

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF QUEENSLAND

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**THE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE
IN CAPE YORK**

Report No. 38

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

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PREFACE

The breadth of this inquiry has given the committee insight into the past practices and current matrix of departments, advisory bodies and stakeholders who play a role in the provision of infrastructure in Cape York. The committee has been careful not to concentrate exclusively on the issues and challenges concerning the delivery of infrastructure to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Cape York but to focus its inquiry on the delivery of infrastructure to all the residents of Cape York. In this region, indigenous and non-indigenous Australians alike are disadvantaged by their remoteness, the high cost of construction and maintenance, poor road networks, minimal access to communications networks and a lack of basic infrastructure. However, the committee realises that the health status and environmental health conditions of indigenous people on Cape York is much worse than non-indigenous Australians and that more indigenous Australians live in remote communities than non-indigenous.

The terms of reference for this inquiry have directed the committee to look at infrastructure in six main areas. The committee has found that many factors which impede the delivery and operation of infrastructure in Cape York are common across the six portfolio areas. These factors are:

- the need for maintenance funding as well as capital funding for infrastructure owned and maintained by local and community councils in remote areas (eg. water and sewerage);
- the need to build infrastructure and introduce technologies which are low maintenance;
- the need to train local people, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to maintain their own infrastructure;
- the need for greater inter-departmental coordination to avoid overlaps and gaps in the government's delivery of infrastructure;
- the need for a whole of government response to tackle environmental health issues and social problems, particularly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- the need to plan for and invest in the provision of infrastructure to people living on reserves, outstations and in small isolated towns as their needs have been largely overlooked in the past;
- the need to develop comprehensive town plans and consult with the end users before introducing new infrastructure or technology;
- the need for culturally sensitive public education campaigns to teach people about new technologies; and
- the need for a specialist appropriate technology organisation to resource, skill and support local people to improve their basic infrastructure, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seeking to improve or establish outstations.

In this report, the committee makes recommendations addressing these key issues. They are directed at ministers responsible for specific portfolio areas and at Chief Executive Officers of various departments who meet as the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development and are actively trying to develop a whole of government strategy on the provision of infrastructure to indigenous communities in Queensland. The committee sees

this as a very positive and overdue initiative and hopes that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee will not *"lose the will to resolve these issues, because they will not go away... [and] tackling them half-heartedly will be a recipe for continuing failure"* (O'Donoghue:17).

The committee respects the efforts of various departments to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and key stakeholders and provide infrastructure with sometimes insufficient funds and insufficient cooperation from other departments. It applauds the work of the Departments of Natural Resources, Main Roads and Local Government and Planning and the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) in developing Total Management Plans (TMPs) for water and transport infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The committee supports the proposal of the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development to expand and improve the TMP's as they are invaluable planning documents. The committee believes that improving the provision of infrastructure to people on Cape York to standards acceptable to the rest of Queensland is possible, but it *"will require determination and patient effort, negotiation and compromise, imagination and true generosity"* (O'Donoghue:17).

The committee realises that this is a relatively large report but hopes it has *"penetrated the complex web of agency decisions which have such a profound impact on the lives of Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous] people in Cape York"* (Whimp:10).

I thank my fellow committee members for their assistance during the inquiry. Thank you to those who assisted the committee in its inquiry, particularly non-profit, non-government organisations such as the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. and the Apunipima Cape York Health Council. Thanks also to the committee secretariat staff, particularly Alison Wishart for her assistance in preparing the draft report and Maureen Barnes for preparing the final draft for printing.

Len Stephan MLA
Chairman

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACC..... | Aboriginal Coordinating Council |
| ATSIAP | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Program |
| ATSIC | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission |
| CED | Common Effluent Disposal |
| CLC | Carpentaria Land Council |
| CDEP..... | Community Development Employment Program |
| CHIP..... | Community Housing and Infrastructure Program |
| CYLC | Cape York Land Council |
| CYRAG..... | Cape York Regional Advisory Group |
| CYPLUS | Cape York Land Use Strategy |
| FNQEB..... | Far North Queensland Electricity Board |
| HIPP | Health Infrastructure Priority Program |
| IAC | Indigenous Advisory Council |
| IAIDC..... | Indigenous Affairs Inter-Departmental Committee |
| ICC | Island Coordinating Council |
| NHMRC | National Health and Medical Research Council |
| NPA..... | Northern Peninsula Area (Injinoo, Bamaga, Seisia, New Mapoon and Umagico) |
| QBSA | Queensland Building Services Authority |
| QPS | Queensland Police Service |
| QCSC | Queensland Corrective Services Commission |
| SGFA..... | State Government Financial Aid |
| SPP | State Purchasing Policy |
| TMP..... | Total Management Plan |
| TSRA..... | Torres Strait Regional Authority |

DEFINITIONS**Appropriate technology**

Appropriate technology must meet the following criteria:

- it best suits the needs and lifestyle of the people using it;
- the choice and design of technology should involve the beneficiaries to the greatest extent possible and thereby foster ownership and community control; and
- it should fit in with and adapt to the local social, cultural and natural environment and ecosystem (CAT 1994b:2).

Health hardware

This is hardware that is found in almost every home and contributes to a healthy living environment. Examples of health hardware are: taps, stoves, benches, drains, washing tubs, showers, toilets, pipes and electrical fittings.

Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

From 1984-1988, the Queensland government granted parcels of land to indigenous people, to be held in trust by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils. These parcels of land are referred to as Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust areas and usually surround a permanent settlement. The *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984* facilitated the land grants and established the community councils. There are fourteen Aboriginal and seventeen Torres Strait Islander Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust areas.

Designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

For the purposes of this inquiry, this refers to the Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities, and Aurukun and Mornington Island Shires.

Outstations

A small family or clan based group of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people with historical, cultural or traditional ties to the area of land they are living on. An outstation is usually “*beyond the present practical delivery limits of municipal type services and infrastructure*” (CYLC:1).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee makes the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1: *(Paragraph 88)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Natural Resources and the Minister for Local Government and Planning work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils and local governments in Cape York to develop or redevelop sources of non-potable water and investigate the use of treated sewerage effluent to fertilise playing fields and parks.

RECOMMENDATION 2: *(Paragraph 90)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Natural Resources commit sufficient funds to, and review, the current WaterWise education strategies to ensure that the WaterWise campaign on Cape York is effective.

RECOMMENDATION 3: *(Paragraph 93)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning consult with community councils and specialist appropriate technology bodies when designing and installing waste water disposal systems in communities, reserves, outstations and remote towns in Cape York.

RECOMMENDATION 4: *(Paragraph 94)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning develop and conduct a community awareness and user education campaign to coincide with the installation of new waste water disposal technology in communities, outstations, reserves and towns in Cape York.

RECOMMENDATION 5: *(Paragraph 98)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning and the Minister for Natural Resources seek additional funds for capital works and the operations and maintenance of water related infrastructure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, reserves, outstations and towns in Cape York.

RECOMMENDATION 6: *(Paragraph 117)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Mines and Energy engage appropriate organisation(s) to conduct a public education campaign about power generation and usage for people on Cape York.

RECOMMENDATION 7: *(Paragraph 123)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Mines and Energy:

- (a) direct the Far North Queensland Electricity Board to provide an emergency generator for Napranum; and**
- (b) direct the Department of Mines and Energy to extend their community service obligation to provide the residents of Old Mapoon with a subsidised power supply.**

RECOMMENDATION 8: *(Paragraph 125)*

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Far North Queensland Electricity Board review their electrical inspection process;**
- (b) the review include measures to ensure that employees correctly and thoroughly conduct inspections; and**
- (c) the Minister for Mines and Energy table in parliament the results of the review with his response to this report.**

RECOMMENDATION 9: *(Paragraph 135)*

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Minister for Sport discuss with the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations the option of modifying the Far North Queensland Institute of TAFE training course for Sport and Recreation Officers to include a component on facilities maintenance; and**
- (b) until Sport and Recreation Officers receive training to maintain sporting facilities, that the Minister for Sport appoint maintenance officer(s) to the Cape York region to assist communities to maintain sporting facilities.**

RECOMMENDATION 10: *(Paragraph 149)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Education direct Education Queensland to design school buildings on Cape York which take into account the tropical climate, needs of the school population and likelihood of vandalism.

RECOMMENDATION 11: *(Paragraph 158)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Education:

- (a) direct Education Queensland to streamline the procedures for doing maintenance work on school buildings in Cape York; and**
- (b) consider changing the procedures to allow school principals to appoint suitably qualified local tradespeople in consultation with Education Queensland to do maintenance work wherever practicable.**

RECOMMENDATION 12: *(Paragraph 170)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, strongly encourage and assist community councils to specify standards for health hardware in construction contracts.

RECOMMENDATION 13: *(Paragraph 176)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program:

- (a) provide sufficient funds and strongly encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils to consult prospective residents and specialist organisations before approving designs and specifications for houses built on their communities.**
- (b) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to do this, they must provide, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, reasons to justify their decision.**

RECOMMENDATION 14: *(Paragraph 178)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program:

- (a) provide sufficient funds and strongly encourage community councils to, wherever possible, use building materials that are cost effective and appropriate over a long time period, thereby reducing maintenance costs.**
- (b) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to do this, they must provide reasons, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, to justify their decision.**

RECOMMENDATION 15:*(Paragraph 182)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to review the allocation of housing grants to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that communities which can build more houses from their grant do not have their allocation reduced as a consequence of their efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION 16:*(Paragraph 183)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, strongly encourage and assist community councils to, wherever possible:

- (a) hire local people as trainees on construction projects; and**
- (b) enter into contracts with builders and specialist tradespeople who agree to train local people and hire apprentices as part of the project.**
- (c) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to train local people as part of the project, they should provide reasons, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, to justify their decision.**

RECOMMENDATION 17:*(Paragraph 190)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing:

- (a) through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program implement a maintenance and repair program which:**
 - (i) includes training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in house maintenance;**
 - (ii) concentrates on improving the essential health hardware, safety and livability of the houses;**
 - (iii) concentrates initially on those houses which require minor repairs;**
- (b) seek additional funds over a three year period to maintain and repair public housing stock on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and**
- (c) table documents showing how the department will fund and implement the maintenance and repair program within six months of the tabling of this report.**

RECOMMENDATION 18: *(Paragraph 195)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to provide training for community council staff on procurement and contractual issues.

RECOMMENDATION 19: *(Paragraph 202)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to:

- (a) include health hardware tests as part of their inspection process;**
- (b) employ qualified, experienced builders to supervise construction work on Pormpuraaw and at least one other Aboriginal community in 1997-98; and**
- (c) seek additional funds to employ supervisors on more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the future.**

RECOMMENDATION 20: *(Paragraph 203)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, study the *Pormpuraaw Housing for Health Project Report* and implement the relevant recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION 21: *(Paragraph 215)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health direct Queensland Health to accelerate its capital works planning program to upgrade the infrastructure and services at primary health care centres on Cape York to provide in-patient services.

RECOMMENDATION 22: *(Paragraph 222)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health:

- (a) carry out a cost benefit analysis of using solar power instead of gas to heat water used in primary health care centres and hospitals on Cape York;**
 - (b) table the results of this analysis within three months of the tabling of this report; and**
 - (c) ensure regular maintenance work is carried out on back up electricity generators at primary health care centres.**
-

RECOMMENDATION 23: *(Paragraph 224)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health direct Queensland Health to negotiate with the Aurukun Shire Council concerning the future use of the old health centre at Aurukun, provided that both parties understand that the government may be unable to provide the necessary recurrent funding to operate the facility, should Queensland Health decide to hand it back to the community.

RECOMMENDATION 24: *(Paragraph 235)*

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development and the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice provide facilities other than those attached to police stations for court hearings on Cape York; and**
- (b) where the implementation of part (a) requires the Department of Justice to build new facilities, that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice negotiate with the community so that both the judiciary and the community can use the facilities.**

RECOMMENDATION 25: *(Paragraph 244)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Corrective Services seek additional funds to accelerate the replacement and/or upgrading of police and watchhouse facilities where required, such as at Bamaga.

RECOMMENDATION 26: *(Paragraph 258)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Corrective Services establish correctional outstations in eastern, northern or central Cape York as a matter of priority

RECOMMENDATION 27: *(Paragraph 301)*

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development consider the recommendations of the *Cape York Peninsula Outstation Strategy* and develop a whole of government strategy to provide appropriate housing and infrastructure to people living on outstations, reserves and towns in Cape York as a matter of high priority.

RECOMMENDATION 28: *(Paragraph 301)*

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care work with the commonwealth government through ATSIC to

develop a common policy and joint funding arrangements for the provision of infrastructure to Aboriginal reserves and outstations.

RECOMMENDATION 29: (Paragraph 312)

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care work with the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development to consolidate resources and revenue and develop one strategy and one coordination body to oversee the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

RECOMMENDATION 30: (Paragraph 313)

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development amend the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* to include, within the role of a proposed coordination unit, a referral service with one contact point for enquires about infrastructure maintenance and delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

RECOMMENDATION 31: (Paragraph 314)

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development consider the recommendations contained in the *Cape York Peninsula Land Use Strategy Stage 2 Final Report* as it finalises the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy*.

RECOMMENDATION 32: (Paragraph 316)

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development reach agreement on a whole of government strategy to coordinate the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland *as soon as possible*.

RECOMMENDATION 33: (Paragraph 324)

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Program to review the operation of community councils and table this review within six months of the tabling of this report. The review should include:

- (a) an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages to community councils in operating under the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*;

- (b) an analysis of the impact of establishing community councils under the *Local Government Act 1993*;**
- (c) an analysis of which structural arrangements would provide the most funds and best assist community councils to undertake their role as local governments; and**
- (d) an analysis of which structural arrangements for local government would provide the best outcomes for residents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.**

INTRODUCTION

THE COMMITTEE

1. The *Parliamentary Committees Act 1995* (Qld) establishes the Public Works Committee. It consists of six members of the Legislative Assembly. Both the government and the opposition nominate three members. The chairperson must be a government member and has a casting vote if the votes are equal (s. 4A.(1)). The all-party committee adopts a non-partisan approach to its inquiries.
2. The committee's role is to scrutinise the government's capital works program. This can occur at any stage from planning to completion. The committee may determine to conduct a particular inquiry, or the Legislative Assembly may refer specific works for investigation. Amendments contained in the *Parliamentary Committees Legislation Amendment Act 1996* (Qld) allow the committee to consider major works conducted by Government-Owned Corporations (GOCs) (s. 20(1)(b)).
3. The committee considers a variety of matters when conducting its inquiries, many of which also form the basis of its decisions to inquire into particular areas or projects. The committee endeavours to review projects from as wide a selection of departments and other constructing authorities as is practicable, in a variety of locations throughout Queensland, of differing cost and scale, and at various stages of their implementation.
4. When investigating a work, the committee may consider:
 - the stated purpose of the work and the apparent suitability of the work for the purpose
 - the necessity for, and the advisability of, the work
 - value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work
 - revenue produced by, and recurrent costs of, the work or estimates of revenue and costs for the work
 - the present and prospective public value of the work, including consideration of the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment
 - procurement methods for the work
 - the balance of public and private sector involvement in the work
 - the performance of -
 - the construction authority for the work and
 - the consultants and contractors for the workwith particular regard to the time taken for finishing the work and the cost and quality of it and
 - the actual suitability of the work in meeting the needs and in achieving the stated purpose of the work (s. 20(2)).

5. The committee considers that when investigating public works, it is essential to listen to the views of end users as well as those held by people and organisations either affected by or with an interest in a particular project. One of its roles in facilitating this process is providing a public forum in which the community can express an opinion, whether it be a suggestion, praise or criticism. This enables the committee to assess the extent of public acceptance of the state's capital works program.
6. The committee believes the focus of all state government capital works projects must be upon maximising the benefits to the community. It is determined to ensure Queensland gets best value for money from the development of capital assets, and that state government agencies manage such assets to provide the best possible outcomes.

SCOPE OF INQUIRY

Terms of reference

7. The committee's terms of reference for this inquiry were as follows:

in relation to the provision of infrastructure in the Cape York and Gulf of Carpentaria regions, with particular regard to:

- health
- housing
- law and order
- education
- utilities
- sporting facilities.

The committee is to inquire into and report on:

1. the purpose of the work and the suitability of the work for the purpose
2. the necessity for and advisability for the work
3. the value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work
4. the concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work
5. the present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment
6. procurement methods for the work
7. the balance of public and private sector involvement in the work
8. the performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work.

Government involvement

8. This inquiry is one of the largest undertaken by the Public Works Committee. It covers six policy areas (listed in paragraph 7) and ten departments.
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9. The departments involved in the inquiry are:
- Department of Education
 - Department of Emergency Services (including the Office of Sport and Recreation)
 - Department of Families, Youth and Community Care
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Justice
 - Department of Local Government and Planning
 - Department of Mines and Energy
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Queensland Police Service (including the Queensland Corrective Services Commission)
 - Department of Public Works and Housing

Geographical area covered

10. For the purposes of this inquiry, the committee has defined Cape York as the rough triangle of land between Yarrabah in the east, Doomadgee in the west and the tip of Cape York. Mornington Island is the only island included in the inquiry area. The Torres Strait Islands are not included.
11. The committee wanted to include Doomadgee and Mornington Island in the inquiry as several departments have spent millions of dollars constructing significant infrastructure there in the last few years. These areas are generally regarded as part of the Gulf of Carpentaria, not Cape York Peninsula.
12. The local government shires included in this geographical area are:
- Aurukun
 - Cairns
 - Cook
 - Douglas
 - Mareeba
 - Mornington
 - the northern part of Carpentaria
 - the northern slither of Mulgrave
 - the southern part of Torres shire on the tip of Cape York
 - the northern part of Burke (see map no. 1, Appendix E).

13. There are sixteen designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which are included in this area. These are:
- Aurukun
 - Bamaga
 - Doomadgee
 - Hope Vale
 - Injinoo
 - Kowanyama
 - Lockhart River
 - Mornington Island
 - Napranum
 - New Mapoon
 - Old Mapoon¹
 - Pormpuraaw
 - Seisia²
 - Umagico
 - Wujal Wujal
 - Yarrabah (see map no. 2, Appendix E).
14. As well as these communities, there are over 400 reserves, many Aboriginal outstations and several small towns that are within the boundaries of the Cape York inquiry area (see map no.3, Appendix E).
15. Throughout the report, the committee will refer to towns which are outside the inquiry area. This is because the infrastructure which services people within Cape York is often located at large regional centres such as Mt Isa, Cairns and Thursday Island. For example, if people want to go to high school or need specialist medical treatment, they usually have to leave the cape.

SUBMISSIONS, INSPECTION AND HEARINGS

16. The committee sought public submissions in relation to the provision of infrastructure in Cape York by public advertisement and by direct mail to selected interest groups and individuals. A copy of the advertisement is at Appendix A. A list of submissions is at Appendix B.
17. From 7-9 April members of the committee inspected the infrastructure at Cooktown, Lockhart River, Bamaga, New Mapoon, Seisia, Injinoo, Umagico, Napranum and Aurukun.
18. The committee held public hearings in Cairns on 10 April and in Brisbane on 28 and 30 April. A list of those who appeared at the hearings is at Appendix C. A list of exhibits tabled at the hearings is at Appendix D.

¹ Old Mapoon, situated north of Weipa, is a recognised Aboriginal community. The Marpuna Corporation provides some local government services but it is not recognised as a community council. A Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust area is held in trust by a board of trustees and the Marpuna Corporation is required to obtain approval from this board for all matters relating to land use and construction work. In the other Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities, the community council is the governing body and the body which holds the land in trust.

² Bamaga and Seisia are Torres Strait Islander communities. All of the others in the list have a mainly Aboriginal population.

RESPONSIBILITY OF MINISTERS

19. This report makes recommendations for action by government. Section 24(4) *Parliamentary Committees Act 1995* requires the responsible minister to table a response in the parliament within 3 months after the committee tables the report.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

20. As this inquiry covers six infrastructure or policy areas, ten departments and a large geographical area, the structure of the report departs from the usual structure used to organise Public Works Committee reports. Rather than using the terms of reference as sub headings and organising all of the information accordingly, information is grouped under the six infrastructure areas: utilities (water and electricity); sporting facilities; education; housing; health and law and order (policing, courts and corrective services). Within these sections, information is grouped under four main headings and the applicable terms of reference are addressed under these headings as follows.

- The current infrastructure assets
- The need for improvements to the infrastructure assets
terms of reference 1 and 2
- Improvements made to the infrastructure assets in the past five years
terms of reference 3-8
- Proposed improvements in the next year

BACKGROUND TO THE INQUIRY

21. The provision of infrastructure in Cape York is complex. Many different government and non-government agencies are involved in this area at local, state and commonwealth levels (see the section on “key players”). The people who live on Cape York Peninsula know that their townships and communities lack basic infrastructure and, subsequently, basic services. Government ministers and officers are also largely aware of this fundamental problem. Thus, lack of awareness or knowledge about the issues is not the main problem. It is in the implementation of the suggested solutions that the real problems occur.
22. The Public Works Committee’s inquiry into the provision of infrastructure on Cape York is part of a long history of activity in this area. This inquiry comes from a context of many government and academic reports and inquires on these issues; a land use strategy for the area; a variety of commonwealth, state and local government funding programs which seek to meet the basic infrastructure needs of the people; an undertaking by the Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop a whole of government strategy on infrastructure provision to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland; increased mortality and sickness rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Cape York and rapidly deteriorating infrastructure assets in Cape York. There is much evidence of government activity in the area, but little evidence of cost-effective and long-term progress. This is something the committee has addressed in the recommendations in this report.

Prior research

23. Since Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were given the right to vote in May 1967, successive state and commonwealth governments and committees have researched and reported on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and affairs. The Queensland Public Works Committee has held two inquiries of its own: an inquiry into the administration of the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program in 1991 (report no. 6) and an inquiry into health facilities in far north Queensland in 1994 (report nos. 20 and 21). These reports have discussed the problems and suggested solutions. More recently, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) convened a national forum called *Research Innovation and Reform: Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure*. The discussion papers from this forum (held in Canberra in January 1997) confirm that there are many players in the provision of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The importance of consultation, high costs of delivery due to remoteness and need for coordination between different levels of government and different government departments are common themes.
24. Most reports and research into the provision of infrastructure on Cape York have focussed on infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Subsequently, funding has also been focussed on the thirty recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on Cape York and in the Torres Strait. While these communities do have important infrastructure needs, so too do the communities which have a mix of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. For example, Coen and

Laura are isolated townships with several hundred people but with minimal health facilities. These townships have been left out of successive funding rounds.

Cape York Land Use Strategy

25. The Cape York Land Use Strategy (CYPLUS) is a joint initiative of the state and commonwealth governments which commenced in 1992. Stage 1 comprised the preparation of forty-four individual reports on land use, natural resources and society and culture in Cape York and a large GIS (geographical information system) database. In late 1995, stage 2 began and the Cape York Regional Advisory Group (CYRAG) formed to develop a strategy. CYRAG brings together all the stakeholders on the cape — pastoralists, miners, farmers, fisheries management, land councils, environmentalists, Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, developers — to develop a land use strategy which recognises the cultural, ecological and economic importance of Cape York. It has recently finalised its stage 2 report which outlines the group's vision for the region, a set of principles to guide future land use and a strategy with recommendations. State and federal cabinet will consider the stage 2 report. Stage 3 involves implementation of the recommendations. The federal government has committed about \$40 million from the National Heritage Trust towards Cape York which could be used to implement CYPLUS.
26. The Queensland Government has recently approved a regional planning exercise for the Gulf of Carpentaria region. From July 1997, it will provide funds to the North Queensland Regional Planning Division of the Department of Local Government and Planning for the development of a Gulf Regional Development Plan.

Total Management Plans

27. At the same time as CYPLUS began, the state government established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program in response to a state/commonwealth agreement, *The National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. In 1995, the program was transferred from the then Department of Family Services to the then Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning.
28. When the Department of Local Government and Planning took over the program, they realised that there was insufficient information on the infrastructure available in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on which to base funding decisions. If a community applied for funds to build a new dam, the department didn't know whether they already had a satisfactory dam, whether the water needs of the community warranted a new dam, or whether the old dam (if there was one) could be improved.
29. To address this problem, they engaged consultant engineers to develop TMPs for the 32 Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities and the two Aboriginal shires. The Departments of Local Government and Planning, Main Roads and Natural Resources and the TSRA jointly funded the plans which cost \$1 million. TMPs detail the existing water related and transport infrastructure in each community and the finance, resources, time and work needed to bring the infrastructure available in each

community up to a level equivalent to that provided in other small, remote communities. The TMPs provide the following details for each community:

- a summary document;
 - an asset management report (explaining how the council can manage the infrastructure assets to extend their economic life and improve the service they are providing to the community);
 - an asset register (an inventory of the council's water and transport infrastructure assets) including asset valuations using the current replacement cost methodology;
 - a preliminary planning report (outlining and prioritising the maintenance, upgrading and new capital works required over a ten year horizon and taking into account the projected population increases and normal rates of deterioration and obsolescence);
 - a financial plan (summarising the cost of the work recommended in the asset management report and the preliminary planning report each year for the next ten years and taking into account the current technical skill level within the community and needs for training); and
 - drawings (submission 23:2).
30. As part of the TMP process, communities prioritised the capital works needed in their community. Water infrastructure or the sealing of internal and access roads was nearly always at the top of the list.
31. The TMP process identified that in order to bring the water and transport related infrastructure assets on these thirty-four communities up to an acceptable standard, the local councils need \$500 million in capital and recurrent funding over the next ten years. Of the \$26 million available to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program over three years (1995-96 to 1998-99), \$8 million has already been committed to approved projects. The Department of Local Government and Planning has developed a methodology to enable it to prioritise the projects and allocate the remaining funds to improve infrastructure assets and environmental health on communities. Coordination with other funding programs (state and commonwealth) is also taking place so as to avoid overlaps in expenditure, enable the most effective spread of funding and achieve the best possible outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (submission 23:2).

KEY PLAYERS

32. Many government and non-government organisations have a role in providing infrastructure to residents of Cape York Peninsula. A brief outline of the role of each of these organisations follows. For clarity, the committee has grouped these organisations into five categories:
- local government;
 - state government;
 - statutory authorities;
 - commonwealth government; and
 - non-government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

33. As previously mentioned (see paragraph 12), ten local shire councils provide local government services to the residents in the inquiry area. Water supply, sewerage, rubbish collection and maintenance of local roads are some of the shire councils' responsibilities. The shires in Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria are quite large and most have a small rates base.

Cook Shire Council

34. Cook shire covers 116,021 km² making it nearly twice the size of Tasmania, twice the size of Mareeba shire and the largest local government area in Queensland (see map no. 4, Appendix E). However, it only collects rates from about 5200 residents. This means it has a very small operating budget. In 1993-94, its annual revenue was \$6,212,000. The neighbouring Eacham shire (on the Atherton Tableland) has a similar population and budget (\$6,223,000/year) but only has to provide services to an area 1% of the size of Cook Shire.³
35. The four state controlled roads within Cook shire are not sealed for all-year, all-weather use. These roads are:
- the Peninsula Development Road (from Lakeland to Weipa);
 - the Cooktown Development Road (from Lakeland to Cooktown);
 - the Endeavour Valley Road (from Cooktown to Hopevale); and
 - Shipton's Flat Road (from Cooktown to Rossville) (see map no. 3, Appendix E).
36. Many of the towns in the shire are cut off during the wet season which can last from December to April. The large distances and poor road networks make the provision of infrastructure expensive and time consuming.

