Submission period extended

Queenslanders now have until 30 June 2003 to make submissions on Indigenous people's participation in Queensland's democratic processes to the Queensland Parliament's Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee.

The committee is grateful to those people who have already made submissions.

"The input so far has been invaluable," says committee chair, Karen Struthers MP. "During our public consultations, people have been asking if it is too late to put in a submission. The committee is pleased to extend the time to make a submission. We want to hear from as many people as possible on these important issues and hope that people will take the opportunity to put their views in writing."

So far, four public meetings have been conducted in Brisbane. The committee commences its regional travel next week with public meetings in Cairns and Weipa and on Thursday Island. The committee will also travel to Roma, Charleville, Rockhampton, Mackay, Mt Isa and Townsville.

An issues paper was released in December 2002. It discusses some strategies which might enhance the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland's democratic processes, including:

- enhancing participation in existing processes through increased voter and civics education, mentoring and political party encouragement
- giving a representative body direct input into Parliament, for example through participation in question time or debate on bills
- establishing an Indigenous Assembly similar to the Sami Assembly in Norway
- dedicating seats to Indigenous peoples in the Queensland Parliament similar to Maori seats in the New Zealand Parliament
- making changes to Queensland's electoral system which might promote greater representation of minority groups.

"There have been mixed views presented about these strategies at the public meetings held so far," says Ms Struthers. "The committee has been presented with other strategies, such as cross cultural awareness training for members of parliament and redrawing electoral boundaries to take greater account of Indigenous communities."

Consultation will take place until the end of June.

Information about the inquiry, including the issues paper and public meeting schedule can be found at <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Committees/LCARC/LCARCHandsonParl.htm>.

For background information, contact Sarah Lim at the committee secretariat on 3406 7909.