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LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND  
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COMMITTEE



**LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

## **HANDS ON PARLIAMENT —**

**A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER PEOPLES' PARTICIPATION IN QUEENSLAND'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESS**

### **Feedback form**

This feedback form can be used to make a submission. Alternatively, submissions may be made in another form such as a letter.

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## BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

1. What are some of the reasons that Indigenous peoples are underrepresented in the Queensland Parliament?
2. What are some of the reasons that Indigenous people might choose not to be involved in Queensland's Parliament and government?
3. What factors make it difficult for Indigenous people to participate in Queensland's system of democracy?

- Q1. FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE CAN BE ASKED OF DARK SKIN COLOUR.
- Q2. THE FRUSTRATIONS THAT THEY HAVE SUFFERED FROM PROMISES MADE BY GOVERNMENTS AND NOT KEPT HAVE DISILLUSIONED THEM INTO THINKING "WHY BOTHER", THEY (GOVERNMENT) WILL NOT LISTEN.
- Q3. BECAUSE OF THE SUPPRESSION AND STRIPPING OF IDENTITY, IT TAKES TIME TO BE ABLE TO RISE UP AGAIN AND REPAIR WHAT WAS TAKEN AWAY.



#### STRATEGY 1: ENHANCE PARTICIPATION IN THE EXISTING PROCESSES

4. Is more civics education and voter education targeted specifically to Indigenous people necessary?
5. What other strategies might promote greater participation by Indigenous people in the existing democratic process?

Q4 No, BECAUSE OF WHAT PAST GOVERNMENTS DID BY CONTROLLING THE LIVES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, THEY THINK IT IS ANOTHER WAY OF GOVERNMENT TELLING THEM WHAT TO DO.

Q5 THE ONLY WAY TO PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IS TO SHOW THEM THAT YOU ARE BEING HONEST AND ARE LISTENING TO THEIR NEEDS AND PROBLEMS AND ASSISTING THEM TO OVERCOME THE INBRED FEARS OF PAST HISTORY.



## STRATEGY 2: DIRECT INPUT INTO PARLIAMENT

6. Would avenues for bodies which represent Indigenous people to have direct input into Parliament enhance the participation of Indigenous peoples in the Parliament?
7. Is it a good idea to enable bodies which represent Indigenous peoples to have direct input into Parliament? Why or why not?
8. If a representative body with direct input into Parliament was to be established how should it operate? For example:
  - Who should be on the representative body?
  - What forms of direct input should the representative body have?
  - What else would be necessary to ensure Parliament considered matters raised by the representative body?

Q.6 YES, BY GIVING THEM A VOICE IN PARLIAMENT AND TRULY LISTENING, IT WILL CREATE A FEELING THAT "YES, THEY ARE LISTENING TO WHAT WE SAY AND WANT."

Q.7 AS SAID PRIOR, YES IT IS A GOOD IDEA, BUT LET THE PEOPLE SELECT THEIR OWN REPRESENTATIVES THEMSELVES.

Q.8 ELDERS THAT ARE RESPECTED COMMUNITY PEOPLE WHO HAVE LIVED THROUGH PAST GOVERNMENTS AND BECAUSE THEY ARE ELDERS, TREAT THEM AS YOU WOULD YOUR OWN GRANDPARENTS OR PARENTS, AND REALLY LISTEN.





### STRATEGY 3: AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ASSEMBLY

9. Would an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly contribute to the participation of Indigenous people in the democratic process in Queensland?
10. Is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly a good idea? Why or why not?
11. If an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly was to be established, how should it operate? For example:
  - How should members of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly be selected?
  - What would be the specific role and functions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly?
  - How should the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly have input in the Queensland Parliament?
  - What else would be necessary to ensure the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly contributed to representation of Indigenous people?
  - Would one Assembly be appropriate, or should there be separate Assemblies for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders

Q.9 YES IT WOULD, BECAUSE IT WOULD SHOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING AND WOULD BE A STEPPING STONE FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH TO TAKE OVER FROM THERE LATER ON.

Q.10 AS STATED PRIOR, YES, FOR THE REASONS GIVEN PREVIOUSLY.

Q.11 EACH AREA SHOULD HAVE THEIR OWN ASSEMBLY AS INDIGENOUS DIFFER IN EVERY AREA AS IN THE MAINSTREAM SOCIETY, BUT ALSO, THE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS SHOULD HAVE SEPARATE ASSEMBLIES AS THEIR CULTURE DIFFERS FROM ABORIGINALS.

#### STRATEGY 4: DEDICATED SEATS

12. Would dedicated seats enhance the participation of Indigenous people in the democratic process in Queensland?
13. Are dedicated seats a good idea? Why or why not?
14. If dedicated seats were to be introduced, how should they operate? For example:
  - How many dedicated seats should there be?
  - In what ways, if any, should the role and functions of members in dedicated seats differ from members in other seats?
  - How should members in dedicated seats be selected?
  - Should people who vote for members in dedicated seats also be able to vote for members in their general electorate?
15. Should there be a referendum about the introduction of dedicated seats?

Q.12 No, it would be like the government is being paternalistic towards indigenous people like it was in the past.

Q.13 No, because this would cause more friction and animosity between indigenous people and mainstream Queenslanders.

Q.14 If dedicated seats were introduced, nine seats would be sufficient, and they could be elected as are the general electorate.

Q.15 Yes, it is up to the whole of Queensland to say whether they would like dedicated seats for indigenous people in parliament.



### STRATEGY 5: CHANGES TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

16. Should Queensland's electoral system seek to achieve representation of minority groups in Queensland?
17. Should the electoral system be reviewed to ensure that it is the most effective electoral system to represent the diverse interests of the Queensland community?
18. Would a different electoral system be likely to ensure greater representation of Indigenous peoples?

Q.16 WHEN MINORITY GROUPS ARE MENTIONED, IT MEANS ALL MINORITY GROUPS, WHETHER THEY BE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OR NEW AUSTRALIANS OR WHATEVER.

Q.17 IF IT NEEDS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE, THEN YES, REVIEW IT AND MAKE CHANGES, BUT IF NOT LEAVE IT AS IT IS.

Q.18 NO, ITS LIKE THE OLD SAYING GOES, "YOU CAN TAKE A HORSE TO WATER, BUT YOU CANT MAKE HIM DRINK."





#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

19. What other strategies could be used to enhance the participation of Indigenous peoples in the democratic process in Queensland?
20. What strategies or combination of strategies would best achieve enhanced participation of Indigenous peoples in the democratic process in Queensland?

Q.19 By CREATING THE ASSEMBLIES, THIS WOULD GIVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE MORE INPUT INTO ELECTIONS, AS THEY WOULD HAVE TO VOTE FOR PEOPLE ON THE ASSEMBLIES, PLUS VOTE FOR CANDIDATES IN THE GENERAL ELECTION, IF BOTH ARE COMBINED.

Q.20 AS STATED ABOVE, A COMBINATION OF GENERAL CANDIDATES, AND ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, BECAUSE THEY WOULD HAVE TO VOTE FOR BOTH PARTIES AT THE SAME TIME. IT WILL BE ALONG THE SAME LINE AS VOTING FOR COUNCILLORS AND VOTING FOR THE MAYOR OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