³ The area of Eacham Shire is 1,131km² and it has an estimated 5,977 residents (ABS,1994:7, 11).

STATE GOVERNMENT

Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Program

37. The Department of Families, Youth and Community Care is the lead agency on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. The department administers the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*. These two acts apply to the thirty-two Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities in Queensland. The department provides funds to the community councils which govern these communities to help them improve their financial accountability, maintain their infrastructure, manage the land and natural resources and support the development of outstations and economic enterprises (see paragraphs 318-319).
38. From 1989 to 1995, the government transferred the responsibility for providing certain services (eg. health, housing, water infrastructure, land, local government services) from the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care to departments which specialised in these areas.
39. The Department of Families, Youth & Community Care recently established the Indigenous Affairs Inter-Departmental Committee (IAIDC) to develop a whole of government perspective on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) to represent the needs and views of indigenous Australians in Queensland.

Department of Local Government and Planning

40. The aim of the department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program is to improve basic services (such as water, sewerage and transport) to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, thereby improving their health and living conditions.
 41. In 1996, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program contributed to the development of TMPs for 34 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland (see paragraphs 27-31). TMPs enable the state and commonwealth governments to prioritise and coordinate funding to these communities (see diagram no. 1).
 42. Aurukun and Mornington are shires created by the *Local Government (Aboriginal Lands Act) 1978* and constituted under the *Local Government Act 1993*. The Department of Local Government and Planning administers both of these acts. The department provides advice and support to Aurukun and Mornington shire councils on a range of issues and matters related to local government and an administration grant in lieu of rates. In 1995-96 and 1996-97 the department provided \$1.01 million to each council. It recently approved a "one-off" grant to Mornington and Aurukun shires of \$6.5 million to help the councils construct stormwater drains, and seal streets in the township to reduce health problems associated with water ponding and dust (see paragraph 271). Some of the funds are also being used to upgrade their existing sewerage schemes (submission 23:3).
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Diagram 1: Allocation of funds under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program



43. The department also provides assistance to local and community councils on Cape York through the Smaller Communities Assistance Program, the Rural Living Infrastructure Program and the Roads and Drainage Program. The Smaller Communities Assistance Program is a new program with funds of \$150 million over a ten year period to assist local governments with populations of 5000 or less and water and sewerage charges greater than \$800 per household to upgrade their water supply and sewerage infrastructure. The program will help councils to improve their infrastructure so that they can reduce water and sewerage charges to \$800 per annum for domestic users (submission 23:3, transcript:72).

44. Under the Rural Living Infrastructure Program (community amenities component) the department committed \$3.4 million to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils from 1994-95 to 1996-97. Some of the funds will be spent in 1997-98. The program funds amenities such as lighting for sports fields, shade cloth over play areas in parks, fences, public toilet blocks at sporting venues and multi-purpose sporting venues (submission 23:4). All local shires with populations less than 10,000 are eligible for assistance under the Rural Living Infrastructure Program. Under both programs, councils must apply for funds.
45. The department administers its Roads and Drainage Program differently to the above two programs. Under this program, it distributes \$25 million per annum amongst all local government shires in Queensland. It divides the funds according to a formula similar to that used by the Local Government Grants Commission which takes into account road lengths, population and traffic volume. No council receives less than \$15,000 per year and councils can carry funds over to the next financial year (transcript:72-3). Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils receive \$15,000 per year because of their small size and low traffic volumes. In 1996-97, Cook shire received \$56,727 and Mareeba shire received \$160,492 (correspondence to the committee from DLGP, 7.5.97).
46. The Planning Services section of the department is coordinating the state government's involvement in and response to the Cape York Land Use Strategy (CYPLUS).

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Aboriginal Coordinating Council

47. The commencement of the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* led to the establishment of the Aboriginal Coordinating Council (ACC) in 1984 as a statutory authority. It represents the fourteen, Aboriginal, Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils in Queensland and other affiliated remote Aboriginal communities living on reserves, townships and shires. Based in Cairns, it advises state and federal ministers on all matters and issues affecting the progress, development and well-being of Aboriginal people. It represents the needs of communities, and provides training to communities on health, community justice, land and resource management, housing, infrastructure, women's affairs and other policy issues. The ACC also provides training for new councillors in financial management, Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) administration and community housing management. In 1995, the ACC conducted a housing needs assessment in seventeen member communities which quantified the massive shortfall in safe, adequate housing in these communities (see paragraphs 164-166).

Island Coordinating Council

48. The Island Coordinating Council (ICC) is similar to the ACC but represents the seventeen Torres Strait Island Community Councils in Queensland. Its membership consists of the elected chairpersons of the Torres Strait Island community councils. It coordinates the activities of relevant state government agencies in the region and administers grants and loans given to the ICC for the progress, development and
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well-being of Torres Strait Islanders. In 1995-96, the ICC attended to (among other priorities) providing a safe, adequate year round water supply for seven of the outer Torres Strait Island communities; developing a Torres Strait Marine Conservation Strategy; land tenure issues (particularly for Torres Strait Islanders living on Cape York mainland) and improving the financial accountability and auditing of Torres Strait Islander community councils. The ICC advises the Queensland Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care on issues in the Torres Strait region and is a statutory authority.

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

49. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) has regional councils and zone commissioners throughout Australia. The Peninsula Regional Council represents the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Cape York.
50. ATSIC's two largest funding programs both contribute towards infrastructure provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The CDEP provides work and training on local communities for unemployed Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Participants forego their individual unemployment benefits and receive a wage for work done on the scheme. Each community decides its own work program which may include road works, house repairs, producing artefacts and gardening.
51. The Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) has recently been reorganised in recognition of the fact that spreading funding thinly across the continent will not make appreciable inroads into a estimated \$4 billion deficit in housing and infrastructure in indigenous Australia. CHIP expenditure for 1996-97 will be around \$210 million. CHIP provides funds for the innovative Health Infrastructure Priority Program (HIPP). HIPP focuses on "*large scale environmental health projects that will make a measurable difference to living standards in targeted communities*" (O'Donoghue:15). HIPP is one of the programs used to implement the National Aboriginal Health Strategy. ATSIC recently agreed to outsource the management of some HIPP projects to state based managers. ATSIC requires HIPP managers to evaluate projects on the basis of measurable health outcomes, with assessments made before it funds the project and after it completes them.

Torres Strait Regional Authority

52. Established on 1 July 1994 after an amendment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989, the TSRA is an independent, commonwealth, statutory authority. It is like a mini ATSIC for the Torres Strait region. It aims to gain recognition for Torres Strait Islanders of their culture, customs and native title rights to the lands and waters of the Torres Strait; develop a sustainable economic base for the region; provide better health and community services; and ensure protection of the natural environment. The TSRA administers commonwealth government funds (\$30.6 million in 1995-96) and advises the federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs on issues relating to Torres Strait Islander affairs and Aboriginal affairs in the Torres Strait region. The chairpersons of the Torres Strait Island community councils are the elected members of the TSRA. They set TSRA policy and

determine how to spend and allocate funds. The TSRA receives funding and assistance from ATSIC, administers the CDEP program for the region, provides advice on native title issues and provides funding for a wide variety of programs ranging from health to heritage protection to small business initiatives.

NON-GOVERNMENT

Apunipima Cape York Health Council

53. In 1994, Aboriginal people from fifteen communities on Cape York held a four day health summit and resolved to form the Apunipima Cape York Health Council. Apunipima means, in the Injino language, “all in one” or “united”. It aims to improve the health of Aboriginal people on the cape by working with health authorities, training local people and undertaking health projects. It tackles environmental, family, women’s, sexual and mental health issues, domestic violence, substance abuse and diabetes. In 1996, Apunipima conducted a ground-breaking project when it investigated the healthiness of the housing provided at Pormpuraaw Aboriginal community. Apunipima receives core funding from the Department of Health and Family Services (commonwealth government) and project specific funding from state and commonwealth government departments.

Balkanu Development Corporation

54. Balkanu is a non-profit, indigenous organisation which is owned by the Cape York Land Council and Apunipima Cape York Health Council. Formed in 1996, Balkanu aims to “*maximise the opportunities for Cape York peoples to live their own culture, on their own lands under their own direction*” in healthy, economically and socially sustainable communities which respect the environment. Balkanu employs ten economic development officers throughout the cape to provide support and training to Aboriginal people who are seeking to develop their own enterprises to establish an economic base for their community. It also supports groups who want to return to their country through the development of outstations and provides training to improve environmental health, employment opportunities and land management.

Cape York Land Council

55. The Cape York Land Council (CYLC) aims to represent the traditional land owners in the Cape York area. The council negotiates on behalf of the land owners with miners, developers, tourist operators and fishermen to ensure that traditional owners are at the forefront of discussions and decisions about their land. Based in Cairns, the council supports the outstation movement, assists traditional landowners with land claims and lobbies Australian governments for greater rights and recognition for traditional land owners.

Carpentaria Land Council

56. Based at Burketown, the Carpentaria Land Council (CLC) is the native title representative body for the southern gulf region. Since its establishment in 1984, the CLC has supported the return of traditional Aboriginal lands and waters to traditional owners through the purchase of pastoral properties and land claim processes. The CLC

also provides support to traditional owners in their negotiations with non-indigenous land interests (for instance mining, pastoral, government and fishing interests).

Cape York Peninsula Development Association

57. Formed in 1987, the Cape York Peninsula Development Association (CYPDA) is an independent body with members from mining, pastoral, tourism, local government, community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. It aims to enhance the quality of life of people on Cape York Peninsula through economic and community development. It liaises with all sectors of government and all relevant business and industry organisations to achieve its aims. It also initiates projects and carries out investigations to accelerate economic and community development.

Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc.

58. With offices in Cairns and Alice Springs, the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. is a non-profit organisation controlled by an indigenous, independent board. It aims to “*research, design, develop and teach appropriate technology for remote communities*” (submission 10). It receives funding on a project basis from state and commonwealth sources. It specialises in cross cultural technology transfer with expertise in housing, infrastructure and environmental health. It has recently managed and reported on the “Old Mapoon — Planning for a Healthy Community” project, the “Housing for Health Project” at Pormpuraaw and the “Moojeeba-Theethinji: Planning for a Healthy Growing Community” at Port Stewart which saw the development of spread out family living areas to protect the natural and cultural environment and the planting of household gardens to improve nutrition. The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. is reapplying for funding from ATSIC so that it can continue to provide free appropriate technology advice to communities and resource agencies in north Queensland.

Far North Queensland Network

59. The primary role of the Far North Queensland (FNQ) Network is to encourage and enhance a cooperative approach to the sustainable, economic development of the region including Cairns, the Torres Strait, the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York Peninsula. Membership of the FNQ Network includes representatives from regional development organisations, local government, trade unions, industry and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. It has recently completed an *Economic Development Strategy for Cape York Peninsula* in which it addresses the need for (among other things) infrastructure to develop the key industries of the region: tourism, animal production, marine, mining, plant production and local enterprise.

MAPOON: AN EXAMPLE OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF KEY PLAYERS

60. In 1963, the Queensland government evicted the original residents of Old Mapoon (or Mapoon as they call it) from the area. The people are gradually moving back and trying to establish a community with basic services. In their submission to the inquiry, the Marpuna Corporation informed the committee of the number of institutional stakeholders or key players that provide infrastructure and services to their growing community (submission 30:3). This list is provided as an example of the number of

different bodies that have a role in the provision of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the number of bodies that the Marpuna Corporation has to seek funding from.

1. *The Queensland Department of Health with their new Community Health Centre, staffed by local health workers, with the provision of a visiting doctor from Weipa on a fortnightly basis;*
 2. *the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) facilitates funding of the CDEP scheme and various special purpose federal grants;*
 3. *the Queensland Department of Families, Youth and Community Care provides a range of services relating to planning, funding, government, training and land issues;*
 4. *the Cape York Land Council (CYLC) provides assistance with land related issues and more recently with planning and outstation resourcing;*
 5. *the Aboriginal Coordinating Council (ACC) has a resource role to its member communities with respect to training, housing infrastructure, and so on;*
 6. *the Asset Management Unit (AMU) of the Queensland Department of Primary Industries (DPI) [now located within DNR] extends technical advice with asset management of infrastructure in townships and outstations;*
 7. *the Queensland Department of Housing and Local Government and Planning (QDHLG&P) facilitates funding for welfare housing [housing is now located within the Department of Public Works and Housing];*
 8. *in addition to its commercial mining interests throughout the greater area, Comalco has provided assistance [to the] Mapoon Community in the past in a number of ways, including the putting down and maintenance [of] roadworks to the main access road and clearing of the new airstrip site;*
 9. *Telecom provides and maintains the community telephones;*
 10. *the Department of Education with the building of a new school, a one Principal/Teacher school;*
 11. *the Department of Customs (provides rebates for fuel for our generator for power) and Quarantine;*
 12. *the Department of Police (visiting service).*
61. From its research, the committee would like to add two more key players to this list.
 62. The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc., with funding and assistance from Queensland Health's Tropical Public Health Unit, worked with the people of Old

Mapoon to develop a comprehensive plan for the community in 1995. The Plan is called *Planning for a Healthy Community: Towards a Healthy Living Environment, Old Mapoon* and covers options for transport, water supply, drainage, sewerage and sanitation, rubbish disposal, energy and power, house design and location, a five year project implementation plan and an infrastructure maintenance and management strategy (Mapoon Community, CAT and Queensland Health).

63. The Queensland Department of Local Government and Planning worked with the community in 1996 to produce a TMP detailing the community's current infrastructure and future needs in the areas of water, sewerage and transport.

UTILITIES — WATER RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE

THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

64. Water related infrastructure refers to the water supply systems and waste water disposal systems. Stormwater drainage systems remove water but they are not a utility and so are outside the committee's terms of reference for this inquiry.

Water supply infrastructure

65. Many of the towns in the Cook shire do not have an adequate water supply. Residents in Ayton, Marton, Lakeland, Portland Roads and Rossville draw water from bores and tanks. Many of the bores are shallow and the water is sometimes contaminated by the intrusion of salt water and sewerage effluent. At times, the limited amount of water does not meet the NHMRC guidelines for drinking water. There is insufficient water for public amenities and tourists. Coen draws its water from the dam on Oscar Creek. The storage capacity of the dam is insufficient to meet the needs of a growing population and tourist trade (submission 5).
66. The TMPs for the sixteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the inquiry area show that the water supply, water quality and reticulation systems in many communities are inadequate and unsafe. For example: at Aurukun and Hopevale, the groundwater supply is depleted leading to a lowering of the aquifer level and salt water intruding into the water supply (DNR, TMP for Aurukun, Summary Document:11 & DNR, TMP for Hopevale, Summary Document:10). The 130 (approximate) residents at Old Mapoon rely on water from two bores, hand dug wells and rainwater tanks. The water is not treated or chlorinated and the reticulation system only reaches residents in the Red Beach area (DNR, TMP for Old Mapoon, Summary Document:6).
67. The sixteen communities draw their water from a variety of sources ranging from hand dug wells (Old Mapoon), household rainwater storage tanks (Mornington Island), bores (Aurukun, Kowanyama, Old Mapoon, Hopevale, Lockhart River, Pormpuraaw and Napranum), rivers (NPA communities, Doomadgee, Wujal Wujal) and weirs (Yarrabah).
68. Water tests have shown that chemicals and bacteria on many communities are contaminating the water making it unsafe to drink. Corrosion of the pipes and dead ends in the reticulation systems add to the health risks associated with the water supply. For example: residents at Napranum have become ill due to the high levels of bacteria in the water and high level of oxides from the corrosion of metallic reticulation pipes (DNR, TMP for Napranum, Summary Document:9). At Doomadgee the water quality is poor, due to incorrect chlorination rates and dirty water mains and reservoirs (DNR, TMP for Doomadgee, Summary Document:10).

Northern Peninsula Area

69. In 1975 the then Irrigation and Water Supply Commission built a water supply system in the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA). There are five small communities in the NPA which are only a few kilometres apart and about 35 kilometres south of the northern

most point of the Queensland mainland. The Department of Families, Youth and Community Care owns and manages the NPA water supply infrastructure. Using this infrastructure, residents in the five communities on the NPA draw their water from the Jardine River. The water is pumped 15.4 kilometres via a 300mm diameter AC Class D pipeline with unlined ductile iron fittings to an elevated fifty kilolitre surge tank. Water treatment comprises an earth storage for settlement of solids and disinfection by gaseous chlorine. The treated water is pumped to two, 910 kilolitre storage tanks at Bamaga which show signs of corrosion and leakage. Water is then gravitated via distributed mains which vary in size from 250mm to 100mm in diameter to smaller storage tanks at Injinoo and Seisia. The tanks at Seisia are the only ones that are fenced to keep out animals and trespassers. There are presently no water storage facilities at New Mapoon or Umagico. The size of the pipes and storage system means that the supply has a capacity of 0.21megalitres/day compared to peak demand of 0.85 megalitres/day. The village reticulation systems for Bamaga, New Mapoon and Umagico are connected directly to the distribution mains (DNR, NPA Water Supply Appendix A:4-6).

70. Since February 1996, the Department of Families, Youth & Community Care has been carrying out tests on the quality of the water from the NPA water supply. Prior to this, the department had not carried out tests for an extended period of time. The results show that for almost every test, the water samples do not meet the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Drinking Water Guidelines. The water has very low hardness and alkalinity which means that chlorination of the water will significantly lower the pH level. The low pH level encourages high levels of corrosive by-products in the water such as copper, nickel, chromium, iron, magnesium and lead. This corrodes the pipes and reduces their life. Residents on the NPA need to boil their water prior to using it for cooking or drinking due to the ineffectiveness of the water treatment facilities (DNR, NPA Water Supply Appendix A:7, DNR, TMP for Injinoo, Summary Document:11).

Waste water disposal systems

71. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on Cape York use several different systems to dispose of waste water. Aurukun, Injinoo, Kowanyama, Mornington Island, Napranum, New Mapoon and Umagico communities benefit from fully reticulated sewerage systems. These systems pump the effluent to treatment lagoons where it usually evaporates. Only Aurukun pumps its treated effluent into the nearby Archer River.
72. Houses and community facilities at Doomadgee, Hopevale, Lockhart River and Yarrabah use Common Effluent Disposal (CED) systems. CED systems collect the effluent from septic tanks and pump it to treatment lagoons. Only Bamaga, Old Mapoon, Pormpuraaw, Seisia and Wujal Wujal still have septic systems with soakage trenches. Soakage trenches are problematic and ineffective in many of these communities due to clayey soils and the rising of the water table during the wet season. A quarter of the septic tanks in Wujal Wujal are connected to a common effluent system. This system discharges primary effluent directly into the Bloomfield River within the town area. The community draws its water from the river and during

high tides, the town water supply could become contaminated (DNR, TMP for Wujal Wujal, Summary Document:6).

73. Bamaga and Pormpuraaw still have earth closets and night pans for some houses for the disposal of night soil. The night soil is collected several times each week and buried in layers in trenches in the night soil disposal ground. At the northern end of the settlement at Old Mapoon, the people use pit latrines.
74. The replacement value of the waste water disposal infrastructure on these communities ranges from \$3.655 million for the assets at Doomadgee to \$256,000 for the sewerage systems at Pormpuraaw.
75. Towns within Cook shire also experience problems with their waste water disposal system. The septic system at Coen is inadequate and not working properly and the sewerage effluent at Cooktown is currently being discharged into the Cooktown harbour which is linked to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park by the Endeavour River (submission 5).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

76. The Preliminary Planning Reports and the Asset Management Reports within the TMPs for each community detail the capital and maintenance work respectively that local governments and community councils need to carry out over the next ten years to improve the water related infrastructure. The purpose of the suggested capital and maintenance works is to gain maximum value from the existing infrastructure and ensure that there is a safe, adequate water supply and sanitation system for the community. The plans have taken into account projected population growths to the year 2006. The TMPs provide a strategic planning document for the community councils and Mornington and Aurukun local councils to ensure that their water infrastructure meets their water needs.

Water supply

77. Water is one of the three basic needs of human beings for survival. The lack of drinkable water on some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is one of the reasons these people are said to be living in third world conditions. Contaminated water can cause many gastro-intestinal diseases such as diarrhoea. Clean water, for washing and drinking, is also needed for the prevention of illnesses such as renal diseases and skin infections such as scabies. Providing communities with access to adequate supplies of clean water is an extremely effective preventative health measure.
78. Twelve of the sixteen communities in the inquiry area identified water supply as the number one priority area for infrastructure improvements in their community during

the TMP process.⁴ This highlights the poor quality of the water supply infrastructure and the importance of drinkable water for the health of the community.

79. Cook Shire Council realises the urgent need to provide residents in the shire with a safe, adequate supply of drinking water but has been unable to carry out sufficient investigations to determine the best water sources and the best ways to distribute the water in Portland Roads, Rossville and Ayton. The council has a very small income from its rates base and is unable to employ the water engineers and planners necessary to fully service the shire. To provide water for Marton (which is only twelve kilometres from Cooktown), the council proposes constructing a trunk main from Cooktown and a water reticulation system to service the twenty-five dwellings. Marton may also require a reservoir. The council also proposes enlarging the capacity of the dam at Coen and building new reservoirs at Lakeland.

Waste water disposal

80. For communities which draw their water supply from the ground (rivers, creeks, bores or springs), the performance of the waste water disposal system in the removal of effluent is inextricably linked to the quality of the water supply. If effluent seeps into the water table or rivers, this contaminates the water supply and the risks of contracting one of the diseases discussed above multiplies. Functioning sewerage, septic or CED systems lead to a healthy living environment.
81. Three of the sixteen communities in the inquiry area (Aurukun, Pormpuraaw and Wujal Wujal) identified the replacement, upgrading or extension of their existing sewerage system as a number one priority for their community in the TMP process. Four communities nominated sewerage as their second priority.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work

82. Over the last five years, the Asset Management Unit, now located within the Department of Natural Resources, has carried out minor capital works and minor repairs on water and sewerage infrastructure on most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The largest expenditure was \$360,000 at Bamaga to replace the diesel driven pump with an electric pump at the Jardine River pumping station in 1995. Other works ranged from installing a solar powered bore pump at Old Mapoon to rearranging the water treatment plant pipework at Doomadgee. It pleases the committee to see the department carrying out upgrading and maintenance work, albeit limited, on the water and sewerage infrastructure. This represents value for money as it extends the life of the infrastructure.

⁴ The TMPs only cover water (water supply, sewerage, storm water drainage) and transport (roads, aircraft and jetty facilities) infrastructure and solid waste disposal.

Water supply

83. Another value adding activity of the Department of Natural Resources is the training of community water officers (TSRA Annual Report:48). When staff from the department's Asset Management Unit travel to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to carry out minor repairs, they give hands-on training to community water officers to increase the community's self-reliance in management and control of their water infrastructure. Hope Vale Community Council is paying for two people from their community to complete a four year apprenticeship in plumbing with the Asset Management Unit (transcript:113). The Unit is also working with a training committee chaired by the Department of Training and Industrial Relations to develop and implement a holistic, coordinated training strategy for water officers on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (correspondence from DNR 1.5.97:1).
 84. As part of the proposed on-going management of the NPA water supply infrastructure the State Water Projects unit within the Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the five community councils, will develop and implement a program of training and technology transfer covering operation, maintenance and management of the water supply system. The aim is to train the local people to be able to manage their water infrastructure assets by the year 2004 (submission 22). The Department of Local Government and Planning has already allocated \$5 million of the \$10 million required to upgrade the NPA water supply infrastructure. The department requires companies bidding for the capital works contracts to submit training programs as part of their tender. The State Water Projects unit of the Department of Natural Resources will monitor the training provided. The committee commends the work of the Department of Natural Resources in training Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to manage their water supply infrastructure.
 85. During the dry season on Cape York there is sometimes a shortage of water, while during the wet season water can be a curse and not a blessing. The shortage of water during the dry season is exacerbated by people using treated water to irrigate gardens, lawns, sporting fields and crops, suppress dust, wash gravel and make concrete. Most communities on Cape York have access to supplies of non-treated water. Generally the water source(s) used by the community before the installation of proper storage tanks and treatment facilities are still available. Several communities have expressed a desire to redevelop these sources (eg. springs, wells and weirs) to provide sufficient non-potable water for use on gardens, ovals, roads and making concrete (DNR, NPA Water Supply Appendix A:4). The committee supports this idea.
 86. The Department of Natural Resources has done some preliminary research into redeveloping ground water bores on the NPA. They estimate that this will cost about \$100,000 (transcript:117).
 87. The Office of Sport and Recreation would also like to see treated sewerage effluent used to fertilise playing fields (transcript:88). Encouraging grass to grow on ovals is an important part of maintaining the infrastructure and increasing its use. Cook Shire Council is seeking \$150,000 to use their treated sewerage effluent on their parks, sporting fields, botanic gardens and a new wetlands area rather than discharging it into the Cooktown Harbour (submission 5).
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88. The safe and efficient use of non-potable water and treated sewerage effluent will reduce the need to augment the capacity of the water supply infrastructure as the population increases in the future. Developing sources of non-potable water and redirecting treated sewerage effluent onto playing fields, gardens etc. requires cooperation between funding bodies such as ATSIC and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program, community councils as the owners of the water and sporting infrastructure and the Department of Natural Resources as the agency which assists communities to manage, operate and maintain their water infrastructure.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Minister for Natural Resources and the Minister for Local Government and Planning work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils and local governments in Cape York to develop or redevelop sources of non-potable water and investigate the use of treated sewerage effluent to fertilise playing fields and parks.

89. None of the communities on Cape York have metered water supplies, although there are plans to introduce them on the NPA (transcript:116). The TMPs document that overuse of water is a problem on most communities during the dry season and particularly on Kowanyama (DNR, TMP for Kowanyama, Summary Document:12), Napranum (DNR, TMP for Napranum, Summary document:9) and Pormpuraaw (DNR, TMP for Pormpuraaw, Summary Document:11). When the committee visited the NPA, it noticed sprinklers being used to water lawns in the middle of the day. Hopefully this was an isolated incident. The recently established WaterWise committee on the NPA is implementing a WaterWise program and organised a water festival in May.
90. WaterWise is a public education campaign that the Department of Natural Resources introduced in 1992. Ninety-four Queensland local government councils are partners in the campaign but Cook, Aurukun and Mornington shires are yet to join. WaterWise staff and officers from the Department of Natural Resources based in Cairns have worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils on Cape York to develop a public education campaign which specifically targets indigenous communities (correspondence from DNR 1.5.97:5). WaterWise programs should increase the value for money of water supply infrastructure but, as the above anecdotal evidence shows, could be more effective.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Minister for Natural Resources commit sufficient funds to, and review, the current WaterWise education strategies to ensure that the WaterWise campaign on Cape York is effective.

91. Community councils do not charge water rates or connection fees for water and sewerage. All commercial operators and residents receive their water free of charge. The committee learnt that in Bamaga, the owner of the concrete batching plant is selling concrete to the council for around \$300 per cubic metre when about 80% of concrete is water and this is provided free of charge. This issue is addressed in greater detail in paragraphs 317-321.

