



Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee

Hands on Parliament

Interim evaluation of the implementation of recommendations made following a parliamentary committee inquiry into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in Queensland's democratic processes

RESPONSE FORM

This form can be used to send your views to the committee. Please send it to:

The Research Director
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
Or fax it to: 07 3406 7070
Or email it to: lcarc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Submissions close on Friday, 1 June 2007

Extensions to the closing date may be given. If you need more time to make a submission, or if you require further information, contact the committee's secretariat on (07) 3406 7307.

Copies of this paper and all other committee publications, including report no 42, are available from the committee's secretariat or via the committee's home page at: www.parliament.qld.gov.au/committees/LCARC

| Your details | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Name: | <u>Ms Deborah Avery</u> |
| Address: | _____ |
| Contact number: | _____ |
| Email: | _____ |

HANDS ON PARLIAMENT

DETAILS

Name: Ms Deborah Avery

Address: PO Box 548 Smithfield Queensland 4878

Contact number: (work) 40503683 or mobile 0432 286 908

Email: matetetas@hotmail.com

Forwarding my responses to;

The Research Director

Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee

Parliament House, George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

RESPONSE

Formal recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

(pages 5 and 6)

An amendment to the Constitution of Queensland 2001 to include a preamble of due recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is necessary.

The likelihood post this amendment that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation in democratic processes within Queensland would increase, is high.

Political parties (pages 6 to 10)

All Parties should be encouraged to lead actions that support the development of an inclusive government. A strong foundation from which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the opportunity to progress Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and be fully involved in political decision making and processes will be fundamental in increasing engagement in democracy.

All parties should include an official acknowledgement to Country at the commencement of all State forums.

All parties should have and support quotas and selection processes that target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Enhanced and inclusive civics education (Pages 10 to 13)

Our Governments recognition of the importance of recording Aboriginal and Torres Strait history accurately and strengthening of actions within all school settings and curriculum's is commendable.

Testing inclusiveness in civics education (pages 13 and 14)

The expansion of the MCEETYA test to include knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander systems of governance is very necessary and we as a Government are promoting a stronger platform from which we can all move forward in partnership in the knowledge that education has the opportunity to be inclusive within all school settings.

Parliamentary Education Services (Pages 15 to 17)

Increased resources to support the development of appropriate materials and programs will assist in meeting this recommendation.

Youth participation in local government processes (Pages 17 to 20)

Supporting this recommendation whilst taking heed that there will need to be implementation of new and creative strategies to engage DOGIT communities.

Deborah A Avery 2007 Response to *Hands on Parliament*

A stronger focus should be placed on Government and non Government stakeholders with a mandate to support this recommendation who should evidence their engagement methodologies, involvement and or advice given my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key bodies.

Australian Electoral Commission voter education activities (Pages 20 and 21)

Increased participation in democracy by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will only be achieved if all activities are inclusive and targeted – new and creative strategies are needed to tailor for the needs of this special population group that will support a variety of approaches at encouraging enrolment.

Electoral Commission Queensland voter education activities (Pages 21 to 23)

Securing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communications Officers within the Voter Y Project is a positive strategy that should increase involvement by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

All enrolment and electoral campaigns should be inclusive of specific strategies to target special population groups.

Employment and training in democratic institutions and processes (Pages 23 to 25)

Initiatives previously undertaken in this area are commendable. An increased focus on employment post the completion of traineeships within the Public Sector Employment Program is very necessary to ensure utmost opportunity for sustainable employment. Increased strategies to support the development of sound and credible data is also necessary within all strategies.

There is also a critical need to increase mentoring and ‘on the ground’ support (in particular: remote settings) as it appears we are investing seriously however a majority of actions appear to have not been sustainable in rural and remote communities.

Leadership Training (Pages 25 and 26)

Increased support to leadership initiatives is very necessary and all governance structures with a specific mandate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should consist of majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as representatives on these bodies. Also a greater focus on partnership approaches between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders should always be encouraged.

Enhancing local government participation (Pages 26 and 27)

Government’s response states that ‘mentoring of potential candidates’ at the local government level is more appropriately carried out by political parties and experienced independent candidates. However this approach is not evidenced with local government councillors in remote communities. To be a priority, Government needs to offer incentive and develop and secure a type of mentoring program that ‘culturally competent’ political party leaders should undertake with special population groups in order to assist Government on a whole reach its outcomes.

Evaluation of participation in local government (Page 28)

An evaluation framework consisting of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies (conducted by external to Government ‘expertise’) is critical to inform Government if the Abolition of ATSIC and following strategies are achieving Governments vision that Queenslanders have their cultures affirmed, heritage sustained and have the same prospects for health, prosperity and quality of life as other Queenslanders.

Efficient service delivery (pages 28 to 30)

Most Agencies and Departments have a mandate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. Now that Department of Communities (post Abolition of ATSIC) have taken on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy role specific communication strategies are not evident. Strengthened communication strategies necessary to inform and education all on the role of this new 'Unit' within Department Communities are needed.

The new foundations from which Government is implementing policy should be inclusive of an evaluation framework that analyses and potentially validates all information from an external (to Government) source.

Indigenous Community cabinets (Pages 30 and 31)

To enhance the direct input of any disadvantaged population group dedicated Community cabinet meetings are necessary.

The role of community leaders (Pages 31 to 33)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Government's appreciation of cultural differences (pages 33 and 34)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Fundamental legislative principals (Pages 34 and 35)

Nil response.

LCARC's area of responsibility (Page 35)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Parliamentary Indigenous Liaison Officers (Page 36)

Agree with Committee recommendation.

If existing staff levels within the parliamentary Service are sufficient for the provision of advice to Committees concerning Aboriginal tradition and Island custom then it appears to be an 'access' issue and strategising to increase access to information and knowledge is crucial.

LCARC's agenda (Pages 35 and 36)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Assembly (Page 37)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Greater autonomy in the Torres Strait (Pages 37 and 38)

Any actions to enhance greater autonomy in the Torres Strait are supported.

Dedicated seats (Page 38)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.

Queensland's electoral system (Pages 38 and 39)

Nil response, agree with Committee recommendation.