Waste water disposal

92. In some communities, particularly Doomadgee, Injinoo and Umagico, the waste water disposal systems are working well and generally meeting the communities' needs. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program, then located within the then Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, funded the installation of these sewerage and CED systems from 1991-1993 (DNR, TMPs for Doomadgee, Injinoo and Umagico, Summary Documents:4-6).
93. The government achieves value for money from the waste water disposal systems it funds when they are appropriately designed and takes into account environmental factors (the type of soils, level of the water table, amount of water available) and the needs of the community (high usage or low usage toilets). The government must also ensure that contractors install waste water systems properly and educate the community about their appropriate use and maintenance. During the inquiry, the committee became aware of several instances where this did not occur. For example: at Kowanyama, in 1984-85 the then Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement located effluent disposal ponds in an area which is subject to flooding (DAIA:13, submission 10). ATSIC has allocated \$880,000 to (among other things) improve the sewerage treatment and reticulation system at Kowanyama.⁵ Within the state government, the responsibility for assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop and operate appropriate waste water disposal systems now lies with the minister responsible for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program, the Minister for Local Government and Planning.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning consult with community councils and specialist appropriate technology bodies when designing and installing waste water disposal systems in communities, reserves, outstations and remote towns in Cape York.

94. The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. informed the committee that the then Department of Local Government and Housing funded the installation of Aerobic Waste Treatments systems in twenty-three houses in Coen. These systems have failed to treat the sewerage effluent. During the wet season Coen stinks and untreated effluent can be seen in gardens and on the streets. The local health clinic has recorded unacceptable high rates of diarrhoea and gastroenteritis for the past three wet seasons. It appears that the selected waste treatment systems are too small for the average size household in Coen; that they rely on a constant and reliable power source which is not available in Coen; and that the installation was not supported by community and user education. The committee finds it curious that the department chose to install an underground treatment system even though the previous underground septic system failed during the wet season due to the rising of the water table and the inability of the soils to absorb more moisture (submission 10; transcript:4). Cook Shire Council

⁵ ATSIC will use the \$880,000 to “increase water storage capacity; improve sewerage treatment and reticulation; repair and seal roads.” This is funded under the HIPP (correspondence to the committee, ATSIC 28.4.97:2).

estimate that it will cost \$2 million to install a sewerage system in Coen (submission 5).

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning develop and conduct a community awareness and user education campaign to coincide with the installation of new waste water disposal technology in communities, outstations, reserves and towns in Cape York.

95. Waste water in Cooktown is currently removed by both septic and sewerage systems. The Cook Shire Council wants to extend the sewerage system to the rest of the town and change the discharge point for sewerage. Instead of pumping treated effluent into the Cooktown harbour, the council plans to distribute it to existing parks, sporting fields, the botanic gardens and a wetlands area which it will establish as part of the project. This will reduce the need to use fully treated drinking water for irrigation. The sewerage effluent reuse project, which is estimated to cost \$150,000, represents value for money as it conserves water, improves the Cooktown surrounds, reduces the need to use chemical fertilisers and reduces contamination of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (submission 5).

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

96. Queensland Treasury allocates the Asset Management Unit within the Department of Natural Resources base funds of \$470,000 per year. Funding for minor capital works (\$455,000 per year) and emergency funding for minor repair works (\$200,000 per year) brings their annual budget to \$1,125,000. This allocation is intended to cover the water related infrastructure repair needs of all thirty-three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland. The department does not currently receive funds for repair and maintenance work at Old Mapoon or on reserves or outstations (submission 22).
97. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program has \$26 million for capital works in all infrastructure areas on all thirty-four indigenous communities in Queensland. This funding was over a three year period and runs out in June 1998 (submission 23:8).
98. The Department of Natural Resources estimates that communities (within the inquiry area) need a combined total of \$8.4 million is needed to properly operate and maintain their water supply, sewerage/septic and stormwater drainage infrastructure over a two year period. The TMPs estimated that governments need \$51 million to provide “essential” capital works for water related infrastructure on these Cape York communities to the year 2006 (submission 22). The gap between the funds needed for capital works and operations and maintenance and the funds currently available to the Departments of Natural Resources and Local Government and Planning is enormous. An annual allocation of \$1.125 million when \$59.4 million is needed over a ten year period will barely fill the holes in a leaking bucket. Some funds are available from the commonwealth government through HIPP, however this will not meet all the identified needs. More funds are needed to provide vital water related infrastructure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and reserves and outstations.

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government and Planning and the Minister for Natural Resources seek additional funds for capital works and the operations and maintenance of water related infrastructure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, reserves, outstations and towns in Cape York.

99. The Department of Natural Resources, based on data collected during the TMP process, estimates that it will cost \$10,768,000 to upgrade the water supply infrastructure on the NPA to meet safety standards. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program within the Department of Local Government and Planning has recently allocated \$5 million towards the first phase of upgrading of the water infrastructure on the NPA. The Department of Natural Resources is managing phase one which involves:
- upgrading or constructing reservoirs at Bamaga, New Mapoon, Seisia, Umagico and Injinoo with concrete tanks and connecting pipework;
 - upgrading trunk mains from New Mapoon to Seisia;
 - upgrading rising mains to New Mapoon and Umagico/Injinoo reservoirs; and
 - producing commercial design and documentation for the future upgrading of the water treatment facilities.
100. The TMPs highlighted the urgent need for this work and the Department of Natural Resources expects to complete the above work by August 1997 (correspondence from DNR 1.5.97:2-3).
101. The reason the cost of this capital and maintenance work is so high is because the owner of the infrastructure did not maintain it properly for the first twenty years of its life. It was not until 1995, that the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care appointed a qualified plumber and two gangers from the local community to do maintenance work on the NPA water infrastructure. In late 1995, the department funded the installation of three new electric pumps at the Jardine pump station. After twelve months, only one pump was operating without defects. One pump vibrated excessively when working and the other leaked oil from the electric motor and grease from the seal, which contaminated the water supply. These two pumps eventually seized up and had to be taken to Cairns for reconditioning. In the meantime, the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care purchased an additional pump to keep the water system operating. Geoff Stevenson (the plumber employed by the department on the NPA) told the committee that the pumps were supposed to require low maintenance but the instruction booklet for the pumps recommends weekly inspections of the oil level. The Jardine pump station is only accessible by dingy during the wet season and crocodiles are common (DNR: NPA Water Supply Appendix A:8).
102. If the department (then the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement) had responded to the recommendations in the infrastructure development reports for the five NPA communities which it commissioned consultants Edmiston and Taylor to complete in 1989, the cost of upgrading the water supply infrastructure on the NPA
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would not be as high as it is today. Due to twenty years of neglect, the pipes and valves have deteriorated significantly and most of them need to be replaced rather than repaired. Mr Stevenson told the committee that he estimates that 300-400 valves will need replacing over a period of time at a cost of about \$1000 each. The risk of one of the distribution mains becoming blocked, one of the valves bursting or one of the storage tanks splitting at the seams is very high, especially during the wet season. If this happens, the NPA communities are only guaranteed a reticulated water supply for a further six hours. The cost of barging in water is astronomical. Therefore, the \$5 million allocated to the NPA water supply infrastructure represents a step in the right direction and value for money.

103. Cook Shire Council estimates that it will cost \$3.95 million to provide a safe, adequate water supply for Marton, Rossville, Ayton, Coen, Lakeland and Portland Roads. However, due to the need for more investigative work this is only a rough estimate (submission 5).

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment

104. As previously mentioned, an adequate supply of drinkable water is essential for the prevention and treatment of many diseases. The removal of waste through sewerage or septic systems is also important for preventing the spread of water borne diseases and maintaining a healthy living environment. Improving water-related infrastructure will increase the livability of communities and dramatically decrease the costs and pressures on the public health system.

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

105. The Department of Natural Resources is managing the upgrading of the water infrastructure on the NPA. They have asked the local community councils to do the earthworks for the new concrete tanks, appointed contractors to build the tanks (after a tendering process) and appointed consulting engineers and planners Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey to prepare designs for future water treatment facilities (transcript:114).

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

106. Most community councils that the committee spoke to were happy with the standard of construction of the water related infrastructure that was available on their community.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

107. The Department of Natural Resources is currently coordinating the development of commercial designs and documentation for the future upgrading of the water treatment facilities on the NPA. Geoff Stevenson is sending weekly water samples to the department for testing so that it can use the results to develop the most appropriate water treatment facilities for the NPA.

108. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program will provide funds for the following water-related projects on Cape York over the next year, based on the prioritisation methodology it developed to prioritise the work suggested in the TMPs (exhibit 2a).

Table 1: Water-related projects in the inquiry area which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program will fund in 1997-98

| Community | Project | Suggested funding |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Hopevale | dam | \$2.6 million |
| Lockhart River | sewerage | \$1 million |
| Yarrabah | sewerage | \$0.8 million (stage 2) |
| Wujal Wujal | sewerage | \$1.5 million |
| Doomadgee | stormwater drainage | \$95,000 |
| Kowanyama | waste disposal | \$95,000 |
| Aurukun | waste disposal | \$20,000 |

UTILITIES — POWER**THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

109. Electric, gas and solar power is used on Cape York. Electricity is provided by the Far North Queensland Electricity Board (FNQEB) which is a Government Owned Corporation within the Department of Mines and Energy. The state government transferred ownership of, and responsibility for, the electricity assets on Cape York to FNQEB in 1992. The statewide electricity grid provides electricity to Hopevale, Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal, Laura, Lakeland, Cooktown and surrounding towns through. FNQEB purchases electricity from the Comalco power station at Weipa and sells it at the statewide equalised tariff to residents at Weipa and Napranum. All other communities on the Cape have their own power stations with full reticulation or diesel generators. The power stations consist of generating sets, auxiliaries, fuel storage and handling, switchboards and control systems, tools, plant and equipment, a distribution system for high and low voltage and sometimes accommodation for staff. The total replacement cost for these isolated systems within the inquiry area is \$8,287,021 (submission 17:4, 7).
110. Power is sold to all residents on Cape York at the statewide equalised tariff of nine to ten cents per kilowatt per hour. The cost of generating that power is between twenty to forty cents per kilowatt. The difference, about \$17 million a year, is paid by the Department of Mines and Energy as a community service obligation. When a council builds a house, it pays an initial connection fee and an initial generation contribution fee of \$1000 per kilowatt if they use more than two kilowatts of power for air-conditioning (transcript:38).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

111. Capital upgrades and maintenance work on the isolated electricity systems are necessary to keep up with demand which is currently growing at about 10-15% per annum. When FNQEB initially took over in 1992, the growth in demand for power was as high as 35-40%. Demand is directly linked to the development of community infrastructure such as housing, shops, services, water and sewerage.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS**3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work**

112. FNQEB argues that the government will achieve greater value for money by coordinating the provision of infrastructure and services. For example: the design and construction of buildings which are energy efficient may incur higher initial construction costs but would lower electricity needs and lower the government's on-going community service obligation payments. The primary costs may be greater but the reduction in the on-going operational costs would represent an overall saving for the government.
113. The committee saw many examples of buildings on Cape York which are similar in design to buildings in Brisbane but fitted with an air conditioner to suit the climate.

Cooling a large grocery store requires many kilowatts of power. The council clerk and other workers at Bamaga live in ATCO-type houses. These are hot boxes which need constant air-conditioning. FNQEB estimates that the government could save \$3000 per annum per installation if councils built houses that maximise natural ventilation. This step would also reduce the demands on the electricity system and the resident's own electricity bill. FNQEB has built houses for staff on Mornington Island and Normanton which cost about \$3500 extra in insulation, wide rooves, windows and positioning to catch the natural breezes, but saves the corporation, and the government, about \$3000 every year in power costs. (transcript:37-39, submission 17:4).

114. In a bid to improve value for money, communities are exploring alternative sources of power. Two to three years ago, the Mornington Island Community Council installed solar hot water systems on most of the houses in the community. While the installation cost was four times that of electric hot water, the houses now have cheaper hot water. However, maintenance can be costly, especially when the solar panels are broken or vandalised. FNQEB have noticed that most residents on Mornington Island are not reaping the full benefits of solar power, as the electric boosters, which help to heat the water, are left on all the time (transcript:40-41). This happens easily when the booster switch is not in a prominent place and people forget to switch it off. A public awareness campaign about using solar power and wiring to make the booster turn itself off automatically once the water is heated would enhance the value for money of solar power installations.
115. While solar power is a good alternative, it is not suitable for all communities. Solar power requires a high quality water supply, otherwise the pipes deteriorate quickly and maintenance or replacement costs become exorbitant. Once the water quality on communities improves, solar power will become a more viable and cost-effective alternative.
116. Providing appropriate sources of power for outstations and some remote reserves is problematic. The government has paid for the installation of diesel generators on some outstations but this cripples the communities as they have to find funds to purchase diesel (submission 10). Diesel power costs the consumer about one to two dollars per kilowatt compared to public electricity which costs ten cents per kilowatt.
117. Because people have to pay for the power they use, albeit at subsidised rates, they have some appreciation of the cost of providing electricity. FNQEB provided some briefing sessions for communities in the Torres Strait when they installed new power stations on the islands. They encountered some cultural beliefs about light and dark which they were not prepared for. A culturally sensitive, public education campaign about responsible electricity usage and alternative sources of power may heighten awareness of power costs and ways of saving energy. FNQEB and the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. are just two organisations which would be capable of conducting a public education campaign. In the long term, this may result in a saving for the government.

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the Minister for Mines and Energy engage appropriate organisation(s) to conduct a public education campaign about power generation and usage for people on Cape York.

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

118. FNQEB spends between \$1.5 million and \$2.5 million per year on capital works to upgrade the isolated electricity systems (exhibit 1a). This is an off-budget item which impacts on the corporation's profit and loss and return on access.
119. On budget costs total about \$20 million per year. These costs consist of generation costs (twenty to forty cents per kilowatt); distribution costs (four cents per kilowatt); depreciation, finance etc. (five cents per kilowatt) and the eight percent return on access required by the government. The corporation raises about \$6 million a year through the sale of electricity (exhibit 1a).

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment

120. Communities need electricity to operate office equipment, pump water, flush toilets, and, in the absence of gas or solar power, to heat water and fuel stoves and ovens. Many of these needs are essential to the health of a community. When diesel generators break down or the power is switched off, people's health and sanitation is at risk.
121. To avoid blackouts, FNQEB have put at least three motors in isolated power stations. Two motors are needed to generate power during peak times. In this way, if one of the generators breaks down or needs repairs, FNQEB can still provide power. The high reliability of the system impressed the committee.
122. However, during its inspections at Napranum, the committee learnt that there is no back up power supply for the community if the power supply from Comalco fails. A small, emergency generator would enable the community to operate their fully reticulated water and sewerage system during a blackout and prevent health risks.
123. An extensive community planning and consultation process, facilitated by the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. in 1995, helped to maximise the public value of providing power and other infrastructure at Old Mapoon. During the consultation process, the majority of residents at Old Mapoon indicated that they would prefer to live in houses which are separated from their neighbours by bushland and run along the coast. This is very different to the usual grid layout of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The elongated town plan makes water, sewerage and electricity reticulation more expensive in the short term, but the town plan is less disruptive of the natural environment, provides for a healthy living environment and is more attuned to the kinship ties of the people. This will enhance the social conditions, thereby reducing crime, vandalism and imprisonment. Cooperation between FNQEB, ATSIC (who have provided funds for six new houses, roads, a diesel generator and a reticulated electricity supply) and the community, and the initial planning process has

ensured that the provision of electricity for Old Mapoon is congruent with the community's plan for a spread out town and has a minimal impact on the natural environment (CAT 1997:4). However, unlike all other Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities, the state government is not providing the residents of Old Mapoon with subsidised power. While all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities can purchase power at about ten cents a kilowatt, people at Old Mapoon have to pay about thirty cents per kilowatt. FNQEB is currently talking to the Department of Mines and Energy about providing a public electricity supply to Old Mapoon in the near future (transcript:38).

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Minister for Mines and Energy:

- (a) direct the Far North Queensland Electricity Board to provide an emergency generator for Napranum; and**
- (b) direct the Department of Mines and Energy to extend their community service obligation to provide the residents of Old Mapoon with a subsidised power supply.**

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

124. FNQEB does contract out some of its installation and maintenance work to companies in the private sector. About 90% of the work is done by FNQEB and about 10% by private contractors.

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

125. Most of the communities that the committee visited seemed happy with the power supplied by FNQEB. Faulty wiring in homes is still a problem, but this is more the responsibility of the electrician who is employed when the house is built rather than FNQEB. However, FNQEB told the committee that it is their policy to check all electrical house wiring before they connect the electricity supply (transcript:39). Perhaps these checks are not as thorough as they need to be as the Housing for Health project found evidence of a brand new house in Pormpuraaw where one entire power circuit was wrongly wired and unsafe, the solar hot water units were wrongly wired and unsafe and people were getting electric shocks from taps in the yard and the house. There were also numerous houses where power points in the laundry were installed too close to taps (submission 10).

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Far North Queensland Electricity Board review their electrical inspection process;**

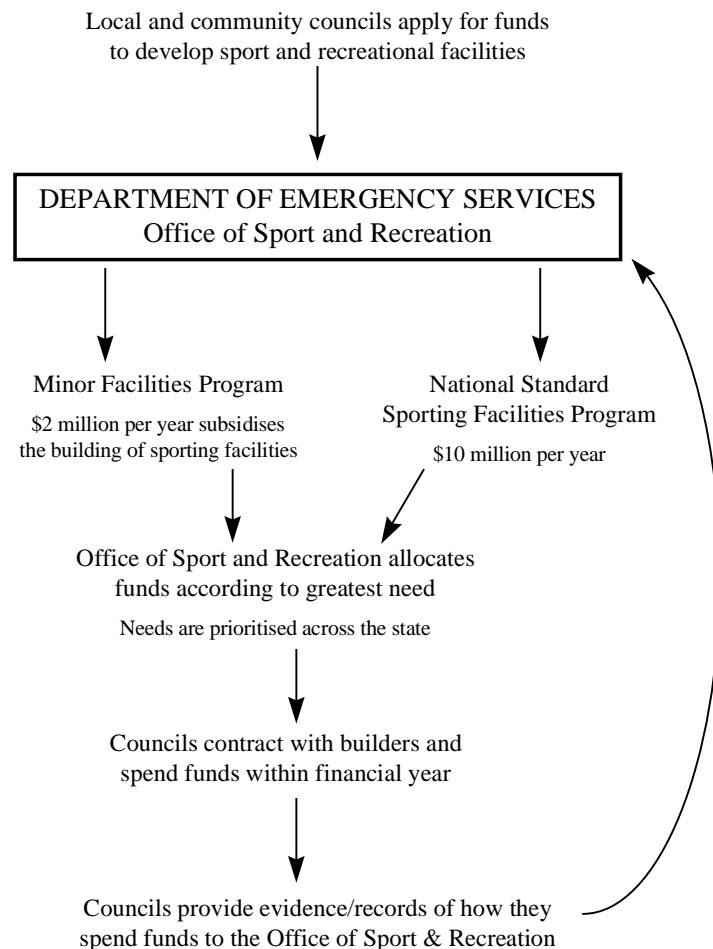
- (b) the review include measures to ensure that employees correctly and thoroughly conduct inspections; and**
- (c) the Minister for Mines and Energy table in parliament the results of the review with his response to this report.**

SPORTING FACILITIES

THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

126. The committee found a range of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities of varying conditions in Cape York. Larger communities such as Hope Vale, Napranum, Yarrabah, Kowanyama, Aurukun and Bamaga generally have facilities which are in average to good condition, although the councils are currently upgrading the ovals at Bamaga and Aurukun (see table 7, Appendix F). There are a wide range of facilities at Weipa, some of which are partly funded by Comalco. Mareeba has ovals, courts and a golf course and Kuranda has an oval and basketball courts. Football is popular at Mossman Gorge reserve but there is no oval or other sporting facilities (exhibit 4a).
127. The residents of Cooktown and the surrounding towns believe they have out grown the old shire hall which was built in 1890 and the CWA (Country Women's Association) hall. These are the only venues for indoor social activities in the town which has a population of nearly 4000 people (submission 5). For outdoor recreation, there are two ovals, a bowling green, golf courts, and basketball and tennis courts. The committee received submissions from the Cooktown and District Cricket Association Inc. (no. 4) and the Rossville and District Citizens Association (no. 8) concerning the need for new or upgraded facilities in their towns. There are no sporting facilities in Rossville which is a village of approximately 150 people located forty kilometres south of Cooktown. Due to the poor quality of the dirt roads and the extensive wet season, it is often impossible for Rossville residents to travel to Cooktown to use the oval or courts.
128. The Office of Sport and Recreation, which is part of the Department of Emergency Services, provides funds under the Minor Facilities Program and the National Standard Sporting Facilities Program to local councils wishing to upgrade or build sporting facilities (see diagram 2). The Minor Facilities Program aims to provide sporting facilities for use in local and regional sporting events. Under this program, the Office of Sport and Recreation provides grants of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for up to 50% of the estimated eligible costs of a project up to the value of \$500,000. The minister has the discretion to approve grants covering the full cost of the project. The National Standard Sporting Facilities Program provides grants for larger facilities which cater for international, national, state and regional competitions. Under this program, the Office of Sport and Recreation will subsidise the local council for up to 50% of the total eligible costs of the project (submission 24:1). Both of these programs are for capital works only. Because these are both grants programs, the grant applicant owns the facilities and the Office of Sport and Recreation expects them to raise funds for the operations and maintenance of the facilities.

Diagram 2: Allocation of funds to communities by the Office of Sport and Recreation



THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

129. The committee received several submissions which highlighted the positive effects of sporting facilities and programs on young people and the community in general (submissions 2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 24). Sport is one of the few recreational activities available in remote isolated communities where people can not access picture theatres, shopping malls, video game arcades, a variety of TV channels (only ABC and channel 10 are transmitted to the NPA), museums, art galleries (see paragraphs 277-281) and libraries. The past state member for Cook and part-time commissioner of the QCSC

stressed to the committee that the ability to play sport in one's local area provides an outlet for anger and energy, relieves boredom, deters young people from abusing alcohol, sniffing petrol and acts of vandalism (transcript:28). As the Rossville and District Citizens Association commented, the availability of "*active healthy activities*" for residents, and particularly young people, "*impacts on health, law and order and education*" (submission 8:1).

130. Colin Tatz's recent book *Obstacle Race: Aborigines in Sport* argues strongly that when Aboriginal people play sport, it adds meaning to their lives, relieves boredom and tensions, enhances their self-respect, provides a schedule, gives them a sense of power and control over their lives and builds community. Sport also helps communities to overcome problems such as substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, violence and health problems (Tatz:297-339). A former doctor from an Aboriginal community in Queensland described sport as a "*contract to be of good behaviour — there is much to lose if one is thrown out*" of the team (Tatz:334). Tatz uses the example of Palm Island where "*in 1989 arrests for violent offences were half the 1988 figure — a fact that correlates with the installation of lights at the oval...*" (Tatz:334). Building sporting facilities can therefore save money and resources in other areas of government service provision. For these reasons, the committee believes that sporting facilities for males and females are a necessary and valuable infrastructure asset.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work

131. Given the necessity for sporting facilities and the savings they can generate in law and order and health portfolios if fully utilised, the committee believes the construction and upgrading of sporting facilities represents value for money. Organised sporting events, inter-school competitions, and regional matches, be they competitive or social, lead to greater utilisation of the facilities and therefore, greater value for money. The committee is pleased to see that most communities in Cape York have a designated sport and recreation officer. This is usually a local person on a traineeship. As part of their training, the person goes to the Cairns TAFE for on-site training and assists residents in their local community to organise cultural, recreational and sporting activities (exhibit 4a).
132. However, the government would achieve greater value for money if it assisted remote communities to maintain their facilities. The lack of routine maintenance carried out on sporting infrastructure is a "major issue" for the department and can contribute to the decline in use of sporting facilities (transcript:89). In larger towns and cities, local councils can charge sporting clubs for the use of community ovals, courts and halls. Clubs in turn charge players a membership fee. This is the main way they raise revenue to maintain their facilities. Hiring out facilities is not an option for small, remote communities where there may only be one football or cricket club and parents are struggling to pay rent and buy food, let alone pay club fees.
133. If there were skilled people on the community who could fix fences, spectator seating, basketball hoops, line marking etc. as required, then maintaining sporting facilities would not be as expensive or time consuming. If a community only has one oval or

hall and this can not be used for several months while they are waiting for someone from Cairns or Mt Isa to come and carry out repairs, the recreational program can break down and young people may seek other less healthy pursuits.

134. The Far North Queensland Institute of TAFE training program for Sport and Recreation Officers contains three modules which cover facilities programming and management but does not include training in constructing, maintaining or upgrading facilities (transcript:89). This is an issue the TAFE curriculum advisers within the Department of Training and Industrial Relations should consider.
135. One way of tackling the maintenance issue is for the Office of Sport and Recreation to appoint maintenance officers to service towns or communities in an isolated region. Maintenance officers could travel to communities regularly and on request to “service” the sporting infrastructure. They could also train local people to maintain their own facilities as they do their rounds. Perhaps the maintenance of sporting facilities could be an activity incorporated into the recreational program or CDEP program in remote regions. Maintenance officers could lead sessions on re-marking basketball courts and repairing broken seats while they were in the area. Although the government does not own the sporting facilities, the appointment of at least one maintenance officer to the Cape York region would be a valuable investment in the infrastructure funded through the department.

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Minister for Sport discuss with the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations the option of modifying the Far North Queensland Institute of TAFE training course for Sport and Recreation Officers to include a component on facilities maintenance; and**
- (b) until Sport and Recreation Officers receive training to maintain sporting facilities, that the Minister for Sport appoint maintenance officer(s) to the Cape York region to assist communities to maintain sporting facilities.**

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

136. From 1994-1996, the Office of Sport and Recreation has granted a total of \$191,843 to communities in Cape York for the construction or upgrading of sporting facilities (see table 8, Appendix F). Cooktown Shire Council is seeking \$1.5 million to build a multi-purpose indoor sports and entertainment centre in Cooktown. The Rossville and District Citizens Association Inc. has raised \$12,000 but needs more funds to build a large covered area, playing field, storage shed and toilets and showers. Given the added expenses associated with building in a remote area, the committee considers the above costs to be satisfactory.

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment.

137. The committee has already commented on the positive impact that well utilised sporting facilities can have on a community (see paragraphs 129-130). Arranging inter-area sporting matches can boost local economies as spectators and teams travel to play and the media may even travel to the area to cover the finals. The Department of Local Government and Planning, through its Rural Living Improvement Program, provided funds for the erection of fences and ablution facilities and the planting of trees around sporting venues which can help to improve the local environment.

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

138. Once the Office of Sport & Recreation approves a grant, the grantee calls for tenders for the work. Both private and public sector agencies can bid for the contract. Some councils make the use of local CDEP labour a condition of the contract.

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

139. The committee noticed that most of the sporting facilities it inspected were in poor condition due to lack of routine maintenance rather than poor initial construction.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

140. The Office of Sport and Recreation has provided funds to seven communities in Cape York to build or upgrade local sporting facilities (see table 9, Appendix F) as part of the 1997 Minor Facilities Grants program.

EDUCATION**THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

141. Due to an extensive capital works program in the 1980s most remote communities in Cape York have facilities for primary school students. Aurukun, Bamaga, Doomadgee, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mornington Island, Weipa North and Yarrabah state schools also have secondary departments which allow students to study until year ten. The department provides full high schools at Thursday Island, Cairns, Cooktown, Mareeba, Kuranda, Mossman and Mt Isa (submission 13).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

142. Over the last five years, Education Queensland has added nutritional centres, secure stores, covered sports areas, pre-school facilities, new toilets, fences, classrooms, resource centres and staff accommodation to existing school facilities. Nutritional centres are an excellent initiative. They provide healthy food to school children at subsidised prices. Fences around school properties help to keep dogs out (where that is school policy) and children in. Covered playing areas are essential in tropical climates and suitable accommodation helps Education Queensland to attract and retain teachers (submission 13).
143. Education Queensland is building a primary school at Old Mapoon on the west coast of Cape York. Without a primary school at Mapoon, the children would probably not get a western education as the road to Weipa is virtually unpassable during the wet season. Education helps people to participate fully in society, increases their employment options and gives them skills such as literacy and numeracy which are important in a modern world.
144. Education Queensland also transports teachers to outstations on a regular basis. While the department does not have any designated school buildings on outstations, it still needs to provide teachers with transport (road or air), camping equipment and educational resources (submission 13).
145. When the committee inspected the school premises at Aurukun, it noticed that some of the classrooms were old demountables with flat tin rooves and no insulation. The temperature inside these classrooms can reach 42 degrees Celsius in summer. There is also no purpose built pre-school as the old one was wrecked by vandals a few years ago. The Aurukun council has asked Education Queensland for a purpose built pre-school for many years but with no success. The pre-school children currently use an old classroom on school grounds. The students and teachers at Aurukun urgently need new classrooms with natural ventilation to replace the demountable classrooms and a pre-school.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work

146. As previously mentioned, (see paragraph 36) construction in remote areas in Cape York is expensive. However, the on-going costs of operating and maintaining school buildings is increased when school building designs do not account for the needs of their particular student group or the climate. Aboriginal children often prefer to learn sitting in a circle rather than rows and by doing as well as listening. It is difficult for teachers to accommodate these cultural learning styles if they only have a blackboard which is fixed to one wall of the classroom and limited materials and resources.
147. A representative from Education Queensland told the committee that *“in design, the schools [on Cape York] are very much the same as any school down here. ...Air conditioned classrooms are not always the best in places where you get a nice sea breeze”* (transcript:100). During its inspections, the committee saw examples of well designed school buildings in Lockhart River and Aurukun. Classrooms were upstairs and had walls of louvres to increase air flow. The installation of air flow ventilators and greater roof over hang would have helped to cool the building down even further. Under the classrooms is a large covered area. Having classrooms upstairs makes it more difficult, but not impossible, for vandals to break in.
148. The committee noticed that the windows were taken out of the staffroom at Aurukun and replaced with boards. This is to prevent vandalism. Vandalism is a social problem which the state government and the community will only begin to solve when they address its social causes. In an attempt to prevent further damage to school buildings, Education Queensland has allocated funds to Aurukun under the Building Better School Security Enhancement Program (submission 13). The committee understands that Q-Build will use mesh-lite, a clear fibre glass, to replace glass in some of the windows and put in metal door frames and solid wood doors as part of this program.
149. To summarise, school building designs which take into account the climate of the region, needs of the school population and likelihood of vandalism reduce operating and maintenance costs and provide greater value for money in the long term.

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that the Minister for Education direct Education Queensland to design school buildings on Cape York which take into account the tropical climate, needs of the school population and likelihood of vandalism.

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

150. Education Queensland has budgeted nearly \$1 million for the construction of a primary school and \$262,200 for a transportable house at Old Mapoon. It will spend \$892,518 building a three bedroom house and two duplexes at Lockhart River for teacher accommodation. A two story general learning block, special education unit, two modular buildings and a demountable are costing the department over \$1.7 million at Yarrabah. In the 1996-97 financial year, Education Queensland will spend
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\$2,302,355 improving schools in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Cape York. In the previous five years, it has spent just over this amount (\$2,443,988) (submission 13). These figures are evidence of an accelerated capital works program in schools in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Cape York region.

151. In schools outside of designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Cape York, the department has budgeted \$16,106,154 for projects commencing in 1996-97. Just over \$9 million of this amount is for a new high school at Kuranda which the department will complete in 1998. In the three year period from 1993-94 to 1995-96, the department spent about \$4.5 million upgrading schools and building staff accommodation in places such as Lakeland, Laura, Cooktown, schools around Cairns and Mareeba (submission 13). Even allowing for the expenditure on the new high school at Kuranda, the capital works budget for projects commencing in 1996-97 is significantly greater than the combined capital works budgets of the previous three years.

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment

152. In communities where people value education, schools can become a focus for community life. Fetes, cultural days, tuckshop rosters, parents and friends associations, sports days, reading programs and after school activities usually require the assistance of volunteers and generate community spirit and togetherness. The inclusion of nutritional facilities in schools with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations is in recognition of the fact that you have to have a healthy body in order to learn. School sporting facilities are sometimes available for use by the general community outside of school hours. This reduces the need for government or council expenditure on additional ovals, courts and swimming pools. Education Queensland's policy views school buildings as part of the community so it encourages local people to use the school facilities. However, it gives principals the discretion to negotiate this with local community groups.

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

153. The Department of Public Works and Housing's Project Services Business Unit manages the tendering, contracting, construction and maintenance of schools in Queensland. Work is or contracted out to private companies or Q-Build regional teams through a tendering process which complies with the State Purchasing Policy. Q-Build carries out maintenance work on schools, although schools do receive a small grant for minor repairs (eg. replacing light bulbs and broken louvres) and can utilise local people as they see fit.

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

154. School principals in some of the schools the committee visited expressed frustration at getting maintenance work done on their schools. They experience long delays in waiting for materials, and work crews to come from Cairns. This creates a backlog of

maintenance work and can cause health and security risks. Ideally, school principals would like to see local people trained to carry out maintenance work to avoid delays and decrease the costs of freighting in materials *and* labour.

155. The committee inspected the schools at Aurukun and Lockhart River at length and the principals informed the committee of some of the problems they encounter in relying on Q-Build. The principal at Aurukun reported that replacement windows freighted to the community often arrive broken. It appears to the committee that the proposed use of triflex or mesh-lite instead of glass in windows would reduce maintenance costs and time delays and improve the security of the buildings.
156. At Lockhart River, the principal showed the committee a low, concrete retaining wall which Q-Build erected six months ago at the back of the undercover playing area. Water was seeping through the wall and water ponds with algae and flies had formed. This is now a health risk and will need to be properly replaced. At the same school, Q-Build had cut water pipes running down the side of the classroom to replace the metal hood or awning on the building. Q-Build did not reconnect the pipes so the run off water now streams down the side of the building whenever it rains.
157. The principal is responsible for signing the approval form to say that the Q-Build has completed the work. If a principal is unhappy with the work, s/he contacts the regional manager, facilities and assets within Education Queensland to organise an inspection. After an inspection the regional manager will then decide if additional work needs to be done and contact Q-Build. This process can result in delays, especially if the school community has to wait until the next dry season for Q-Build to fix work done in the previous dry season.
158. While the committee has not inspected every school on Cape York, it would seem from these two examples that the performance of Q-Build as the maintenance provider is not always satisfactory. The Department of Public Works and Housing's representative at the public hearing has followed up these complaints with Q-Build. He informed the committee that when Q-Build constructed the retaining wall at Lockhart River state school, it considered the natural drainage and used bituminastic paint on the back of the wall to reduce seepage and leaching. Q-Build will contact the principals at Aurukun and Lockhart River schools to discuss their concerns (correspondence from DPWH, 30.5.97). Nevertheless, the committee believes the process which school principals must go through to get maintenance work done and the delays that can occur are not satisfactory.

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that the Minister for Education:

- (a) direct Education Queensland to streamline the procedures for doing maintenance work on school buildings in Cape York; and**
 - (b) consider changing the procedures to allow school principals to appoint suitably qualified local tradespeople in consultation with Education Queensland to do maintenance work wherever practicable.**
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PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

159. Some of the projects which Education Queensland budgeted for in 1996-97 will carry over to the following year. In 1997-98, Education Queensland plans to spend \$1,976,897 upgrading and maintaining educational facilities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Cape York (submission 13).

HOUSING

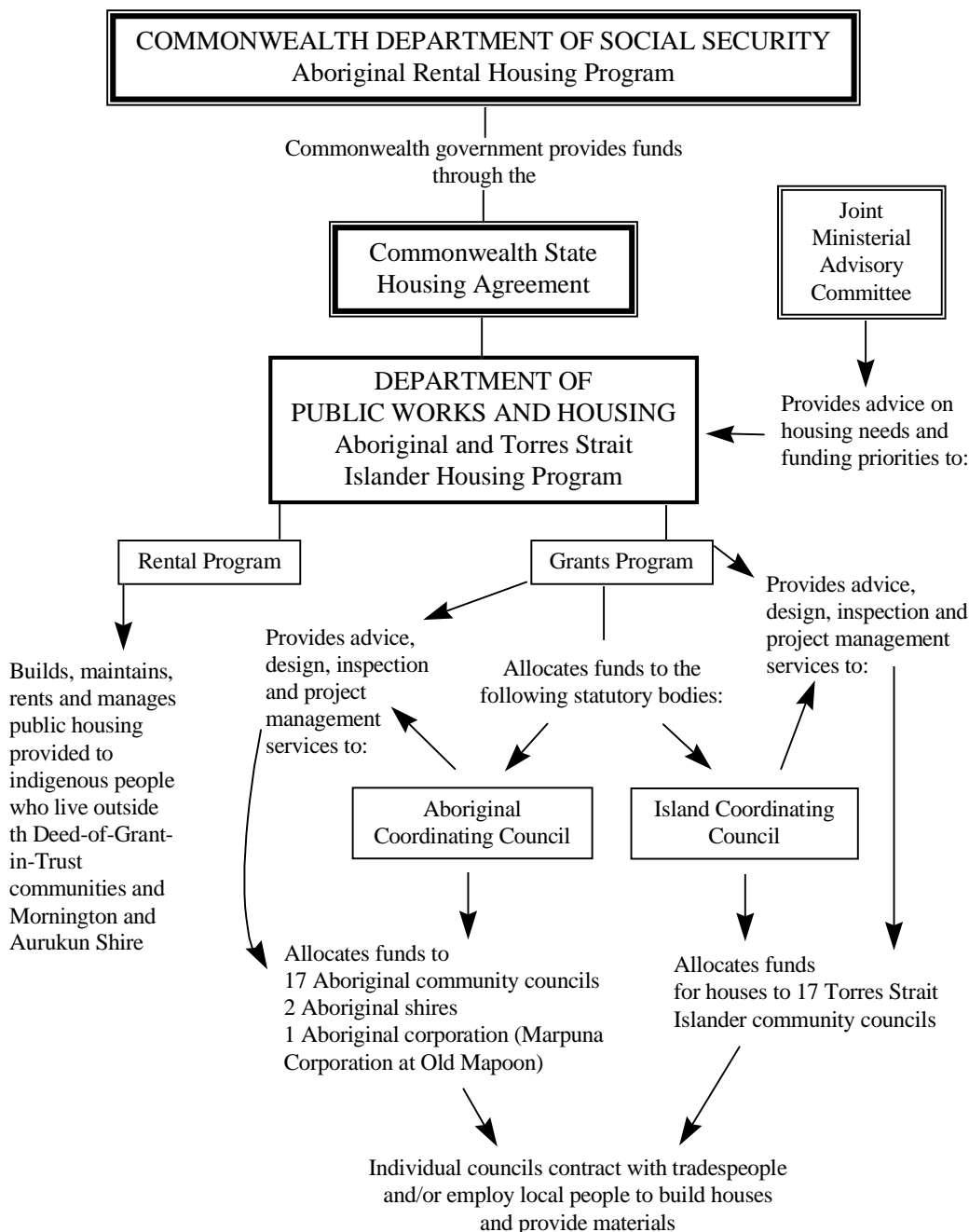
THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

160. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program manages approximately 2500 dwellings and tenancies for indigenous people living in rural, urban and remote areas throughout Queensland. Indigenous Australians who live outside of designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (eg. at Coen, Laura, Lakeland and Cooktown) rent houses directly from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program and, on application, the Community Housing Program both provide capital grants, through the ACC and the ICC, to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils to build houses. Councils on designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are responsible for building, maintaining and managing their rental houses. Both of these programs are part of the Department of Public Works and Housing (see diagram no. 3, page 46).
161. The housing stock for indigenous residents in Cape York is generally run down, unsafe and inadequate. In 1991, 4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dwellings in the Cooktown region were classified as “improvised” compared to 0.2% of non-indigenous dwellings nationally (ABS 1991:11). The committee recognises the need for more houses of varying size (one to five bedrooms), better construction practices, a concentrated repair program, an on-going maintenance program and improvements in the way councils manage community housing.
162. Non-indigenous residents on Cape York buy houses or rent houses from the public and private sectors.
163. It is almost impossible for indigenous people living on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land or reserve land to get a loan to buy or build their own home. Under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Land Holding) Act 1985* and the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*, individuals or groups can apply for a lease (held in trust) over areas of land. If the area of land is less than one hectare, the lease can be for perpetuity. However, because the leased land can not be sold to another authorised person, banks are very reticent to lend money for the building of a house as they would not have an asset which they could mortgage.
164. In 1995, the ACC carried out a Housing Needs Assessment survey of all dwellings in seventeen Aboriginal communities. These communities were the fourteen Aboriginal Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities (eleven of which are in the inquiry area), the Aurukun and Mornington Island shires and Old Mapoon. The ACC restricted their survey to these communities as they are the communities that are eligible to receive capital grants from the Department of Public Works and Housing and the ACC only deals with Aboriginal communities. The survey data enables the ACC to develop a needs based allocation process for capital housing grants to satisfy both equity and accountability standards. The ACC survey found that:
 - there is a total stock of approximately 1850 dwellings distributed across the seventeen communities;

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- about 60% of the houses have three bedrooms;
 - there is an assessed need for about 3300 additional bedrooms;
 - there is an assessed need for 1100 additional dwellings of varying sizes from one to five bedrooms;
 - 34% of the 1100 new dwellings should be one bedroom dwellings in order to meet residents' preferences;
 - councils' records show that 11,300 people live in the 1850 dwellings (an average of 6 people per dwelling);
 - 40% of the dwelling stock is not fit to live in as 17% of the stock falls into the demolition category and 23% into the major repair category. Of the communities on Cape York with dwellings needing repairs, all the dwellings on Aurukun and Napranum were assessed as warranting either minor or major repairs or demolition (ACC 1995).
165. The Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (which provides tied funds to the Department of Public Works and Housing under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement) provides capital funding for seventy new houses per year distributed across the seventeen communities. The ACC calculates that *"at this rate of supply, it would take the ARHP ... alone, fifteen years to satisfy the current assessed need without taking into account population growth"* (ACC 1995). Overcrowding increases the rate of deterioration in houses (and subsequent cost of maintenance) and exacerbates environmental health problems. The ACC estimates that the total cost of repairing current stock and building new houses to meet the current demand on Cape York communities is \$106,036,125 (ACC 1995).
166. The committee commends the work of the ACC in carrying out this comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment. In 1996, the ICC completed a study of housing conditions on Torres Strait Islander communities. The study found that there is not enough accommodation and that much of it is sub-standard. For example, Bamaga needs eighty-three new houses and Seisia needs eleven in order to meet the housing needs of their residents. The ICC has applied to state and federal government agencies for additional funds to rectify the situation (exhibit 5b).
167. Environmental health inspections carried out by government and non-government organisations on Cape York found evidence of over crowded, poorly maintained, unhygienic and poorly designed housing on almost every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the Cape. For example: some of the old houses at Lockhart River used old bed pans as they were not connected to the septic system. Long grass around houses on several communities encouraged rats, pigs and snakes. People are still living in houses without doors, cupboards, screens, hot water or sound plumbing in some communities (Apunipima:Appendix 2).
168. To date, state and local governments have largely overlooked the housing needs of indigenous people, particularly Aborigines, living on reserves or outstations. Inspections conducted by Apunipima documented that housing on reserves and outstations was particularly overcrowded and unhealthy. In Coen, Aborigines were living in fibro shacks originally built for road workers; at Laura (Ang Narra) and
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Mossman Gorge, over crowding and hygiene were the main issues; and at the Port Stewart and Aurukun outstations, people were living in houses they had constructed from whatever materials they could gather (Apunipima:Appendix 2).

Diagram 3: Provision of public housing to indigenous people by the Department of Public Works and Housing



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169. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program manages and maintains public housing for indigenous people living on reserve land, especially where that land is held in trust by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care. Housing for people on outstations, if those outstations are located on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land, is the responsibility of the local community council. The local council must find funds for housing on outstations out of their annual housing grant or apply for funds from the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care's Infrastructure Support and Outstation Development Program. Aborigines choosing to live outside the Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community townships have the same right to housing as Aborigines who live in the township. The state government needs to recognise this right and accept responsibility for meeting it (see recommendation 27).
170. A study undertaken in 1996 by the Pormpuraaw Community Council and Apunipima Cape York Health Council, in conjunction with the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. and Healthabitat, revealed that of the sixty-five houses surveyed in Pormpuraaw, none had functioning health hardware. The essential health hardware like working showers, drains, taps, hot water systems, septic systems, stoves and gas was unsafe or inadequate for the household. Functioning and appropriate health hardware is essential for a healthy living environment. The project team carried out repairs on the houses throughout the project and by the end of the project, seven of the sixty-five houses met all eight function standards. Not one of these seven houses was less than two years old. This indicates that the major cause of health hardware breakdown and the requirement for maintenance is not overuse or vandalism but poor design, specification and construction practices (PCC et al:39-42). This finding is supported by research undertaken in Anangu Pitjantjatjara Freehold lands in South Australia by Healthabitat (see Pholeros, Rainow & Torzillo:xi).

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, strongly encourage and assist community councils to specify standards for health hardware in construction contracts.

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

171. As previously mentioned, the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program provides funds for the construction of about seventy new dwellings per year in Aboriginal communities throughout Queensland. These one to five bedroom dwellings provide shelter from the tropical climate, a place for people to cook, wash, rest, and meet. Shelter is one of the three basic needs of human beings for survival. Given the substantial shortfall in housing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (see above), new dwellings and repairs to existing dwellings are urgently needed to meet the needs for accommodation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Cape York.
172. New dwellings should be based on designs that are suited to the climate, culture and lifestyle of the people. Works Australia (a commercialised unit within the commonwealth Department of Administrative Services), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program and the Centre for Appropriate technology Inc. have all carried out extensive design work and consultation with prospective residents. The
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- committee also received submissions from a Cairns resident commenting on the importance of appropriate design and building materials (submission 1:6-9 and no.26).
173. Works Australia bases its designs on recommendations contained in the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) report. These are:
- the housing design should reflect the cultural needs of the community;
 - the housing construction materials and finishes should be acceptable to the community;
 - the materials should be durable and be low maintenance;
 - the designs must be appropriate for the climate;
 - the housing should use simple construction techniques to maximise community employment and training opportunities;
 - the designs and construction materials should be economical; and
 - costs associated with the transportation of building materials to remote locations need to be minimised (Works Australia 1997).
174. Works Australia has observed that, in the past, community councils and the department responsible for housing have built houses with small, cramped living spaces and no natural ventilation in remote communities which experience hot, tropical climates. Data-loggers installed in houses at Pormpuraaw as part of the Housing for Health project recorded temperatures inside the concrete block-work houses which were greater than the outside temperatures for most of the day, and significantly higher during the night (PCC et al:36, transcript:3). Residents therefore find it more comfortable to sleep outside the house. The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. told the committee that low set houses with sliding, steel frame windows were inappropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Large windows at ground level made it easy for people to jump in, so the windows are often kept shut twenty-four hours a day to improve security and privacy (transcript:3).
175. Governments and community councils need to balance the need to design low maintenance, safe, healthy houses which suit the climate and culture of indigenous Australians with the need for indigenous Australians to have control over the design of their homes. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program aims to achieve this balance by providing grants to Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils and the Mornington and Aurukun shire councils to design and construct their own houses and providing advice on design and construction on request. Each council chooses how to spend the grant and whether to employ an architect or not. Often the need for new houses means that the council uses all their funds on construction instead of finding more appropriate designs. Mr Pearson, representing the Balkanu Development Corporation and the Apunipima Cape York Health Council at the public hearings, suggested that communities need to be able to “*engage architects to come up to the community and sit down with the community and actually look at the environment, talk to the people and design appropriate buildings for that particular family...*” (transcript:63). The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommended (no. 73) in 1991:
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“That the provision of housing and infrastructure to Aboriginal people in remote and discrete communities, including the design and location of houses, take account of their cultural perceptions of the use of living space, and that budgetary allocations include provision for appropriate architectural and town planning advice to, and consultation with, the serviced community” (Johnston 2:434).

176. The committee realises the importance of constructing appropriately designed houses and is aware that it is often funds and the pressing need for new houses that stops councils from consulting design experts.

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program:

- (a) provide sufficient funds and strongly encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils to consult prospective residents and specialist organisations before approving designs and specifications for houses built on their communities.**
- (b) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to do this, they must provide, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, reasons to justify their decision.**

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved by the work.

177. Construction work in Cape York is expensive. Remoteness, lack of a reliable, all weather road and power costs make it expensive to get materials, equipment, tools and skilled people to the building site and use electrical equipment.⁶ Contractors’ and councils’ materials sometimes need to be transported by barge as wet weather makes the roads impassable.
178. Given the high costs involved in building a house, it is important that the house is suitable and durable. Less expensive materials can be used but these may not be as sturdy or serve their purpose as well. Using the cheapest building materials for initial construction often condemns the community to a life time of maintenance and ill health. The Napranum community has found that they get better value for money by using perspex instead of glass in the windows of all new houses. Although the initial outlay for perspex is two to three times the cost of glass, it is less likely to break which significantly reduces replacement costs and the risk of injuries.

⁶ The commonwealth government recognises the high cost of building and maintenance in remote areas and recently asked army personnel to provide free labour and expertise to Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia (*The Australian* 10.4.97:2).

Recommendation 14

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program:

- (a) provide sufficient funds and strongly encourage community councils to, wherever possible, use building materials that are cost effective and appropriate over a long time period, thereby reducing maintenance costs.**
 - (b) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to do this, they must provide reasons, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, to justify their decision.**
179. Another important factor in achieving value for money is the inclusion of local people in the building project. Training local people in the various skills involved in constructing a house (carpentry, plumbing, brickwork, etc.) will eventually minimise the need to pay for tradespeople from outside the community. This will reduce the capital costs.
180. Training local people will also give them an appreciation of the work involved in building a house and equip them, to a certain extent, to maintain the house. This will reduce maintenance costs and delays. When health hardware in the house breaks down, this can create environmental health risks and increase the burden on the health system. Sometimes, if one piece of health hardware is not functioning, this prevents the residents from using ones that are working properly. For example: the hot water system may be working but the pipes may be blocked or the tap fittings may have come off. Home owners should repair health hardware as quickly as possible to minimise environmental health risks and allow people to enjoy the benefits of having a house. The committee agrees that funding bodies will achieve greater value for money when local people receive training to maintain, or at least carry out basic repairs on, the infrastructure in their community. The need to train local people to build and maintain houses and essential community infrastructure was also recognised and recommended (no. 327) by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Johnston:479).
181. Pormpuraaw, Wujal Wujal and Napranum Aboriginal communities have recognised the need to train local people and have adapted their housing construction projects accordingly. Pormpuraaw has its own building team and builds the majority of its new houses (PCC et al:7). John Oliver, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Wujal Wujal community council (located south of Cooktown) told the committee that instead of contracting with a private construction agency, he has engaged Works Australia as project managers and recruited eight trainees from the local community. The council will pay the trainees for two days a week from the CDEP allocation and two days a week from the housing grant. Works Australia have designed the two bedroom houses in consultation with the community. The houses are kit homes and the council anticipates that the trainees will be able to build kit houses themselves in the future. The council still engages specialist tradespeople such as electricians and plumbers for some of the work. By using the grant allocation in this way, Wujal Wujal is able to construct four houses instead of three. The trainees will also be able to undertake some basic repairs if needed.
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182. The Napranum community told the committee that it does not need to contract with external tradespeople to build houses. Local people are trained as qualified plumbers, carpenters, bricklayers and electricians. Teams of workers are employed, using CDEP funds, on house construction and maintenance tasks. The CEO of Napranum, Darvel Long, acts as the project manager. The community makes its own concrete blocks and fly screens for houses and has all the necessary tools and equipment. New houses in Napranum contain air flow ventilators or fans, wide roofs which provide some shade to the concrete block walls, perspex windows, clothes lines, fences and sometimes carports, BBQs and verandahs. House designs differ to meet the tenants individual requirements. The council is gradually replacing the “equity houses” (basically iron clad shacks) that were built in the 1950s when the community was moved from Mapoon and Weipa to Napranum. Of the one hundred equity homes and homes that need demolishing, about seventy still need to be replaced. By employing local labour, Napranum is able to stretch their state government housing allocation to build about six and a half houses instead of four and maintain their housing stock. However, this efficiency could work against the council, as the government allocates housing funds on the basis of need. The more houses a community builds and repairs, the less it needs. Because of the high skill level in the community and the number of apprentices being trained, the Napranum Aboriginal Council will not be able to provide employment for all their tradespeople in the future. The council is therefore considering sending its tradespeople to other Aboriginal communities to train and motivate young apprentices.

Recommendation 15

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to review the allocation of housing grants to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that communities which can build more houses from their grant do not have their allocation reduced as a consequence of their efficiency.

183. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program has commissioned the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. to develop a Home Care Kit which includes basic information on using and caring for a house as well as information on tenants rights and obligations. This will help existing tenants to maintain their homes but community members also need more extensive training in maintenance and repairs. In February 1997, the Minister for Public Works and Housing committed \$500,000 to train local people in construction, repairs and maintenance (exhibit 5a). The committee regards this as a step in the right direction but an inadequate amount of funds to train people in repairs and maintenance on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The department could augment formal training programs (eg. at TAFE) by contracting with builders, plumbers, electricians, bricklayers, carpenters etc. who agree to train local people as part of the project. The ability and willingness to train local people should be specified on tender documents. The work experience gained by local people could count towards a trade apprenticeship course. As mentioned above, this is already occurring on some communities.

Recommendation 16

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, strongly encourage and assist community councils to, wherever possible:

- (a) hire local people as trainees on construction projects; and**
- (b) enter into contracts with builders and specialist tradespeople who agree to train local people and hire apprentices as part of the project.**
- (c) If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils choose not to train local people as part of the project, they should provide reasons, to the Minister for Public Works and Housing, to justify their decision.⁷**

184. Professional construction practices and rigorous inspections also add value for money. If a dwelling is poorly built, it will result in unacceptable maintenance costs. The committee discusses these issues in paragraphs 197-202.

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

185. In 1996-97, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program's rental housing program had a budget of \$12.9 million. Of this amount, the program used \$2.5 million for land purchases; \$7.5 million to construct sixty new homes (at an average cost of \$125,000 each); \$1.5 million to carry out major upgrades on fifty homes; \$500,000 for infrastructure and \$900,000 for a building consultancy service (exhibit 5e).

186. From the 1991-92 financial year to the completion of the 1995-96 financial year, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, under its grants program, allocated a total of \$52,766,186 to Aboriginal communities on Cape York and Bamaga and Seisia to fund the construction of new houses. All of this money came from the commonwealth government's Aboriginal Rental Housing Program through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement. For the first time, in 1996-97, the state government added nearly \$30 million to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing pool (exhibit 5a). Each year, a total amount is given to the ACC (about \$7 million) and ICC (about \$4 million) for it to distribute amongst its member communities. While the ACC and ICC allocate the grants, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program provides design, project management, construction and technical advice directly to the communities on request.⁸

⁷ The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody made a recommendation similar to this (no. 326) in its 1993 report (Johnston:476).

⁸ ATSIC also provides funds for communities to build houses through CHIP. CHIP provides funds for houses through three avenues: the National Aboriginal Health Strategy initiatives, the HIPP initiatives and ATSIC regional councils which distribute grants to community organisations for housing and other infrastructure projects.

187. ATSIHP estimates that it costs between \$110,000 - \$135,000 to build an average three bedroom house on an Aboriginal community on Cape York. (ACC 1995). An average three bedroom house at Yarrabah would only cost \$90,000 due to its proximity to Cairns. As previously mentioned, some communities have reduced the cost of building a house by maximising the use of local people.
188. In the same five year period, the department allocated \$1,322,699 for minor infrastructure works on Aboriginal communities on Cape York and Bamaga and Seisia. These are works which are directly related to the provision of housing such as site preparations, mapping, surveying, road works, power connections, sewerage and waste disposal, water supply, gas, and fencing.
189. In 1996-97 the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, through its rental program, allocated \$1.5 million for major upgrading work on fifty public houses. To date, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program has not provided any funds to Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils and Mornington and Aurukun shire councils to maintain or upgrade its public housing stock (exhibit 5e). Annual grants are for capital works only. Maintenance is seen as the responsibility of the community councils. Councils are to raise revenue for the maintenance of houses by collecting rent from tenants. Lack of routine maintenance on houses increases the rate of deterioration and environmental health risks. The substantial backlog of maintenance work required and poor construction of new houses hampers efforts by community councils to operate a preventative repairs and maintenance program (PCC et al:42).
190. Houses on many Aboriginal communities have deteriorated to such an extent that they are beyond repair. The housing survey carried out by the ACC in 1995 found that 17% of houses should be demolished, 23% needed major repairs, 37% needed minor repairs and 23% did not need any repairs. Houses which would cost more than 60% of the replacement cost to fix up were considered unworthy of repair (ACC 1995). Thus a regular and rigorous maintenance program would significantly improve the standards of housing stock and gradually decrease the capital outlay needed to meet the demand for new houses. If the government tied maintenance funding to improvements in essential health hardware, it would also improve environmental health conditions, reduce the rate of infections and decrease pressure on the health system (PCC et al:53, 61). However, it may not be worth repairing the 40% of houses which the ACC survey classified as needing major repairs or demolition. Instead, the Apunipima Cape York Health Council argues that the council or government should invest in *“more appropriate and functional accommodation in satellites or outstations, thus reducing the long term ‘debt’ of inbuilt environmental health dysfunction which Environmental Health Workers are in large part needed now to fix”* (ACYHC & ARTD:30).

Recommendation 17

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing:

- (a) through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program implement a maintenance and repair program which:**
 - (i) includes training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in house maintenance;**
 - (ii) concentrates on improving the essential health hardware, safety and livability of the houses;**
 - (iii) concentrates initially on those houses which require minor repairs;**
 - (b) seek additional funds over a three year period to maintain and repair public housing stock on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and**
 - (c) table documents showing how the department will fund and implement the maintenance and repair program within six months of the tabling of this report.**
- 5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment.**

191. The public value of providing safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can be seen in the health statistics and productivity levels of communities. If people have houses with functioning hot and cold water taps, stoves, safe electrical and gas fittings, facilities to wash and dry clothes and people and working toilets, they are less likely to contract scabies and other skin diseases, eye infections, ear, nose and throat infections, meningitis, Hepatitis A, trichuris and strongyloides (worms), gastro-intestinal diseases such as diarrhoea, shigellosis, salmonellosis and giardia and many other water borne diseases (PCC et al:53). (Of course, water quality and waste water removal is a vital part of this equation). Preventing the occurrence of these illnesses saves time and money that the government would otherwise spend treating them.
192. Healthier people are also more productive. They are more able to concentrate at school and on training courses, become involved in community activities and economic enterprises, become apprentices, work (either for the dole or a wage) and look after their families. While safe houses and functioning health hardware will not prevent all health problems, they are fundamental to establishing a healthy, safe community.

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

193. Community councils enter into contracts with builders and tradespeople from the private or public sector to build houses. The ACC told the committee that *“most of our councils are moving towards streamlining the tendering processes and bringing it [them] into line with the State Purchasing Policy”* (transcript:46). The committee is

pleased to hear this but believes there needs to be training for council staff to help them understand procurement and contractual issues.

194. In 1996, the Department of Public Works and Housing funded the ACC to conduct three day, housing management workshops in five regional areas for council staff who are responsible for housing. While the workshops looked at important issues such as program accountability, housing allocations and rent, tenancy and property management, they did not include information on procurement methods or contractual agreements.
195. The committee heard evidence that community councillors also need training about the importance of employing builders who are registered with, and take out indemnity insurance with, the Queensland Building Services Authority (QBSA). Employing QBSA registered and insured builders protects the council from employing a shonky builder and covers the council in case part of a new house breaks within the defect liability period, as the builder is then required to fix it (submission 10). The ACC, ICC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program are available to provide design, procurement and technical advice, and grant administration and project management services to community councils on request. This saves the community paying an outside consultant. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program does do QBSA checks on prospective builders, but only if the council asks them to assist them with the procurement process. The committee sees this as another reason for providing training for councils in procurements methods and contractual agreements.

Recommendation 18

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to provide training for community council staff on procurement and contractual issues.

196. The Department of Public Works and Housing told the committee that Q-Build only builds a very small percentage of the houses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on Cape York. Napranum is the only community that does not contract with the private sector, so the majority of the houses are built with the aid of the private sector. As previously mentioned, the committee would like to see more local people becoming involved in every facet of house construction (see recommendations 15 & 16).

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

197. In the Housing for Health Project at Pormpuraaw, the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc., Apunipima and Healthabitat found evidence of taps, showers, toilets, septic trenches, drains, washing tubs, electrical fittings and stoves that were not working or not installed properly due to poor initial construction, poor specification and lack of routine maintenance. Some examples: builders installed solar hot water units on the wrong roof face, at the wrong pitch and/or in the shade. Septic trenches were too short, too deep, too steep, ran backwards and were sometimes crushed during
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or after construction by four wheel drives. In one new house, one entire power circuit was incorrectly wired and unsafe and people were getting electric shocks from taps in the house and yard. Of the \$460,000 budget for the Housing for Health project, approximately 60% was spent on repairing essential health hardware in the sixty-five surveyed houses (submission 10 & PCC et al.). The Pormpuraaw Community Council has elected to use their housing grant to repair the health hardware in existing houses rather than build new houses in the next year.

198. At the beginning of the Housing for Health project, none of the sixty-five houses passed all eight functioning tests. At the end of the project, after repairs had been carried out, seven of the houses passed all eight standards. None of the seven houses had been built in the last two years. As the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. unequivocally documented in their submission, *“the high incidence of poor construction practice is costing communities and the government dearly”*. Poor construction practices result in high on-going maintenance costs and health hardware breakdown and failure. It also means that local people who are employed and trained during construction projects are receiving very poor skills (submission 10).
199. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program employs a regional manager for northern construction who is responsible for ensuring that every new house is inspected and that building standards are met at each construction phase. The program releases funds to pay the builders after the house has passed its inspections. While all the inspectors are registered building inspectors, they have no specialist qualifications in plumbing or electrical works. However, they require builders to sign a statutory declaration stating that they have completed their work in accordance with Australian standards. The statutory declaration also covers the work of sub-contractors such as plumbers and electricians.
200. If new houses that are less than two years old did not pass all eight tests, and therefore do not have a full set of functioning health hardware, then it appears to the committee that the inspection process is not as rigorous or thorough as it needs to be. The committee believes the inspectors employed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program should use the same simple tests used in the Housing for Health project to test the standard of the new health hardware. This would be in addition to their current inspection procedures. The committee believes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program’s practice of not paying contractors or builders until the work has passed inspections is appropriate and should continue.
201. In addition, the committee believes that greater supervision of the construction of houses would also result in improved construction practices and outcomes. The supervisors need to be qualified (ie. registered with the QBSA and gold card holders) and preferably experienced in building in remote and isolated areas. Some of the problems associated with building on Cape York — such as a high water table, extremes of climate, long wet seasons, cyclonic winds and difficulties in getting extra materials and tools — are not encountered by builders working in other parts of the state. Proper supervision also addresses the problem of apprentices or trainees receiving poor on-the-job training.

202. The committee is aware that employing supervisors would significantly increase the cost of building houses. As the ACC and ICC housing needs surveys document that there is a desperate shortage of houses, it is harder to justify increasing the cost per house. However, the committee regards proper supervision and inspection as a sound investment not an unwarranted expense. There is no point constructing houses that cost less if they are not going to be safe to live in and increase rather than decrease environmental health risks. The government will end up paying for the cheaper housing through the health system and the community will suffer the effects through higher maintenance costs, ill-health and disgruntled tenants. The committee views supervision of construction practices as a valuable investment to reinforce to builders and contractors that poor construction on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is not acceptable.

Recommendation 19

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to:

- (a) include health hardware tests as part of their inspection process;**
 - (b) employ qualified, experienced builders to supervise construction work on Pormpuraaw and at least one other Aboriginal community in 1997-98; and**
 - (c) seek additional funds to employ supervisors on more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the future.**
203. The *Pormpuraaw Housing for Health Project Report* contains many recommendations which aim to improve construction practices, maintenance programs and environmental health conditions (PCC et al:57-63). The committee believes this report provides an opportunity for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program to work with the ACC, ICC and community councils to review and improve its grants program. The committee has already made some recommendations in this area (see numbers 12, 13, 15 & 16). However, the committee would not like to see the findings or recommendations of this report buried in bureaucratic processes or other government priorities. The report addresses issues which the committee believes are central to the improvement of living conditions and infrastructure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: the need for environmental health officers; adequate training of local people; routine maintenance and the need to develop more appropriate technology and health hardware.

Recommendation 20

The committee recommends that the Minister for Public Works and Housing, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, study the *Pormpuraaw Housing for Health Project Report* and implement the relevant recommendations.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

204. In 1996-97 Aboriginal councils received \$7 million and Torres Strait Islander community councils received \$4.125 million in capital grants for housing from the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program. They will probably receive a similar amount in 1997-98.
205. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program has allocated \$500,000 for minor infrastructure works projects in the 1996-97 budget and plans to include a similar amount in its 1997-98 budget.
206. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program plans to release its Home Care Kit (see paragraph 183) and Housing Resource Directory in the next financial year. The Directory will assist communities to access funding, resources, training and support for housing related issues (exhibit 5a). It is also conducting a "Vision 2000" research project to study the provision of indigenous housing throughout Australia and the globe and apply the best practices to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland. The research project aims to develop a body of knowledge, a process and resources to enable the department to better advise communities on how to provide more appropriate housing (ATSIHP:1-2).

HEALTH**THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

207. Queensland Health has built accommodation for its staff and primary health care centres in most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on Cape York. There are also primary health care centres at Coen and Laura which also service the small towns and outstations in the surrounding area. People at Lakeland usually travel to Cooktown hospital for health services or call the Royal Flying Doctor Service for emergencies. Primary health care centres provide preventative health care such as immunisations, dental and medical check ups and prescriptions, x-rays, and minor surgery under a local anaesthetic. There is no provision for overnight in-patient care (transcript:82). Queensland Health has built or upgraded hospitals at Mornington Island, Thursday Island, Doomadgee, Cooktown and Cairns in the last five years (submission 20:2-3). Mt Isa, Cooktown, Mossman, Yarrabah, Mareeba, Bamaga and Weipa also have hospitals (PTSRHA:9).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

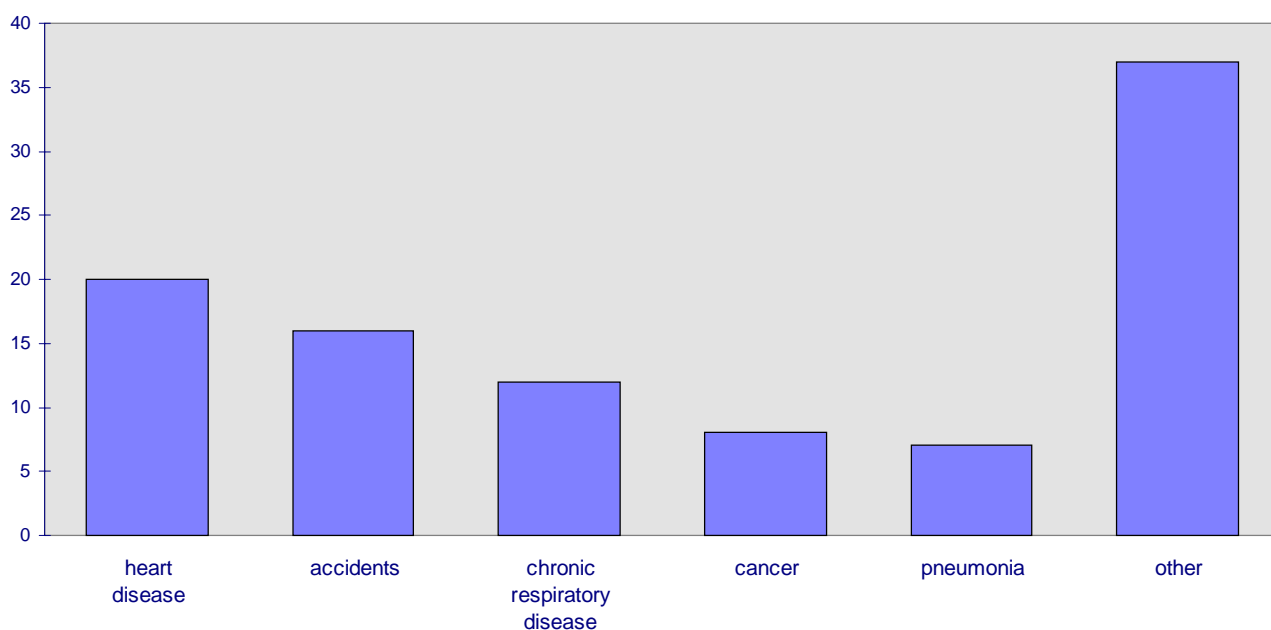
208. The purpose of providing primary health care centres throughout Cape York is to ensure that people can receive treatment for minor ailments, check-ups and preventative health care. Staff can usually stabilise a patient who is seriously ill until they can be transported (usually by air) to a larger hospital. Staff at primary health care centres also provide a vital educational service, teaching people about proper diet, hygiene and dental care. The initiative of the staff at Lockhart River primary health care centre in providing activities for children on pupil free school days, to prevent them from trying petrol sniffing due to boredom, impressed the committee.

209. However, the fact that Queensland Health does not provide many facilities which treat the main causes of death amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Cape York did not impress the committee. A report prepared by Dr Ian Ring, Manager of the Health Information Centre for Queensland Health, implies that despite the building of primary health care centres throughout Cape York, the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the area is actually declining.

- Overall mortality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Cape York appears to have increased by over 20% between 1983-88 and 1989-94 and is now 3.3 times the Queensland average.
- For adults aged 20-69 years, the last twenty years has seen an increase in their mortality rates from 3.2 to 4.7 times the mortality rates of the Queensland population.
- Death rates from alcoholism are over 21 times higher than the Queensland average, violence 18 times, cervical cancer 15 times, chronic respiratory diseases and pneumonia 9 times, accidents 7 times and renal conditions and diabetes 6 times the Queensland average.
- There appears to have been a slight decline in perinatal mortality, but death rates from perinatal conditions are still over twice the Queensland average and the cause of 37% of excess deaths in children.

- From 1989-1994, the main causes of excess deaths for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of all ages on Cape York was heart disease (20%), accidents (16%), bronchitis, emphysema and asthma (12%), cancer (8%) and pneumonia (7%) (see table 2).

Table 2: Main causes of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of all ages on Cape York, 1989-1995

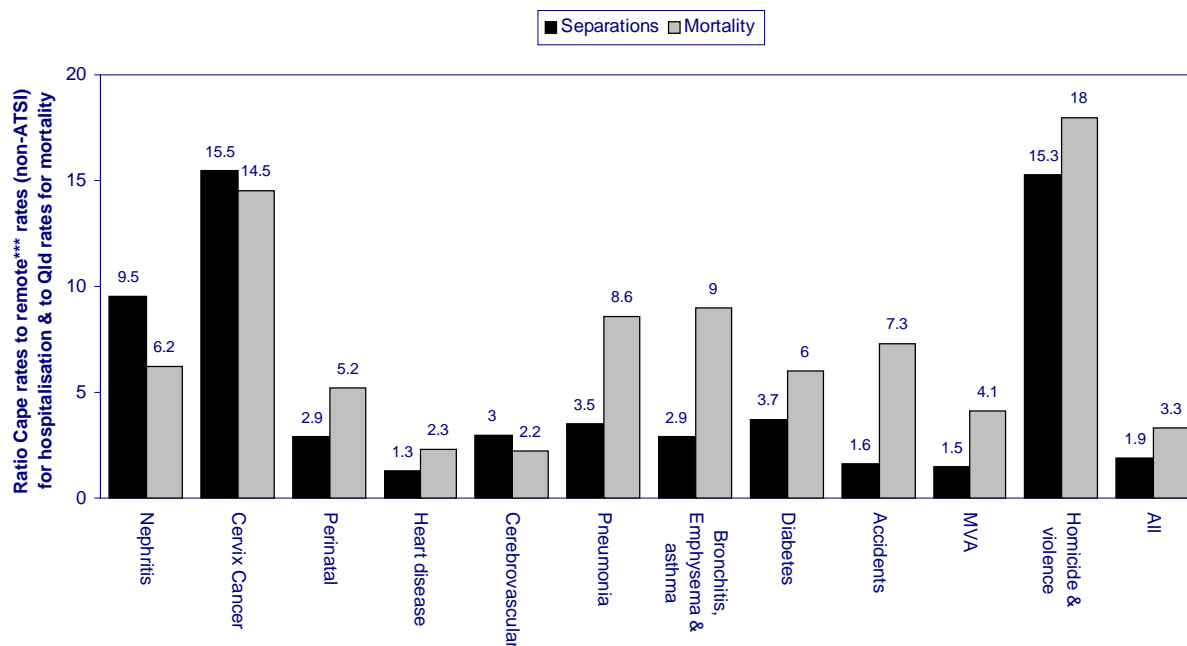


Source: Apunipima Cape York Health Council Annual Report 1995/96

210. Most of these diseases are treatable and preventable (Ring:2). Through its primary health care centres, Queensland Health can provide minimal treatment for most of these illnesses. Nevertheless, hospitalisation is usually required to prevent death. Hospitalisation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Cape York are higher than the rates for people in other remote areas. However, the fact that mortality ratios for perinatal conditions, heart diseases, pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, diabetes and MVA (motor vehicle accidents) are higher than the hospitalisation rates suggests that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could have trouble accessing hospital services or that they chose not to go to hospital for treatment (see table 3) (Ring:3 & 9).
211. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can not receive treatment for these conditions or cervical cancer or nephritis at their local primary health care centre. They may have to travel to a hospital on another indigenous community, which is located on another tribe's land, or go to Cairns or Mt Isa where they are a long way from relatives. The only hospitals on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities

on mainland Cape York are at Yarrabah and an old hospital at Bamaga.⁹ The hospitals at Mornington Island and Doomadgee service Aboriginal communities in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Table 3: Comparison of separation* and mortality rates, Cape ** sector



*Separation refers to the time when a patient is discharged or 'separated' from hospital

**Carpentaria, Aurukun, Cook (exclude Weipa) shires

***Excluding SLA's with >50% ATSI population

Source: Epidemiology and Health Information Branch, Queensland Health

212. The committee realises that it would be very expensive to provide hospitals, staff and staff accommodation on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. But hospitals on larger communities such as Lockhart River, Coen or Kowanyama, which are all several hundred kilometres by air from Cairns and could service the neighbouring communities of Port Stewart and Pormpuraaw, could have a significant impact on the mortality rates of Aboriginal people on Cape York.
213. As the primary role of Queensland Health is to prevent and treat ill-health, the committee doubts that Queensland Health's strategy to date of providing primary health care centres, with no capacity for in-patient care, is adequately fulfilling its role. The 20% increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mortality rates in Cape York and the higher mortality rates as compared to hospitalisation rates for several illnesses, points to the need for more in-patient services throughout Cape York.

⁹ Queensland Health plans to build a new 14 bed hospital in Bamaga but it does not expect that construction work will commence before March 1998, see paragraph 230.

214. A study undertaken by three health professionals in 1993 shows that per capita expenditure on hospital services in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is lower than for other remote communities in Queensland (Hart et al:325). The Director of Queensland Health's Capital Works and Asset Management Branch told the committee that since Queensland Health took over responsibility for providing health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the then Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs in 1991, per capita expenditure on *health* infrastructure (NB. not hospital infrastructure) for remote, indigenous communities has exceeded that of remote, non-indigenous communities. This is mainly due to the fact that there were mainly sub-standard and dilapidated buildings on these communities so the department was starting from a low base (transcript:80; submission 20:4).
215. Queensland Health's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Policy Implementation Plan* recognises that improved health outcomes require a "network of primary health care services throughout the state" and "adequate provision of secondary referral hospital services and mechanisms for accessing tertiary hospital services" (QH:24). However, the suggested capital works planning process, while thorough, will take until at least July 1999 to complete. At this rate, Queensland Health will not be building any new hospitals on Cape York (apart for the one planned for Bamaga, a Torres Strait Islander community) this century.

Recommendation 21

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health direct Queensland Health to accelerate its capital works planning program to upgrade the infrastructure and services at primary health care centres on Cape York to provide in-patient services.

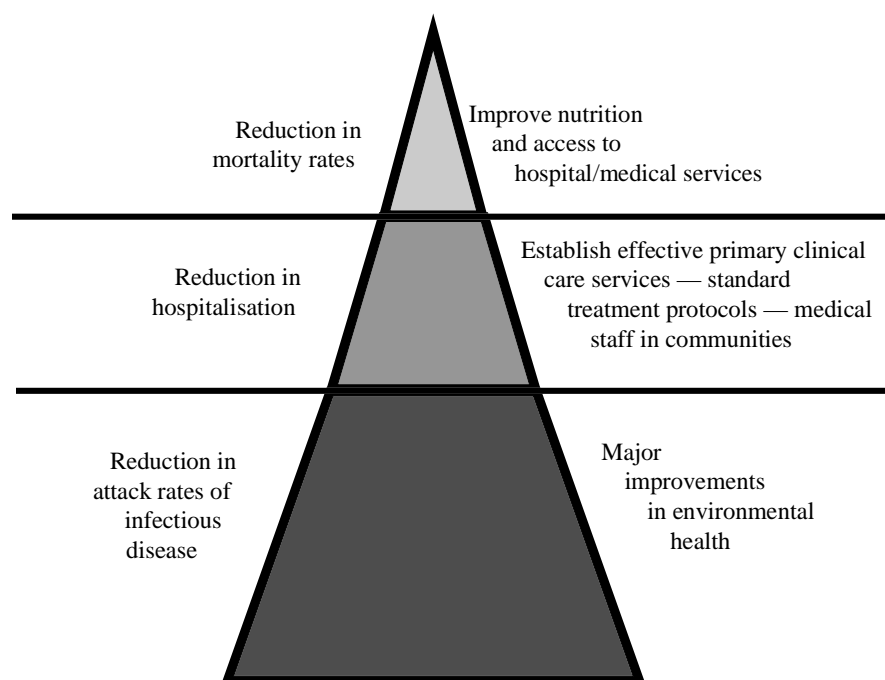
216. The committee is also aware of some major problems with the health facilities at Coen and Weipa. Queensland Health bought an old building at Coen in 1995, redesigned it and turned it into a health clinic. The capital works branch could not provide enough funds for the redesigning so there is no air-conditioning, no laundry, the ambulance won't fit in the garage and the morgue is opposite an Aboriginal person's house. There is also no room to extend or expand the clinic should Coen become the site for a new correctional facility (see paragraph 260).
217. Weipa has a 16 bed hospital and can accommodate visiting specialists. However, the hospital needs an expanded casualty area so that patient trolleys can fit through the doors and about \$30,000-\$40,000 to buy a new generator. The old generator is so unreliable, that every time it is used for an operation, the hospital needs an electrician standing by in case it breaks down.
218. The committee realises that there are many demands placed on Queensland Health's capital works budget but the needs at the above two centres are important, especially as patient's health may be at risk.
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IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work

219. Prevention is always better, and cheaper, than treatment. This is why Queensland Health's capital works expenditure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has focussed on providing primary health care centres in a bid to reduce hospitalisation. But this is only part of the equation. To significantly improve the health of remote, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Queensland Health needs to reduce mortality rates, through improved access to hospital and secondary and tertiary medical services; and reduce the attack rate of infectious diseases, through major improvements in environmental health conditions (see diagram 4). Having meaningful ways to spend one's time, such as employment, sporting and cultural activities and caring for a family also contributes to a person's and a community's overall health and well-being (see paragraphs 129-130). Primary health care centres only tackle part of the problem. The committee believes Queensland Health should place more emphasis on providing health centres with in-patient services (see recommendation no. 21).

Diagram 4: Three major steps in improving Aboriginal child health



Source: Pholeros, Rainow & Torzillo:6

220. Prevention requires public education, vaccinations and improved environmental health conditions. Culturally sensitive and strategic education campaigns about obesity, good nutrition, alcohol consumption and the effects of smoking and petrol sniffing will help reduce preventable deaths amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and

reduce the costs and pressures on the health system (EHIB:3). The Apunipima Cape York Health Council has explored the training needs and employment possibilities for indigenous environmental health workers in Cape York (ACYHC & ARTD). Experience and research in both Australian states and overseas has established that the most effective form of primary health care service delivery is through appropriately qualified indigenous health workers (EHIB:4). Elements of the design of the Lockhart River primary health care centre impressed the committee as it had large covered verandahs big enough to serve as an outdoor waiting area, a play area for children and a place for holding public education sessions. This area was not air conditioned as Queensland Health's consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has shown that most people prefer to wait in a place with natural ventilation but don't mind being treated (for a short time) in an air-conditioned environment (transcript:81).

221. Improving the environmental health conditions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by providing sealed roads, clean water, functioning health hardware in houses and waste water disposal is not the responsibility of Queensland Health. Yet poor environmental health is *the primary cause* of most illnesses that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. *"The high rates of infectious illness [caused by poor environmental health, see table 4], particularly acute respiratory infection and diarrhoeal disease, are major factors in contributing to chronic malnutrition in young children and predisposing them to the cycle of recurrent infection and malnutrition"* (Pholeros; Rainow & Torzillo:5). Undernourished girls will reach their teens¹⁰ and give birth to babies of a low birth weight who are then more susceptible to infections (EHIB:2). And so the cycle continues. Through forums such as the CEO's Steering Committee on Social Development, Queensland Health encourages the appropriate departments (eg. Department of Local Government and Planning, Department of Public Works and Housing) to provide these essential environmental health services (transcript:78). The *Pormpuraaw Housing for Health Project Report* and Apunipima's *Environmental Health Workers in Cape York Communities: Employment and Training* both argue strongly for the appointment of environmental health officers in all Aboriginal communities. Of the Cape York communities, there are currently trainee environmental health workers at Lockhart River, Napranum, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah. The committee supports the training and appointment of environmental health officers in principle but can not make a recommendation in this area as it falls outside the committee's terms of reference. However, environmental health is an urgent issue which the committee believes the government should address from a whole of government perspective (see paragraph 303).

¹⁰ Aboriginal women are five times more likely to commence child bearing before the age of 20 years than non-Aboriginal women and Aboriginal women aged 15-24 have a fertility rate three times higher than the non-Aboriginal population. Both of these factors contribute to Aboriginal mothers having low birth weight babies and a life expectancy about 20 years less than their non-indigenous counterparts (Johnstone:46-48).

Table 4: Hospital Record Disease Rates 1992-93 for Peninsula and Torres Strait Region

| Disease | Queensland rate per 1,000 | Non-ATSI P & TSR rate per 1,000 | ATSI, P & TSR, per 1,000 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Infectious/parasitic disease*</i> | 3.5 | 4.4 | 14.5 |
| Liver cancer [^] | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Cervical cancer | 0.1 | 0.1 | 1.2 |
| Diabetes melitus [^] | 0.9 | 1 | 11.3 |
| Neurosis (include alc/drug dep) [^] | 3.6 | 4.2 | 14.8 |
| <i>Rheumatic Fever/carditis*</i> | 0.1 | 0.2 | 2.6 |
| Hypertensive disease | 0.6 | 0.8 | 7.1 |
| Heart failure | 1.8 | 2.1 | 11.5 |
| Cerebrovascular (stroke) | 1.9 | 1.9 | 8.9 |
| <i>Acute respiratory infection*</i> | 2.5 | 3.4 | 11.1 |
| <i>Pneumonia*</i> | 1.9 | 2.3 | 15.2 |
| <i>Cr. Bronch/Emph/Asthma/COPD*</i> | 3.8 | 4.5 | 14.5 |
| Complications of pregnancy | 18.3 | 22.9 | 70.4 |
| Perinatal origin conditions | 2.1 | 2.7 | 4.4 |
| Fractures skull [^] | 1.0 | 1.3 | 5.4 |
| Other Fractures [^] | 4.8 | 5.8 | 8.9 |
| Intra-cranial Injury [^] | 2.0 | 2.3 | 7.7 |
| Open wound [^] | 3.1 | 5.4 | 23.8 |
| <i>Burns*</i> | 0.5 | 0.8 | 1.0 |
| <i>Accidental poisoning*</i> | 2.2 | 1.8 | 4.2 |

*Possibly associated with environmental factors
[^]associated with behavioural factors, eg diet and drinking

Source: research provided by Dr Q Riley, employing data from Qld Health, Epidemiology & Health Information Branch

222. The primary health care centres which the committee inspected at Lockhart River and Aurukun used gas hot water. The initial installation costs are cheaper with gas, but the hospital has to buy two to three gas bottles per week. The installation of a solar hot water system would probably have saved the Department of Health money over a long term period, provided the water quality on these communities is suitable for solar power. The Lockhart River primary health care centre has a back up generator for power during a black out. However due to a lack of routine maintenance, staff told the committee that the generator often doesn't work when needed. Consequently, the stench from an un-air-conditioned morgue is terrible. Power failures at a health care centre can magnify health risks and make it difficult for staff to carry out their duty of care.

Recommendation 22

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health:

- (a) carry out a cost benefit analysis of using solar power instead of gas to heat water used in primary health care centres and hospitals on Cape York;**
- (b) table the results of this analysis within three months of the tabling of this report; and**
- (c) ensure regular maintenance work is carried out on back up electricity generators at primary health care centres.**

223. The Aurukun Council told the committee that they want to keep the old health care centre which is unused and behind the new primary health care centre for use as a day respite centre for old people. The building is structurally sound although not designed to maximise natural ventilation and light. Keeping the building cool will require air conditioning. The local and district health staff support the idea of using the building as a day respite centre but the Brisbane office of Queensland Health is opposed to it as they consider the building to be a liability rather than an asset. The chairman of Aurukun council told the committee that Queensland Health offered to pay the council \$60,000 to remove the building from the site.
224. When the committee raised this issue with the Director of Queensland Health's Capital Works and Asset Management Branch at a public hearing, it learnt that Queensland Health generally supports the idea of handing over old stock to the council for their use, provided the council accepts full responsibility for the upkeep and recurrent funding of whatever activities they plan to hold in the building (transcript:79). (Queensland Health handed the old health facility at Lockhart River over to the community in 1995 and it is now used as an arts and cultural space, see paragraph 279). The committee believes Queensland Health would achieve greater value for money if instead of using \$60,000 to move the old health centre, it gave the money and the building to the council on the undertaking that the council use the funds to improve and maintain the building and that the council accepts full responsibility for maintaining the building and funding day respite programs.

Recommendation 23

The committee recommends that the Minister for Health direct Queensland Health to negotiate with the Aurukun Shire Council concerning the future use of the old health centre at Aurukun, provided that both parties understand that the government may be unable to provide the necessary recurrent funding to operate the facility, should Queensland Health decide to hand it back to the community.

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

225. The past five years have seen significant expenditure on health facilities in Cape York. Table 5 shows the capital works undertaken by Queensland Health.

Table 5: Infrastructure Provision Over The Last Five Years, Queensland Health

| Facility | 1991/92 \$'000 | 1992/93 \$'000 | 1993/94 \$'000 | 1994/95 \$'000 | 1995/96 \$'000 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Mornington Island</i> Accident & Emergency Unit Redevelopment of Hospital | 115 | | | | 1 |
| <i>Normanton</i> Aboriginal Health Centre | | 350 | | | |
| <i>Doomadgee</i> New 7 bed hospital Staff accommodation (1 x 3 bedroom house; 3 x 2 bed duplex) | | 2,172 | 459 | 182 | |
| <i>Cooktown</i> New Community Health Centre | | | 343 | 903 | |
| <i>Thursday Island</i> Equipment for Hospital Redevelopment of Hospital (38 beds) Staff accommodation (upgrade existing 1 bedroom house to 3 bedroom for Dr and 2 x 3 bedroom houses; 4 x 2 bed units; 8 x 3 bedroom houses; 18 single bed units) | | | 191 609 | 87 4 | 183 |
| <i>Aurukun</i> New Primary Health Care Centre Staff accommodation (3 x 3 bed houses; 1 x 2 bed unit; refurbish 2 houses) | | | 714 341 | 2,024 1,059 | 322 405 |
| <i>Bamaga</i> Staff accommodation (2 x 3 bedroom houses; 2 x 2 bed units plus refurbishment of nurses quarters) | | | 300 | 1,430 | 92 |
| <i>Injinoo</i> New Primary Health Care Centre | | | 75 | 434 | 44 |
| <i>Kowanyama</i> New Primary Health Care Centre Staff accommodation (2 x 3 bedroom houses; 2 x 2 bedroom duplexes) | | | 727 105 | 1,737 1,403 | 836 478 |
| <i>Lockhart River</i> New Primary Health Care Centre Staff accommodation (2 x 3 bedroom houses; 2 x 2 bed duplexes) | | | 664 100 | 2,606 949 | 306 285 |
| <i>Mapoon</i> New Primary Health Care Centres and staff accommodation (1 x 3 bedroom house) | | | 372 | 1,300 | 192 |
| <i>Napranum</i> New Primary Health Care Centre | | | 466 | 1,228 | 204 |
| <i>New Mapoon</i> New Primary Health Care Centre | | | 237 | (14) | 79 |

| Facility | 1991/92 \$'000 | 1992/93 \$'000 | 1993/94 \$'000 | 1994/95 \$'000 | 1995/96 \$'000 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Pormpuraaw New Primary Health Care Centre staff accommodation (2 x 3 bedroom house; 1 x 2 bedroom duplex) | | | 502 96 | 1,991 895 | 347 260 |
| Siesia New Primary Health Care Centre | | | 274 | 11 | |
| Umagico New Primary Health Care Centre | | | 279 | 10 | 1 |
| Wujal Wujal New Primary Health Care Centre Staff accommodation (1 x 3 bed house; 2 x 2 bed units) | | | 498 269 | 1,439 812 | 195 97 |
| Coen Purchase of facility from Family Services for use as Primary Health Care Centre | | | | 303 | 2 |

Source: (submission 20:2-3)

226. An earlier inquiry by the Public Works Committee into the redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital reported that the cost of the project increased from its anticipated cost of \$70 million to an estimated project completion cost of \$92 million (PWC, report no.32:13). The committee made a recommendation regarding the high escalation in costs in its report (PWC, report no.32:8).

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment.

227. Primary health care centres, as places for public education classes and preventative health care, are of immense public value to the local community. By reducing hospitalisation rates they also help Queensland's economy as hospital treatment is more expensive than preventative health care. When staff at primary health care centres provide out of school activities for children who may otherwise try petrol sniffing or alcohol (Lockhart River), consult with community stores to increase the availability of fresh, healthy foods and foods suitable for diabetics (Wujal Wujal, PTSRHA:14) and start to work with indigenous environmental health officers in public education campaigns, this enhances the public value of these facilities (see paragraphs 220-221). The committee believes the present and prospective public value of primary health care centres makes them very worthwhile. However Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need greater access to local health centres with the facilities to treat in-patients if Queensland Health is to reverse the rising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mortality rates (see paragraphs 209-215 and recommendation 21).

6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

228. Queensland Health usually engages Project Services, a commercial business unit within the Department of Public Works and Housing, as the procurement managers

for its capital works projects. Project Services is responsible for calling and evaluating tenders, recommending construction and design consultants to Queensland Health and awarding contracts and consultancies in accordance with the relevant provisions of the SPP. Project management of capital works projects is undertaken by staff in the Capital Works and Asset Management Branch within Queensland Health. Almost all the construction work is contracted out to the private sector. Q-Build is responsible for carrying out maintenance work on Queensland Health assets.

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

229. While at Bamaga, the committee learnt that Queensland Health is building a high-set duplex for nursing staff which is costing about \$1 million. Queensland Health agrees with the committee that this does not represent good value for money and explains that it is partly due to “*an unfortunate contractual situation*” (transcript:81). The company that Queensland Health had contracted to build the accommodation went bankrupt around 1994 before they could complete the job. This was before the formation of the QBSA which can check the reliability and credibility of building companies. The failure of the company to complete the project left the Capital Works and Asset Management Branch within Queensland Health with no construction company and no benefits from the tendering process. The committee accepts that Queensland Health’s practice of checking the credibility of the preferred construction company with the QBSA before signing a contract significantly reduces the likelihood of this scenario occurring again.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

230. Queensland Health is currently building a new 38 bed hospital and staff accommodation at Thursday Island. It expects the building company, Barclay Mowlem, to complete the construction on the \$26 million complex by March 1998 (transcript:80). Queensland Health also plans to build a new community health centre costing \$4.336 million on Thursday Island and a new primary health care centre and staff accommodation at Mornington Island at a cost of \$7.2 million (submission 20:5). As part of the proposed redevelopment of Mornington Island hospital, Queensland Health is considering including birthing facilities at the hospital which would be the first time it has provided this service on an Aboriginal community in Cape York or the Gulf of Carpentaria (transcript:80). At the time of writing, Queensland Health was finalising its plans for a new 14 bed facility at Bamaga. Work on the design will commence soon and construction should begin in March 1998 after the wet season (transcript:81-2). Plans to upgrade the Cooktown hospital with the addition of five nursing home beds and five hostel beds are well under way.

LAW AND ORDER — DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

231. The Department of Justice is responsible for (among other things) providing courthouses and court services throughout Queensland. Some court facilities are provided in Aurukun, Bamaga, Lockhart River and Pormpuraaw. However, these rooms are usually built by the Queensland Police Service (QPS) as part of a police station/watchhouse building and are used for Police Clerks of the Court sessions. Judges and magistrates travel on circuit and usually conduct their proceedings in these court rooms or other buildings (such as the police station).
232. The Department of Justice provides magistrates courthouses in Atherton, Cooktown, Mareeba, Mossman and Normanton and magistrate and district courthouses in Cairns, Weipa, Mt Isa and Thursday Island. The supreme court also sits in Cairns. These courthouses are often next to the police station and watchhouse but not part of the same building.
233. The Department completed the Cairns courthouse complex in 1993 and it contains ‘state-of-the-art’ acoustics to accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants who sometimes have hearing difficulties or speak softly (submission 19:2, 4).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

234. The Department of Justice have upgraded and maintained their courthouses around and on Cape York with extra sound proofing, domestic violence waiting rooms, disabled ramp access, air-conditioning and separate waiting areas for witnesses (submission 19:2). However, the facilities for circuit courts on most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are less than suitable. Holding court hearings in a room which is part of the police station/watchhouse building does not help people to distinguish between or separate the function of the police from the function of the judiciary. It could appear to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, some of whom may not fully understand the western justice system, that the police and the judiciary are one and the same.
235. Providing purpose-built court rooms with fixed furnishings, such as the one attached to the Aurukun police station which is only used for court hearings once a month, seems a waste of resources. It would be more appropriate if the Department of Justice could negotiate with the community or shire council to modify a community room or hall to allow for court hearings. If there is no suitable building already on the community, perhaps the department could enter into a joint funding arrangement with the community council, the Department of Local Government and Planning or the Office of Sport and Recreation, all of which can provide funds for community halls. In this way, the court hearings are physically separated from the business of the police and the community has use of the building when the department is not using it for court hearings.

Recommendation 24

The committee recommends that:

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer’s Steering Committee on Social Development and the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice provide facilities other than those attached to police stations for court hearings on Cape York; and**
- (b) where the implementation of part (a) requires the Department of Justice to build new facilities, that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice negotiate with the community so that both the judiciary and the community can use the facilities.**

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

236. Apart from the construction of a new courthouse in Cairns in 1993, the Department of Justice has not carried out any major capital works in Cape York in the last five years. It has upgraded courthouses at Atherton, Cooktown, Weipa, Mareeba, Thursday Island and Burketown making them more comfortable, safe, accessible and secure. The department’s submission does not provide the total costs for these improvements but they are greater than \$90,000. While these improvements are important, the committee wonders whether the department would have achieved greater value for money by using the funds to build joint court-community buildings/rooms or modify existing community buildings to make them suitable for court hearings (see recommendation no. 24).
237. Project Services manages construction projects on behalf of the Department of Justice and calls for tenders according to the guidelines in the SPP. The department usually uses local contractors or Q-Build for maintenance or upgrade work in remote areas.

Cairns courthouse, police headquarters and watchhouse complex

238. In an earlier report, the committee concluded that the construction of the Cairns courthouse, police headquarters and watchhouse complex was a project that was likely to achieve value for money (PWC, report no. 16). The whole project cost \$40 million consisting of \$26.2 million for the courthouse and \$13.8 million for the watchhouse and police station. The then Department of Administrative Services was the project manager.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT IN THE NEXT YEAR

239. The Department of Justice is conducting research into the feasibility of upgrading facilities at Innisfail, Mareeba and Atherton courthouses. A further project to improve joint police/court facilities in Kowanyama, Thursday Island, Doomadgee and Bamaga is in the initial planning stage (submission 19:3).

LAW AND ORDER — QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

240. QPS provides watchhouses, stations and staff accommodation in most townships on Cape York. QPS replaced or built most of its watchhouses and stations in the last eight years. Its newest facilities are at Doomadgee where it completed a station, watchhouse, three residences and a duplex in 1996. The oldest buildings are at Bamaga, Pormpuraaw and Napranum (submission 18:appendix A). Following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (which began hearings in 1989 and handed down 339 recommendations in April 1991), QPS did a statewide audit of police facilities. The audit classified the Bamaga watchhouse as suitable for the detention of prisoners for up to 24 hours but no longer. People who need to be detained for longer than that period are flown to Cairns (transcript:31). There are no state facilities at Hopevale or Wujal Wujal as the police officers service these communities from Cooktown. Similarly, police based at Laura and Coen service a large area. Police at Weipa cover the Napranum community. QPS handed the old watchhouse at Napranum back to the community in the early 1990s as it was no longer suitable or needed for housing detainees (transcript:33).

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

241. State and community police need purpose built stations and watchhouses to assist them in their work of enforcing the law and keeping the peace. They need to be able to keep records, equipment and sometimes people in a secure place. Community police, who enforce council by-laws and watch over Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained in custody, sometimes share facilities with state police or have a room attached to the police station.
242. Since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, QPS has carried out extensive consultation with Aboriginal people, councils, advisory groups, ATSIAC and the Human Rights Commission to ensure that their watchhouse designs and police and custodial practices are providing justice for Aboriginal people (submission 18:1). All new watchhouses must now comply with the *Standard Guidelines for Police Custodial Facilities in Australia* which police throughout Australia developed in response to recommendation 332 (ADCS and OATSIA:85). New watchhouses are not air conditioned as Aboriginal people prefer natural ventilation and want to be able to talk to their visitors through mesh screens or other openings which would allow air conditioned air to escape. New watchhouses also allow Aborigines to see the natural environment, and, in remote areas, to see the sky and the horizon. Aboriginal culture has strong links with the environment. At Aurukun, the committee noted that QPS had fitted cells with electronic monitoring equipment to assist community police to observe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners and windows which allow detainees to see the natural environment. The design also provided a secure, outside courtyard for visitors and double or multiple occupancy cells for detainees who did not want to be alone. The new police station and watchhouse at Doomadgee also contains these features plus an outdoor alternative dispute resolution area, internal and external exercise yards and several interview rooms.

243. QPS has prioritised the remaining watchhouses in Queensland which need upgrading or replacing to meet the new standard guidelines and placed these watchhouses, according to priority, on its rolling five year major capital works program. It concerns the committee that under this program, QPS will not have the funds necessary to replace the police facilities at Bamaga for “some years” (transcript:32). QPS services all five communities on the NPA from Bamaga. The superintendent for the Cairns Region acknowledges that policing on the NPA is “extremely difficult” as two of the communities (Bamaga and Seisia) have Torres Strait Islander residents and the other three have predominantly Aboriginal populations (transcript:31). Where watchhouse facilities are inadequate and or inappropriate, tensions and frustrations arise amongst the detainees and police often bear the brunt of this (QPSR:49). Policing this area, and other areas where there are inadequate facilities such as Pormpuraaw, is made more difficult by the lack of suitable facilities.
244. The committee notes that in 1993 and 1996, two separate government reports found that some police watchhouses were in a poor state of repair and that the Queensland Government should make funds available to “*upgrade all Queensland watchhouses to comply with nationally agreed standards, as a matter of priority.*”(QPSR:49 and PSMC:62-64).

Recommendation 25

The committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Corrective Services seek additional funds to accelerate the replacement and/or upgrading of police and watchhouse facilities where required, such as at Bamaga.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

3. The value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work

245. Aboriginal people question whether the government has achieved value for money when QPS constructs new watchhouses and rarely uses them. The ACC used the watchhouse at Yarrabah as an example of this (transcript:43). It is QPS policy in the Cairns district to seek alternatives to incarceration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is in keeping with recommendations 87-91 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Johnston 3:42-55). Wherever possible, the police will grant bail, issue a summons or ask that a relative look after the accused until a court hearing. If the law does not allow the police to grant bail, it is QPS policy in the far northern region not to detain an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person in some community watchhouses, such as Bamaga and Yarrabah, for more than twenty-four hours. This is because people kept in custody need to be monitored all the time and this is difficult in a station which only has two to three staff. If a person needs to be kept in custody for longer than twenty-four hours, QPS will fly them to the Cairns or Mt Isa watchhouse which has more staff and facilities. QPS uses the Queensland police air wing or commercial charter planes to transport detainees. This can be extremely expensive (transcript:31). However, QPS argues that it is more expensive to provide sufficient staff (and accommodation) at remote locations to monitor detainees around the clock.

246. Now that QPS has completed the new watchhouse, station and staff accommodation at Doomadgee (the complex was officially opened in February 1997), the committee notes that there is now sufficient staff numbers and facilities at Doomadgee to detain people for more than twenty-four hours if necessary. QPS will be trialing detaining people in custody at Doomadgee (for outstanding fines) etc. for more than twenty-four hours in the near future.
247. The committee congratulates QPS on developing a policy which minimises incarceration and adhering to it. However, it questions the wisdom of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on watchhouse facilities if QPS does not have enough staff on-site to use the facilities to detain people in their community for more than twenty-four hours. While the committee is aware that QPS has the best interests of the detainees in mind, removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from their place of residence and family prior to a court hearing is contrary to the spirit of recommendation 168 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Johnston 3:310).¹¹ While QPS has altered watchhouse designs to comply with the recommendations from the royal commission, it has not altered its staffing levels to the extent that it can detain people close to their kin, country and community. The committee cannot make a recommendation on staffing levels at police/watchhouse facilities as this is outside its terms of reference.

4. The concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work

248. Since 1989, QPS has spent about \$18.5 million either upgrading or building new police and watchhouse facilities at ten communities on Cape York. The allocation of funds is shown in Table 6 (submission 18:Appendix A).

Table 6: Allocation of funds to replace or upgrade police facilities in ten communities in Cape York, 1989-1996

| Community | Year work completed | Amount (\$ million) |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Aurukun | 1991 | \$2.48 |
| Cooktown | 1992 | \$1.45 |
| Doomadgee | 1996 | \$3.7 |
| Kowanyama | 1995 | \$1.23 |
| Lockhart River | 1993 | \$0.609 |
| Mornington Island | 1993 | \$2.7 |
| Mossman | 1992 | \$1.69 |
| Normanton | 1992 | \$1.54 |
| Weipa | 1992 | \$1.878 |
| Yarrabah | 1989 | \$1.191 |

¹¹ Recommendation 168 is directed at Corrective Services but applies to Aborigines in police custody as well.

5. The present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment.

249. The impact that the construction of new police stations and watchhouses has on the community, economy and environment is a multi-faceted and often divisive issue. On the one hand, police officers need safe, secure and functional police facilities to enable them to carry out their duties. Likewise, watchhouses which meet nationally acceptable standards enable police officers to provide detainees with better standards of care (provided the police officers follow the custody procedures within the Operational Procedures Manual). Inappropriate watchhouse facilities have been the cause of dissatisfaction amongst detainees and deaths in police custody in the past. Poor facilities can make it difficult for police to do their job, are a source of frustration and anguish for detainees and generally have a negative impact on relations between police and members of the community.
250. However, the best police facilities that money can buy can also have a negative impact on relations between police and community members. Some community members question the priorities of the government when they see a brand new watchhouse and police station while they still have dirt roads, inadequate and sometimes unsafe water supplies, unreliable sewerage or septic systems and lack other infrastructure which causes environmental health problems (transcript:43). The juxtaposition of a new police complex beside dilapidated houses gives the impression that policing the community is more important than caring for the health of community residents. While in Aurukun, Leslie Baird, an Aboriginal person working with the ACC commented to the committee that the large police complex can be perceived by the people as the government's way of saying "you behave or else". People feel that the government values their potential criminality more than their health and they "feel down on themselves." This contributes to vandalism, petrol sniffing, school absenteeism, alcoholism, apathy and other social problems. This in turn causes the government to erect high fences so that the community looks like a "*township in South Africa or part of Port Moresby.*" Paradoxically, facilities used to control crime can actually help to create it.
251. Thus there are two conflicting interpretations of the present and prospective public value of building new police stations and/or watchhouses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is a dilemma that QPS is aware of and seeks to address through greater consultation with the community before constructing new facilities and improving police/ community relations by supporting community police officers (submission 18:1). QPS does not build police stations or watchhouses that are larger than needed. They try to design facilities that can be easily extended with minimal cost, should the demand grow, so that the facilities have a "life expectancy" of forty to fifty years. They argue that they need adequate stations, watchhouses and accommodation to attract and retain staff. If staff are unhappy with their working and living environment, they are less likely to stay in the community. Both detainees and police officers can bear the brunt of each other's dissatisfaction with their environment and circumstances. QPS views government expenditure on police facilities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as positive.
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6. Procurement methods for the work and 7. The balance of public and private sector involvement in the work

252. QPS has a standing contract with Project Services as the construction authority for all major capital works projects. This unit seeks tenders from the private sector, signs contracts and inspects buildings on behalf of QPS. Minor capital works projects (eg. repairs or upgrades) are managed by Q-Build, Department of Public Works and Housing.

8. The performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work

253. When the committee inspected the police station, watchhouse and court complex at Aurukun, it noticed corrosion on the galvanised iron posts used to construct the watchhouse cells. This is unusual for a building which is only six years old and will only get worse unless it is repaired.

254. To prevent poor construction practices in the future, the Property and Facilities Branch of QPS has developed a Queensland Police Services Building Code. This code provides details of design philosophies, specifications for cell doors, windows, rooms etc. and other principles and standards to guide contractors in their work. The code enables QPS to hold construction companies and Q-Build accountable for their work. The QPS Board of Management ratified the code in September 1996.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

255. Planning is under way for the replacement of watchhouses and police stations at Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama and Bamaga, although construction depends on the availability of funding. QPS will hand the old police station and residences at Doomadgee back to the community in the near future (submission 18:Appendix A).

LAW AND ORDER — QLD CORRECTIVE SERVICES COMMISSION

THE CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

256. QCSC currently has three correctional facilities on Cape York. The Baa's Yard outstation is a working cattle station outside Pormpuraaw which can accommodate twenty low security prisoners. Baa's Yard is managed by the Pormpuraaw Community Council. Wathaniin is a low, open security community correctional centre outside Aurukun. It is managed from Aurukun and contains prisoners on transfer from Lotus Glen and detainees released by the community corrections board onto a release to work program, home detention or parole. The Lotus Glen Correctional Centre and Farm near Mareeba can accommodate high to low security prisoners and currently has 192 secure beds and 100 low security beds (submission 25:1-3).¹²

THE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

257. One of the key recommendations (no. 92) of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody is that imprisonment of Aboriginal people should be a last resort. However, where a custodial sentence is the only option, the commission recommends (no. 168) that the Aboriginal prisoner "*be placed in an institution as close as possible to the place of residence of his or her family*" (Johnston 3:310). As QCSC currently only has three correctional institutions in far north Queensland in two areas, on the west coast and around Cairns, it is impossible for it to implement this recommendation. The establishment of two more correctional outstations at Palm Island and outside Mt Isa (see paragraph 259) will increase the number of facilities but will not provide anything for indigenous people living in the Torres Strait, on the east coast or central Cape York or on the NPA. The committee recognises that QCSC originally selected Yarrabah and Kowanyama as suitable locations for the establishment of new correctional outstations but was forced to change its plans and approach the Palm Island Community Council and the Kalkadoon Aboriginal Sobriety House (KASH) when neither community could agree on a suitable site for the outstation (submission 25:2).
258. The committee supports the royal commission's recommendation that the state locate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners as close to their kin, country and community as possible and notes that the Queensland Government does too (Queensland Government:122). The level of security that should be available at these correctional institutions is not something the committee feels qualified to comment on. However, outstations or correctional farms (as opposed to prisons) do have many advantages as they enable prisoners to undertake meaningful and productive work, learn new skills and maintain their links with the natural environment.

¹² The expansion of the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre Farm in 1996 is the subject of another Public Works Committee inquiry, see report no. 33.

Recommendation 26

The committee recommends that the Minister for Police and Corrective Services establish correctional outstations in eastern, northern or central Cape York as a matter of priority.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR

259. QCSC has provided funds for the construction of correctional outstations, each accommodating twenty prisoners, at Palm Island and outside Mt Isa. The Palm Island Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Centre will manage the outstation at Palm Island and KASH will manage the facility near Mt Isa (submission 25:1-3).
260. The committee understand that QCSC is planning to expand its facilities in Cape York to accommodate another 200 prisoners. QCSC is adding a further 96 secure beds to the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre and will complete this work in the 1997-98 financial year. For the remaining 104 places, QCSC is consulting widely with Aboriginal communities and legal services and agencies involved in the criminal justice area. This accords with the recommendation which the Public Works Committee made in its report into the expansion of the Lotus Glen Correctional Farm in 1996 (PWC, report no. 33:6). QCSC is considering whether the 104 places need to be high or low security or a combination of both. It is consulting stakeholders about options such as accommodating prisoners in a remand centre near the Cairns courthouse/watchhouse complex, in additional beds at the Lotus Glen Correctional Farm near Mareeba, in correctional outstations managed by Aboriginal communities on the cape, in a single facility near Coen or in a combination of these suggested facilities (transcript:24-26).

OTHER PORTFOLIO AREAS

261. During the course of this inquiry, the committee has become aware of other important issues outside its terms of reference. The committee believes that the state government needs to seriously consider significant improvements in the areas of transport, telecommunications, arts and culture, environmental management and emergency services if the Cape York area is to develop. These portfolio areas impact on the provision of infrastructure in the six portfolio areas in the committee's terms of reference.

TRANSPORT

262. The Department of Main Roads participated in and partly funded the development of TMPs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland. The committee views the inclusion of transport infrastructure in the TMPs as a positive step.

Regional road links

263. Travel by road between settlements and major towns in Cape York is extremely difficult. The vast majority of the roads are not sealed and river crossings can be flooded and impassable for three to five months of the year. During the wet season, the only way in and out of places like Laura, Coen and Musgrave is by air. Old Mapoon is linked to Weipa by a dirt road and has an aerodrome but heavy rainfalls can block both of these routes (submission 30:5). Other towns on the coastline such as Weipa, Portland Roads, Cooktown and most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have access to air and barge services. For three to four days every year, Cooktown can be cut off from its aerodrome, so the shire council is dredging its port to improve the sea route between Cooktown and Cairns. The lack of sealed and all weather gravel roads in Cape York makes it extremely expensive to transport people, goods and building materials into and out of the area. Building infrastructure in Cape York is generally double the cost of building the same infrastructure in south east Queensland. Similarly the cost of fresh food — dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables — is very high making it expensive for people in remote areas to maintain a balanced and healthy diet (transcript:120, submission 14:2).
264. CYPLUS identified that the poor quality of the Peninsula Development Road was inhibiting the further development of the mining, agricultural, horticultural, cattle, eco-tourism and forestry industries (submission 11:3). Pastoralists on the peninsula rely solely on the Peninsula Development Road for the transportation of stock. As live cattle shipments from Weipa increase, the poor quality of the road will seriously hamper the viability and expansion of this industry (submission 11:5). The Peninsula Development Road is also the main route used by tourists which brings increased traffic and income to the area. The amount of dust and mud sprayed by tourists' tyres over world heritage listed rainforest and reef between Cooktown and Wujal Wujal (Shipton's Flat Road) is seriously threatening the integrity of the natural environment. The Cook Shire Council and FNQ Network emphasised to the committee that the lack of good roads is the main impediment to the development of Cooktown and the surrounding shire (submission 5; 7:4). Jim Petrich, chairman of the Cape York

Regional Advisory Group (authors of CYPLUS) and chairman of the CYPDA, told the committee that “*there is a desperate need for the Peninsula Development Road [which is some 600 kilometres long] not to necessarily be tarred but to have an all-weather surface and the major bridging structure necessary to allow the road to be open for twelve months of the year*” (transcript:11).

265. The Department of Main Roads’ *Roads Implementation Program 1996-97 to 2000-2001* contains budget allocations for the bitumen sealing of some sections of the Peninsula Development Road between Mt Molloy and Coen and the bitumen sealing of the Cooktown development road which runs between Lakeland and Cooktown. However, the department does not plan to complete the bitumen sealing of roads between Cooktown and Cairns until 2006 which is nine years too long for the residents of Cooktown (DMR:181). The Department of Economic Development and Trade submitted to the committee that it may “improve” the road between Weipa and Old Mapoon if Alcan decides to develop its Ely Bauxite Mine which lies to the north of Comalco’s mining lease around Weipa (submission 31:2). Similarly, the proposed construction of a natural gas pipeline by Chevron from Papua New Guinea through the Torres Strait and Cape York and possibly as far south as Gladstone could necessitate improvements to the Peninsula Development Road and the Telegraph Road (see map no. 3, Appendix E) (submission 31:2-3). Jim Petrich suggested to the committee that the government could look at splitting the cost with Chevron of building permanent rather than semi-permanent bridges over the many river crossings to create a road with a longer life span and less maintenance costs (transcript:11).
266. The committee believes that improvements to regional road links in Cape York should be a priority for the state government.

Internal roads

267. During its inspections of the infrastructure on Cape York, the committee travelled on unsealed, dirt roads inside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are very few sealed roads on the NPA although ATSIC, through its HIPP, is planning to seal most of the internal roads in Bamaga this year. The council or state government funded the sealing of roads in Lockhart River, Napranum and Aurukun, although generally only one lane is sealed, so when cars pass or park on the side of the road they are throwing up red dust. Napranum has tried to combat this problem by planting grass up to the bitumen edge. The amount of red dust covering buildings, people and vegetation in the area creates a health hazard. Dust exacerbates chronic respiratory infections and eye, ear, nose and throat infections (transcript:12). During the wet season, dust turns to mud and vehicles are easily bogged thereby obstructing the road until they can be towed out.
268. The Department of Main Roads, through its Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme, plans to spend over \$19 million in 1996-97 and 1997-98 upgrading and maintaining internal and access roads in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (DMR:192). The committee hopes that the department will involve and train local people in road maintenance as part of these road projects.

Stormwater drainage systems

269. The TMPs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities document the extent of stormwater drainage in each community. Some communities, such as Old Mapoon and Seisia have no formal drainage system but are located on sandy soil with houses built on dunes, so drainage is not a big problem. In many communities (Umagico, New Mapoon, Bamaga, Injinoo, Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama and Lockhart River) there is no formal underground drainage system and the roads or open drains beside the roads form the drainage paths. Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal, parts of Napranum and Aurukun, Hopevale and Doomadgee have underground pipes and culverts. Some of these pipes are blocked by debris, rubbish and silt and require flushing out and regular maintenance. The replacement costs of stormwater infrastructure assets ranges from nil at Old Mapoon to \$849,950 at Yarrabah (DNR, TMP Summary Documents for various communities). The TMP process found that there was only one community in the inquiry area where *“there are no major shortfalls in the stormwater drainage system: ...Wujal Wujal is well drained with no problems due to water ponding.”* (DNR, TMP for Wujal Wujal, Summary Document:10)
270. Several of the towns within Cook Shire are also without adequate stormwater drainage. The Cook Shire Council is seeking \$1,095,000 to provide stormwater drainage systems for Lakeland, Marton and Coen and a flood management system for Cooktown to prevent rubbish, debris and silt being discharged into the Endeavour river and then the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (submission 5).
271. The lack of stormwater drains in communities in Cape York causes havoc on dirt roads every wet season. As torrents of water gush down the streets after heavy rains, they gouge out their own river bed, often making the roads impassable to all vehicles except the most intrepid drivers of four-wheel drives. The committee experienced some of the effects of stormwater run-off on dirt roads first hand. Every year, dirt roads need to be regraded and re-moulded after the wet season. Stormwater run-off also causes erosion, carries away precious top soil and leads to siltation of the creeks and rivers. After the initial surge of water, some stormwater stays behind and stagnates in pools on the roadside which provides a breeding site for insects which can transmit diseases. Ross River Fever, Dengue Fever and Japanese Encephalitis are very debilitating viruses which can be fatal and can dramatically reduce a person’s capacity to work or care for a family.
272. While every community and township on Cape York needs a stormwater drainage plan, they do not all need the same system. If the population levels at Seisia and Old Mapoon remain relatively stable, then building houses on high points and sandy soils will eliminate the need for an underground drainage system. Once the councils at Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal, Doomadgee and Hopevale clean their respective current drainage systems and then maintain them, the infrastructure will probably serve the community very well for the next few years. However, for communities and townships where there is no formal above ground or underground stormwater drainage system, the council needs to develop plans and construct pipes, culverts, grids and drains to reduce erosion, siltation and water ponding in the area. Ideally, the construction and maintenance of stormwater drains would occur in conjunction with a road sealing program to be carried out by the Department of Main Roads and community councils
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using local labour. Constructing and maintaining stormwater drains will have a positive impact on the local community, economy and environment and achieve value for money as it will reduce erosion, improve road surfaces and road usage, minimise the need to re-grade roads every year and reduce the attractions for disease carrying mosquitos.

Jetties, barge ramps and aircraft facilities

273. As previously mentioned (paragraph 263), air and sea transport is important to the life of communities on Cape York. Many aerodromes in the area need sealing, line marking and lights for landing at night. Cook Shire Council estimates that the cost of providing landing lights at Coen would be \$150,000 and the cost of sealing the runway at Laura would be \$350,000 (submission 5). Barge facilities at Old Mapoon would improve the transportation of supplies and materials to the community. Boat ramps on most communities would improve access to the sea and assist the development of fishing industries and tourism. The TMP documents prioritise the construction of sea and air infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
274. The committee is considering conducting an inquiry into the provision of transport infrastructure on Cape York.

COMMUNICATIONS

275. North of Cooktown, most communities can only pick up ABC radio and TV and perhaps another commercial channel (transcript:120, submission 2:1). This exacerbates the isolation created by the lack of adequate road infrastructure and the vast distances. Mobile phones do not work north of Mount Molloy which is a problem *“in remote areas where unforeseen circumstances are the norm rather than the exception”* (submission 2:1). Fast, reliable telecommunications equipment is a necessity for people living on outstations who may need to urgently contact a flying doctor.
276. Submissions from the FNQ Network (submission 7:4) and the Cape York Regional Advisory Group (submission 11:16-17) mention the need to establish ISDN like services for the Cape. Internet users currently have to pay STD rates to log in to the world wide web. CYPLUS recommends that government departments, local authorities and private companies in far north Queensland and combine their buying power and lease an ISDN line. They could then make any spare capacity on the line available to Internet users (submission 11:16). The FNQ Network sees an opportunity for laying fibre optic cable in the same trench used by the proposed gas pipeline (submission 7:4). Cheaper access to the Internet would facilitate training courses, education, communication and decrease the isolation of the region (submission 2:2). The CYPLUS Stage 2 Report recommends that the government *“complete a telecommunication system for Cape York Peninsula which facilities economic development, assists health and emergency services and enhances the general lifestyle on Cape York Peninsula”* (submission 11:17).

ARTS AND CULTURE

277. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a long history of artistic creativity and cultural expression. Weaving, textiles, painting, dancing and singing are an integral part of their traditional cultures. Like sport, arts and cultural pursuits provide a meaningful pastime, employment and deter young people from trying other less healthy activities. Arts and cultural programs also help to preserve traditional cultural practices and, when linked to the post-primary program, help increase student's interest in learning and school retention rates (TAO:11, 112-3).
278. Unfortunately, the infrastructure, training and personnel to support the development of an indigenous arts and cultural industry in Queensland does not exist. Research by The Arts Office of the Queensland Government has revealed that "*Queensland's indigenous arts and cultural industry is largely cottage based, unstructured and unsupported by any sustained or accessible infrastructure*" (TAO:8).
279. Lockhart River is one of the few communities with a dedicated arts space and arts and culture program (TAO:112). Around 1995, Queensland Health handed the old community health building back to the community and they have turned it into a gallery, workshop and storage space. Local people can learn printmaking and photography and are encouraged to paint and draw. The gallery organisers told the committee that they sell local creations on site and at other venues in far north Queensland.
280. With appropriate assistance and infrastructure, an indigenous arts and cultural industry could become a valuable economic enterprise for the local people and the state of Queensland. Research shows that Queensland is behind other states in the development of an indigenous arts and culture industry (TAO:10). In 1992, the commonwealth, state and territory governments signed *The National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* as a sign of their commitment to ensuring economic independence and equity for indigenous Australians (TAO:11).
281. As far north Queensland is home to almost half the state's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, the development of infrastructure and programs to encourage the arts in Cape York and the Torres Strait would represent value for money. The committee commends The Arts Office for its research into the development of an indigenous arts and cultural industry in Queensland and hopes that the state government will support its recommendations.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Tourism

282. The sea and the land are sources of food, income and spiritual significance for the people of Cape York. The state and local governments and the local people need to encourage but control tourism to ensure that these natural resources are not destroyed. The committee heard evidence of people coming to fish on the Cape without permission and taking away large fridges full of fish (transcript:16). Aboriginal rangers do not have the power to prevent this from occurring. A joint venture

arrangement between tour operators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who could act as fishing and hunting guides would encourage responsible tourism and protect the natural resources and environment.

283. To address this issue, CYPLUS recommends that the Far North Queensland Institute of TAFE, in consultation with communities and rangers, develop an effective cultural land management training program for rangers and other interested people on Cape York Peninsula; that community councils provide full-time employment for rangers; and that the government give rangers effective training and support and the appropriate mainstream enforcement powers (submission 32:2).

Timber

284. The committee inquired into whether local Aboriginal people could mill the timber on their Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land and on nearby mining leases. Milling local timber creates employment and saves costs as builders do not have to freight timber into the area. The Department of Natural Resources (the agency which sets the codes of practice and environmental standards) and the Department of Primary Industry (the agency which controls the harvesting and sale of timber) informed the committee that they can sell the timber on land covered by the Comalco and Alcan mining leases to the highest bidder, provided the lessees do not wish to use it on their lease. The Department of Primary Industry's Forestry Unit is currently negotiating with the Napranum Community Council who wish to buy timber on Comalco's lease near Weipa (transcript:117).
285. Local councils, as the trustees of Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land, can mill the timber on their land if they intend to use it on their land. Under the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* (s77B(2)) they are not permitted to sell any forest products.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fire

286. During the inquiry, the committee received submissions and evidence concerning the lack of fire fighting equipment on Cape York (submission 5 & 11; transcript:121). Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and small, remote communities such as Ayton, Marton, Rossville and Portland Roads do not have fire stations, engines, hoses or hydrants. Timber is used to construct buildings and bridges throughout the cape. The risk of fire is high during the long dry season and due to malfunctioning stoves and electrical circuits (see paragraph 197).
287. The committee can not understand why the government would spend millions of dollars improving the infrastructure in the area if it does not provide fire fighting equipment to protect its investment. Organising and training the local people to provide a volunteer, emergency fire fighting service is also an integral part of protecting the infrastructure. Laura and Coen and some other towns have rural fire brigade units but an attempt by the previous (Labor) government to establish emergency service units on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was unsuccessful (transcript:121). The lack of suitable fire fighting facilities also makes it very difficult to get insurance for houses and community buildings. The committee

believes there is an urgent need for fire fighting equipment and training for local people on remote communities in Cape York.

RESERVES AND OUTSTATIONS

THE CURRENT SITUATION

288. Reserves and outstations are areas of land where groups of Aboriginal people, usually from the same clan, seek to live a more traditional lifestyle. The difference between reserves and outstations is primarily historical. Reserves are areas of land which were historically set aside for use by Aboriginal people. There are over 400 designated reserves in Queensland and most of them are located on the outskirts of towns. Outstations are usually a fair distance from towns making it impractical to deliver municipal type services and infrastructure. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may move onto an outstation or set one up in order to escape from the alcoholism or violence in their community, to be independent of the community council, to live on land originally inhabited by their clan and/or to renew their cultural heritage. In Queensland, people can form outstations on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land and on land such as former Aboriginal reserves or unalienated Crown land which has been granted to Aboriginal trustees under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*. Some Aboriginal people would like to establish permanent outstations in other locations but can not due to insecure land title (submission 32:3; CYLC:5-6). Some Queensland outstations are located at old mission sites at Lockhart River and Mapoon and around Aurukun. Mona Mona, Kuranda, Mossman Gorge and Port Stewart are examples of outstations on reserve land in Cape York.
289. ATSIAC and the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. estimate that there are about 77 outstations on Cape York Peninsula and a further 28 in the Doomadgee - Mornington Island region with a total of 1220 residents (ATSIAC, attachment C:3 & CAT 1994b:9). The CYPLUS stage 2 report states that there are 53 outstations in Cape York with 500 people living on them permanently. A further 300 people live seasonally or occasionally on another 45 outstations. About 1200 people aspire to live on outstations (CYRAG:91). The population of individual outstations is usually small, ranging from a handful of people to thirty people, but numbers can swell to forty or fifty residents during the dry season and on weekends (CAT 1997:4-5).
290. The issue of infrastructure provision to outstations is, as one correspondent to the committee stated, “*a vexed issue for governments throughout Australia*” (correspondence from ATSIAP 20.2.97:2). Successive state governments have focussed on providing infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live on recognised communities and largely ignored those who live on reserves and outstations. Only 22% of Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities or in Mornington or Aurukun shires while half the state’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population lives in far north Queensland (submission no. 33:58). This unfairly disadvantages indigenous Australians who live outside of designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (submission 5:1).
291. A lack of basic infrastructure often prevents people from living permanently on outstations, particularly during the wet season. The Cape York Outstations Project undertaken by the CYLC identified that no outstations have filtered or treated water (CYLC:3-5). Only 19 outstations on Cape York have basic landing strips and about

half the total number of outstations have rough access roads which can be used for 12 months of the year. Only a small number have telephone facilities and most of the housing is owner-built from scraps of material with dirt floors (submission 32:3). Outstation residents usually need to travel to health clinics in their nearest “service community”, although nurses do visit some outstations. The limited or non-existent air and land access and communications technology makes it difficult and sometimes impossible for residents to contact the Royal Flying Doctor Service, or for doctors to reach them in an emergency. The education department provides some resources and teacher support to children on outstations, particularly around Aurukun. Water is collected from the local creek or a hand dug well. The sewerage system (if there is one) may be pit or compost toilets.

ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ON OUTSTATIONS

292. As the Aboriginal people who chose to live on outstations are usually trying to “get back to nature” and their traditional cultural way of life, they are not looking for sophisticated infrastructure (CAT 1994a:v). However, basic infrastructure such as reliable supplies of fresh water; a sanitation and rubbish disposal system; adequate shelter and power; access to grown, bush and sea foods; a secure storage space for food, fuel and equipment; regular visits from health workers and teachers; an access road and all weather landing strip; access to emergency health services; and reliable communications technology is essential for a healthy community and a basic standard of living (Apunipima:30-31). The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. has conducted two studies on planning for outstation development. The Doomadgee study conducted in 1994 looks at the costs, most appropriate technology and feasibility of providing basic infrastructure and housing on ten outstations on the Doomadgee Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land. The Port Stewart study, conducted in conjunction with Apunipima Cape York Health Council and the Cape York Land Council in 1996, prepared a plan for the two outstation sites which considers environmental health factors (CAT 1997:5).

APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY FOR OUTSTATIONS

293. Outstations often require different technologies to towns and established communities. The remoteness and small but variable population of outstations can mean that it is not geographically practical or economically viable to provide reticulated septic or sewerage systems, and reticulated power and water supplies. Alternative technologies such as ventilated pit latrines, solar power, stand alone night lights, hand powered washing machines, chip heater hot water systems, rain water tanks, hybrid power systems (part solar, part diesel, part wind) and separate kitchen facilities with gas stoves are options that the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. explored during its studies (CAT 1994a:49-78, 1994b:17-26). The participatory process used to design and deliver the technology is as important as the end product (CAT 1994b:2). The aim is to install simple but appropriate technology which users can operate and maintain; which local people can construct with supervision from skilled workers; which is resistant to floods, cyclones and termites, which provides some protection from mosquitos, flies and dust and allows fluctuating numbers of people to live in a healthy environment (CAT 1994a:21-22).

294. The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. has produced a report which argues that establishing an appropriate technology facility to service the Cape York Peninsula in general, and outstations in particular, is viable and vital to the development of outstations on Cape York (CAT 1994b). The *Cape York Peninsula Outstation Strategy* also recommends that the government provide funds to establish a regional support and resource agency for outstations (CYLC:20-23). Outstation groups have to make technological choices about the type and design of technology and this has implications for the sustainable development of outstations. The report demonstrates that measuring the complexity rather than the simplicity of technology is the most sensible way to make informed technical choices. The report also investigates the ability of existing government and private bodies to respond to the unique needs of small, emerging outstations and concludes that their expertise is limited. In 1994, the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. applied to ATSIAC's Peninsula Regional Council for a \$250,000 grant to establish the facility but funds were not available.

THE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF OUTSTATIONS

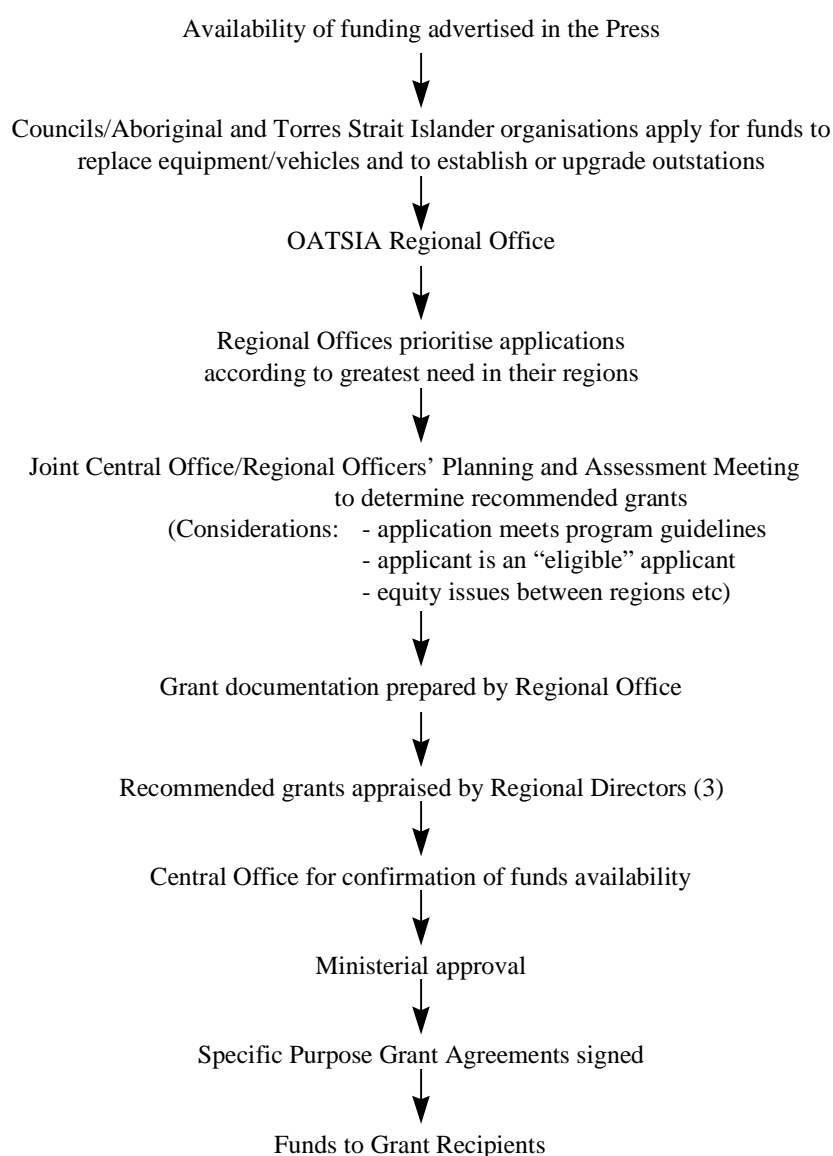
295. The economic sustainability of outstations is also important. It can cost up to three times more to live on an outstation (CAT 1994a:15-16). The people may need to pay for fuel to pump water, run a generator and move materials, goods and people to and from the outstation. CDEP is usually the main source of work and income for outstation residents and their wages would not reflect the higher living costs. Thus, the body responsible for providing infrastructure may need to apply for recurrent funds. In addition, the local council, with the support of Balkanu Development Corporation could encourage residents to establish small enterprises such as market gardens, fishing or cattle industries, controlled eco-tourism and arts and/or crafts to supplement their income and living costs (CAT 1994a:16).

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUTSTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

296. The state government has not resolved the issue of who is responsible for providing infrastructure to Aboriginal reserves and outstations. If the reserve or outstation is within a local government shire, then correspondence from the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care implies that along with the state government, the local council has some responsibility to provide infrastructure and services, although some local shire councils on Cape York Peninsula would disagree (correspondence from ATSIAP, 19.5.97:2; transcript:18, 22). If the reserve or outstation is on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust land, then it seems to be the community council's responsibility. If the reserve or outstation is on land held in trust by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, then the responsibility for infrastructure provision probably rests with the department. However, because the responsibility for infrastructure provision is complex and unclear, none of these bodies have allocated sufficient funds to infrastructure development on outstations and reserves.
297. In 1995-96, the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care allocated \$1,038,328 for its Infrastructure Support and Outstation Development Program. It provided funds to outstations near Coen, Normandy Station, Lockhart River, Napranum, Pormpuraaw and others outside the inquiry area (correspondence from ATSIAP 19.5.97:attachment 4). In 1996-97 the department allocated \$1,155,600 to

this program with a \$250,000 grant going to Bamaga Island Council to upgrade twenty houses. In 1996-97, the department approved grants amounting to about two-thirds of the programs' funds to replace vehicles owned by community councils (exhibit 2c). Diagram 5 shows the way the department allocates funds under the Infrastructure Support and Outstation Development Program.

Diagram 5: Allocation of funds under the Infrastructure Support & Outstation Development Program, Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Department of Families, Youth & Community Care



Source: Correspondence from ATSIAP 19.5.97

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298. The commonwealth government also provides some funds for outstations. In 1996-97, ATSIC, through its HIPP, allocated \$1,045,000 for water, sewerage, land care and the renovation of four houses to the community at Mossman Gorge. It also allocated \$2,860,000 to Mona Mona to increase water storage capacity and improve reticulation, improve sewerage reticulation and treatment, provide housing, do internal roadworks and landscaping and provide a diesel generator and electrical reticulation (correspondence from ATSIC 28.4.97:2).
299. The need to provide infrastructure to people living on Aboriginal reserves and outstations is an issue which the committee believes deserves a higher priority and greater coordination between the commonwealth and the state government and between state government departments. Given that the current federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator John Herron, has publicly stated on several occasions that improving the living conditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote areas is one of his top priorities, the time is ripe for establishing a bilateral agreement between the Queensland and commonwealth governments on infrastructure provision to outstations (Herron:5-6).
300. The current lack of coordination between state government departments could see the situation of a vehicle (light plane or four wheel drive) travelling to an outstation with a visiting health nurse on one day, another vehicle travelling to an outstation with a resource teacher on another day, and a vehicle supplying food and materials to the residents on another day. Coordination will improve efficiency, service and costs.
301. With basic infrastructure, outstations and reserves can result in significant health and social benefits to residents and reduce the strain on the public health system, police and prisons. Research by several different organisations such as ATSIC, the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc., Apunipima and CYLC has shown that the benefits of establishing and maintaining outstations can outweigh the costs if government works with the end uses to deliver the most appropriate technology, coordinates the provision of services to outstations and involves the local people. The committee would like to see the development and maintenance of outstations become a central part of the government's policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs rather than a footnote or afterthought.

Recommendation 27

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development consider the recommendations of the *Cape York Peninsula Outstation Strategy* and develop a whole of government strategy to provide appropriate housing and infrastructure to people living on outstations, reserves and towns in Cape York as a matter of high priority.

Recommendation 28

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care work with the commonwealth government through ATSIC to develop a common policy and joint funding arrangements for the provision of infrastructure to Aboriginal reserves and outstations.

A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION ON CAPE YORK

THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION ON CAPE YORK

302. In the course of its inquiry, the committee has seen many examples of problems which the government could more easily rectify if it coordinated the provision of infrastructure across government. The committee agrees with Paul Pholeros from Healthabitat and Su Groome from the Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc. that “[t]here can only be improvement in service delivery when there is cooperation across government. Furthermore, it is essential that government works alongside commonwealth organisations with the sharing of information and resources” (Pholeros & Groome:4).
303. Some of the reasons the committee supports a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery are as follows.
- There is a maze of councils, committees and government and non-government bodies consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and advising the various levels of government. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people usually have to meet with representatives of these groups or attend meetings to present their case for funding. The number of departments involved, different levels of government and differences in the financial reporting requirements of each funding body¹³ can be very confusing. Diagram 6 (page 93) seeks to illustrate the complexity of consultation and funding arrangements. Coordinating the delivery of infrastructure would enable the state government to streamline funding requirements and arrangements.
 - Coordination reduces costs and improves efficiency. For example: if the Department of Public Works and Housing and the Department of Local Government and Planning were both providing funds for new housing and water supply infrastructure respectively at an emerging outstation, it would be more cost effective and efficient to transport the materials for the two projects together.
 - Improving the health status of people in remote communities usually requires input from several departments. Providing access to primary health care centres is only part of the equation (see section on health). For example: improving the environmental health conditions of communities in Cape York would address the causes of nearly 50% of deaths of young, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Cape York (Ring:2) but no department is responsible for environmental health matters. Improving the environmental health of a community could involve at least the six following state or local government organisations.

¹³ The only characteristic common to all grant requirements, is that the grantee (usually a community council) generally has to spend the funds within the financial year. This in itself can present problems as building during the wet season is difficult and training local people as part of the project may slow down construction.

- Improving the water supply and sanitation system: Department of Natural Resources (advice and maintenance); Department of Local Government and Planning (funding) and local councils (owners of the infrastructure).
- Improving the rubbish disposal systems: local council (rubbish collection service) and Department of Local Government and Planning (advice and funding).
- Improving the health hardware in homes and the design, construction and maintenance of homes: Department of Public Works and Housing (advice, design & inspections); ACC (funding, advice, designs); community councils (construction, choice of design, maintenance). Pholeros, Rainow and Torzillo argue that major improvements in the health hardware of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing is the best way to reduce mortality and morbidity rates amongst Aboriginal people (Pholeros, Rainow & Torzillo:6).
- A public education campaign to raise awareness about hygiene and healthy living environments: Queensland Health (funding and delivery).
- Making communities safer also requires input from several departments. The Department of Justice, QPS and QCSC all have a role in dealing with offenders. Meaningful activities — playing sport, going to school, cultural events, employment and training — also deter people from crime. Making communities safer would involve the Office of Sport and Recreation, the Department of Education, the Department of Training and Industrial Relations and the Arts Office working with the above three agencies and indigenous community groups and councils (McDonnell-Phillips:38).

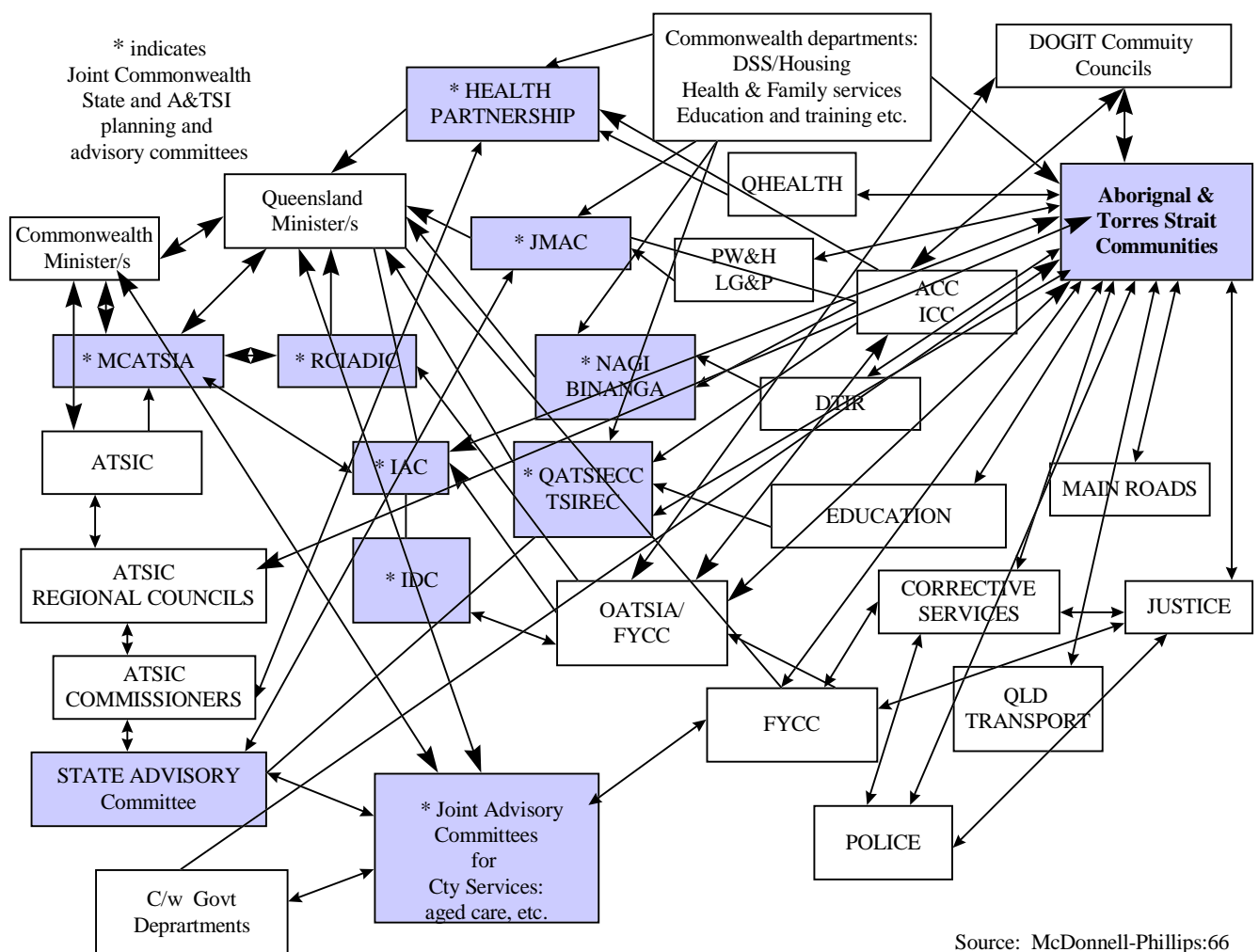
Diagram 6: Key to abbreviations

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|---------------------|--|
| ATSIC | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission |
| ACC | Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council |
| ICC | Islander Co-ordinating Council |
| DOGIT | Deed of Grant in Trust |
| JMAC | Joint Ministerial Advisory Committee |
| QATSIECC | Qld Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Education Consultative C'tee |
| TSIREC | Torres Strait Islander Regional Education Committee |
| NAGI BINANGA | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Standing Committee for Vocational Education, Training and Employment |
| HEALTH | Commonwealth and State Health Departments |
| PARTNERSHIP | Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Forum |
| IAC | Indigenous Advisory Council |
| IDCIA | Inter Departmental Committee on Indigenous Affairs |
| MCATSIA | Ministerial Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs |
| RCIADIC | Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody |
| ATSIHP | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program |
| ATSIIP | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program |

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| FYCC | Department of Families, Youth and Community Care |
| LG&P | Department of Local Government and Planning |
| PW&H | Department of Public Works and Housing |
| QHealth | Department of Health |
| QTransport | Department of Transport |
| MR | Department of Main Roads |
| Justice | Department of Justice |
| QPS | Queensland Police Service |
| QCSC | Queensland Corrective Services Commission |
| Education Queensland | Department of Education |
| DTIR | Department of Training and Industrial Relations |
| DNR | Department of Natural Resources |

Diagram 6: Indicative priority setting and funding processes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, Queensland

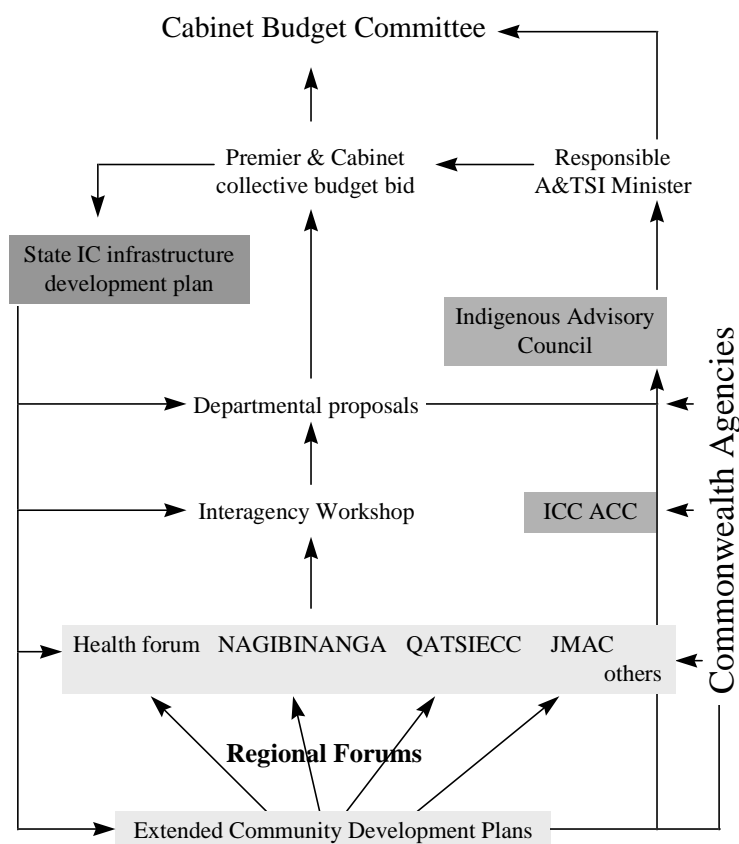


Source: McDonnell-Phillips:66

THE DRAFT WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COORDINATION STRATEGY

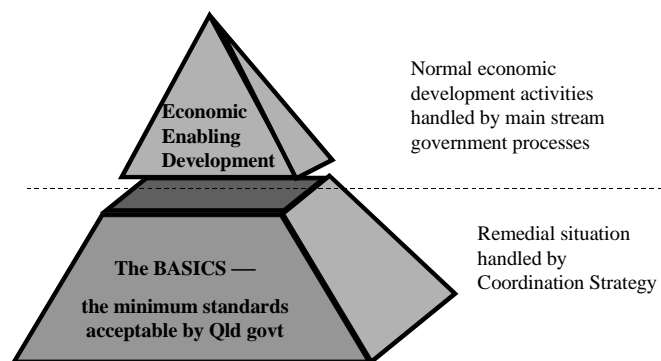
304. The committee commends the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development for asking the Department of Premier and Cabinet to coordinate the preparation of a *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy*. The Department engaged consultants McDonnell-Phillips to draft the above strategy. The aim of the strategy is to coordinate the provision of infrastructure to support the development of healthy, economically and socially sustainable, self-determined indigenous communities (McDonnell-Phillips:3). The key recommendations of the strategy are:
- that the state government fund the preparation of whole of community infrastructure plans (or total management plans) for communities that address the coordinated delivery of: health, education and training, transport, housing, communications, sewerage and waste, law, order and justice, energy, community and family facilities;
 - that the above plans form the basis for negotiation and agreement between agencies for sequenced delivery of infrastructure to support sustainable and healthy development in communities;
 - that the government establish a coordination unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet to consolidate the above plans into the State Indigenous Community Infrastructure Development Plan and use this state plan to monitor the progress of infrastructure delivery with line agencies retaining responsibility for planning and delivery of service;
 - that the coordination unit develop minimum service standards for infrastructure with regard to environmental health (eg. access to drinkable water);
 - that the coordination unit organise annual workshops involving relevant state government departments and ATSIC to prioritise infrastructure needs and take into account the priorities determined by indigenous Australians and the need to ensure every community has infrastructure which meets the above minimum standards;
 - that these inter-departmental workshops form the basis for a collective budget bid for state and commonwealth funding which the coordination unit will prepare;
 - that budget bids include capital works and recurrent expenditure costs and take into account ATSIC's proposed areas of funding (see diagram 7);
 - that Treasury fund budget bids for infrastructure which meets minimum service standards as a matter of highest priority and that budget bids which contribute to the economic development of the community compete with general infrastructure funding for social and economic development (see diagram 8) (McDonnell-Phillips:11-13).
305. While the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development consists of the Director-Generals of only nine departments, the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* includes the work of all eighteen departments (see diagram 9).
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Diagram 7: The proposed whole-of-government coordination strategy



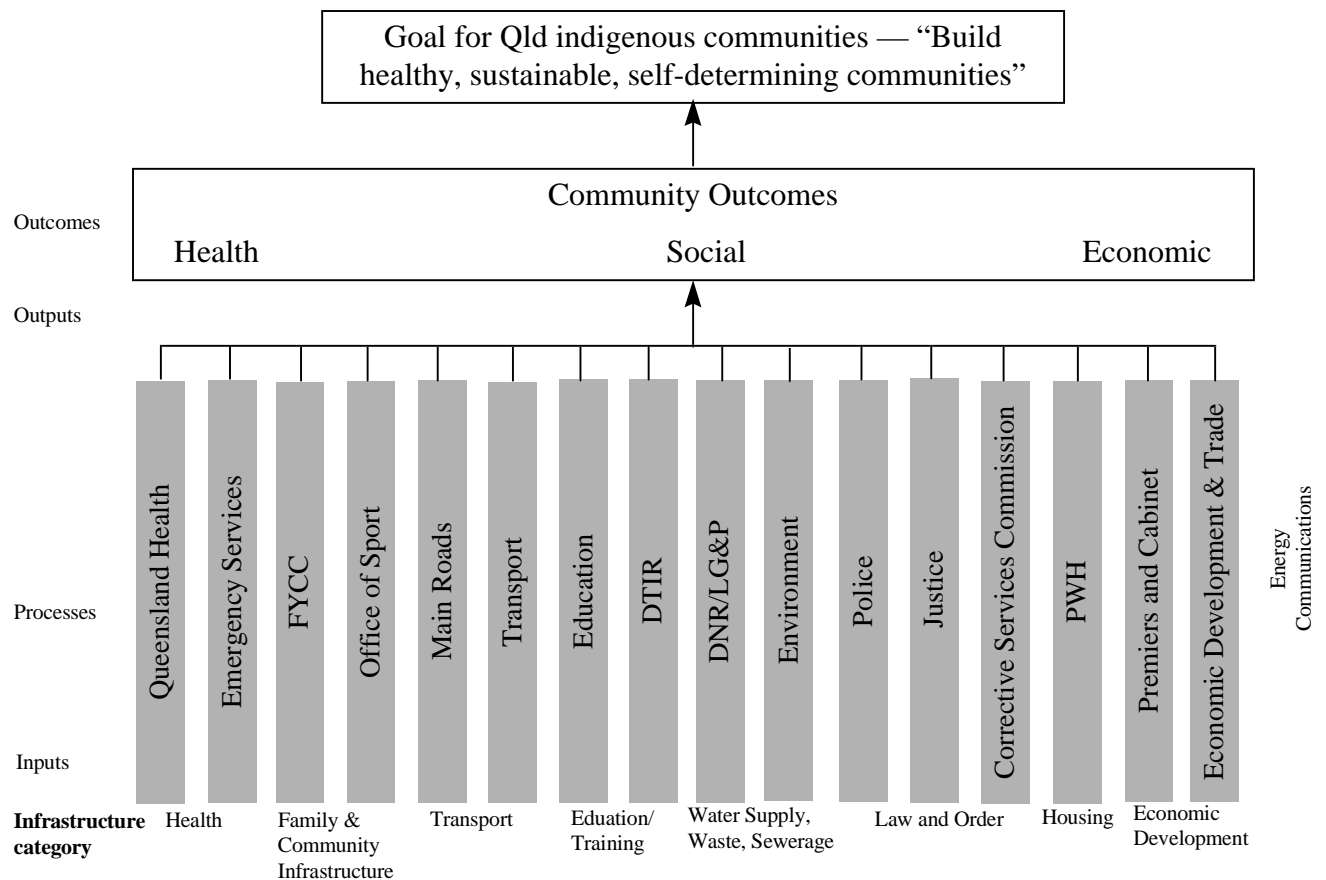
Source: McDonnell-Phillips:9

Diagram 8: Basic essential service provision and assistance with economic development



Source: McDonnell-Phillips:43

Diagram 9: The involvement of all government departments in delivering outcomes for Queensland indigenous communities



Source: McDonnell-Phillips:47

306. The committee realises that while the Chief Executive Officer’s Steering Committee on Social Development accepts the broad principles of the draft strategy, it is still finalising some operational aspects of the strategy. The committee supports the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* because it:

- involves the community in planning processes;
- recognises the need for recurrent funding as well as maintenance funding;
- focuses on community outputs (eg. improved environmental health, safer communities) and not line agency or functional outputs (eg. delivery of housing or sporting facilities);
- includes all relevant government departments;
- assigns overall responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the strategy to one, central department (Department of Premier and Cabinet);
- includes the commonwealth government and ATSIC (albeit loosely);
- encourages flexibility and cooperation between departments in delivering infrastructure;

- is based on the principle of increasing the skills of the local community;
 - seeks to build healthy, economically and socially sustainable and independent communities; and
 - recognises that funding to achieve minimum essential living standards should not compete with funds made available to the rest of Queensland which enable economic development.
307. However, the committee believes the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development could improve the draft strategy by addressing the following issues. Firstly, the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* only refers to the thirty-two Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities and Mornington and Aurukun shires. Once again, a strategic plan concerning infrastructure has excluded the infrastructure needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in reserves, outstations and towns. The committee believes that indigenous and non-indigenous people in remote areas in Cape York should also have access to funds which would give their communities minimum essential living standards. The authors of the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* are aware of this shortcoming and the need for the extension of the strategy "in the future" (McDonnell-Phillips:10, 58). The committee has recommended that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development develop a whole of government strategy which includes the infrastructure needs of people living on towns, reserves and outstations on Cape York (see recommendation 27).
308. Secondly, at around the same time that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee was finalising the terms of reference for this strategy, the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care announced the formation of the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) and the Indigenous Affairs Inter-Departmental Committee (IAIDC).
309. The IAC represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland and makes recommendations on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs to the Minister for Families Youth and Community Care. The committee heard evidence from groups who believe the IAC duplicates the roles of the ACC and the ICC and is a "waste" of \$5 million (transcript:45-46).
310. The Minister for Families Youth and Community Care will be the formal link between the IAC and the IAIDC as he will chair the IAIDC. The IAIDC comprises key chief executive officers from state government departments. A secretariat, whose role is almost identical to the proposed role of the coordination unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, is supporting the IAIDC (McDonnell-Phillips:68-72).
311. The committee recognises that the establishment (one actual and one proposed) of two parallel bodies and inter-department coordination strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs is not part of the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy*, but another example of lack of government coordination and duplication. The development of two coordinating bodies and another indigenous council which can give advice to the minister only adds confusion to an area already complicated by a plethora of government and non-government
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organisations. It also saps funds from an area which requires more funds to bring living standards on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities up to a basic standard.

312. The *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* suggests a role for the IAC which fits in well with its principles of “bottom up planning” for infrastructure and service needs, prioritising needs at regional forums and departments making collective budget bids for funding. The IAC has had an initial meeting from 8-10 April and its role is still being refined. The IAIDC secretariat commenced operations on 3 February 1997 (McDonnell-Phillips:68). From the information made available to the committee, it seems that the role of the proposed coordination unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the suggested strategy for coordinating government provision of infrastructure to indigenous Australians in Queensland is much more developed than the role and strategic direction of the IAIDC.

Recommendation 29

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care work with the Chief Executive Officer’s Steering Committee on Social Development to consolidate resources and revenue and develop one strategy and one coordination body to oversee the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

313. Thirdly, one of the benefits of having one coordination body to oversee the delivery of infrastructure to indigenous communities, is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could have one contact point for government. Instead of contacting different officers from different departments at different levels of government, the state government could resource and train officers in a coordination unit to answer general enquires regarding infrastructure provision to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and act as a switchboard to refer people on to the correct officer at the correct level of government (local, state or commonwealth). This sort of “one-stop shop” service would also assist government employees and help to facilitate inter-agency communication and coordination. It would also decrease confusion and frustration and save on STD phone calls (transcript:121). This is a role which the committee believes would fit into the proposed role of a coordination unit but is not considered in the draft strategy (McDonnell-Phillips:56).

Recommendation 30

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer’s Steering Committee on Social Development amend the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* to include, within the role of a proposed coordination unit, a referral service with one contact point for enquires about infrastructure maintenance and delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

314. Fourthly, the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* does not recognise the work undertaken to develop CYPLUS. Local people and stakeholders from all industries and interest groups in Cape York

developed this strategy. While the main foci of the strategy are sustainable land use and economic development for the cape, it does make recommendations about the delivery of infrastructure and services to people in Cape York and addresses these recommendations to many government and non-government bodies. The Planning Services section of the Department of Local Government and Planning will distribute copies of the CYPLUS stage 2 final report before the end of this financial year. The committee believes the steering committee should consider the recommendations and work carried out in the CYPLUS process as it develops a final whole of government strategy for infrastructure delivery. The committee would not like to see the CYPLUS work duplicated or overlooked.

Recommendation 31

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development consider the recommendations contained in the *Cape York Peninsula Land Use Strategy Stage 2 Final Report* as it finalises the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy*.

315. Fifthly, the *Whole of Government Indigenous Community Infrastructure Coordination Strategy* does not suggest a timeframe for the achievement of its goals. This is because the strategy is a draft and regarded as a working document by the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development. The steering committee will set timeframes once it has agreed on a strategic plan.
316. Throughout this decade, different government departments (especially the department now known as the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care) have tried to develop a whole of government strategy to coordinate the delivery of infrastructure and services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland¹⁴. The committee is aware that in the last year or so, some state government departments have been working together on various projects. For example: representatives from the Department of Justice, QPS and QCSC meet monthly to discuss needs across portfolios and prepare joint budget bids (McDonnell-Phillips:38). This year, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, and the Department of Local Government and Planning are working together to improve the water supply infrastructure in the NPA (correspondence from DNR 1.5.97:3). Other state government departments, such as the Department of Health and the Department of Public Works and Housing have had more success in reaching bilateral agreements with the commonwealth than achieving an agreement with other state agencies¹⁵. The Joint Ministerial Advisory Committee, which advises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program and the Aboriginal and Torres

¹⁴ Letter to the Parliamentary Committee of Public Works from the Director-General of the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, 7 February 1994.

¹⁵ In July 1996, the Queensland Minister for Health, the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Family Services and the Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission signed a joint agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. For several years, the Queensland Minister for Housing and the Commonwealth Minister for Social Services have signed the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

Strait Islander Infrastructure Program, contains members from the state and commonwealth governments, the ACC, ICC and community representatives. The adoption of a whole of government approach to infrastructure delivery to *all* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland is long overdue.

Recommendation 32

The committee recommends that the Chief Executive Officer's Steering Committee on Social Development reach agreement on a whole of government strategy to coordinate the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland as soon as possible.

317. Finally, the committee is also concerned about the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Councils in the provision of infrastructure to indigenous people in Cape York. The *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984* established community councils on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities. Voting residents elect councillors every three years and they have most of the powers and responsibilities of a local government council. They can respond to local issues, pass council by-laws and employ community police to enforce them. They are responsible for the collection of rubbish and sewerage; town planning; building approvals; the maintenance of non-gazetted roads and community facilities (eg. halls, swimming pools, parks) and the delivery of water supplies. However, under the legislation, community councils on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities differ from local government councils in two important ways.
318. Firstly, they cannot collect rates. Instead, the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care pays each council an annual amount in lieu of rates. This is called the State Government Financial Aid (SGFA) program. In 1995-96, the department distributed \$18,791,892 amongst thirty-one Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils, the ACC, ICC and the Marpuna Community Aboriginal Corporation (DFYCC:appendix 5, xiv). The amount allocated to each council is determined by a funding formula, devised in 1991 and revised in 1995 by Alan Moreton, which takes into account the population, location and assets of each community (transcript:53). Following Moreton's reappraisal of the funding formula, the department reviewed the amounts allocated to each council for 1996-97 and will provide additional funds to previously "underfunded" councils over the next five or so years to address the inequalities in funding (correspondence from ATSIAP 19.5.97:attachment 1).
319. The SGFA funds are a "*contribution to meeting the costs of providing local government services to community residents*" (DFYCC:148). The law preventing Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils from collecting rates has led to the situation in Bamaga where the council is providing water free of charge to the private operator of a concrete batching plant but the council has to pay \$300 for each cubic metre of concrete.
320. The funds available to community councils through SGFA rarely stretch to maintaining their essential infrastructure, let alone employing town planners, consultants, engineers, surveyors, environmental health officers, or recreational officers. Some indigenous, non-government organisations such as the CYLC,

Apunipima and Balkanu Development Corporation have formed to assist councils in the myriad of decisions and management issues which they face. However, councils still lack assistance and expertise in the area of infrastructure development and maintenance (submission 10). Small rural and remote towns like Thargomindah, Cunnamulla and Julia Creek also face this dilemma. Even Cook Shire can only afford one full-time engineer because of its small rates base and large area. The Department of Local Government and Planning, provides assistance in the area of infrastructure management to small, remote local government councils.

321. The SGFA funds which the community councils receive are generally treated as revenue by the Local Government Grants Commission. This has the effect of significantly reducing the funds which the grants commission will provide to community councils under its funding formula. The Local Government Grants Commission provides extra funds to local councils for road maintenance and general purposes (the fiscal equalisation grant) (ABS 1994:11). This is in addition to the income which local government's derive from rates and other charges.
322. The second way in which Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils differ from local government councils is that on top of their local government responsibilities, Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils are also charged with various "welfare" responsibilities. They collect rent from tenants in rental houses funded by the Department of Public Works and Housing; administer the CDEP and operate the local canteen. They may also sell power cards; run child care programs, aged care programs and rehabilitation programs; operate community enterprises (eg. a concrete block making facility at Napranum, a gravel crusher at New Mapoon, a crocodile farm at Pormpuraaw, camping grounds at Seisia); run cultural and arts and crafts centres, develop outstations, orchards and cattle stations and participate in community justice committees. Pormpuraaw Community Council also runs the Baa's Yard Outstation and Aurukun Shire Council operates Wathaniin (see section on law and order). In a local government shire, community organisations or private companies separate from the local council would deliver most of these services.
323. Under the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*, the number of services the community councils can be responsible for is daunting. It is difficult for the council to concentrate on the core business of local government such as water, sewerage, rubbish and roads when it has so many other priorities. The committee believes it would be in the councils and the Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities best interests if the councils were able to focus on the delivery of core local government infrastructure and services and they empowered other community members to form groups to carry out the other "welfare" responsibilities. This would mean changing the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984* to give Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils the same status as local government councils. Mornington Island and Aurukun are already administered by local governments under the *Local Government Act 1993*. This change would give councils on Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities access to assistance provided by the Department of Local Government and Planning and spread accountability for the economic activity and employment in the community amongst a number of groups.

From the available data and reports, the committee could not determine if community councils would receive more or less funds under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

324. The committee recognises that the move from community councils to local government councils may necessitate extra training for present and future councillors. It is also aware that this move is a sizeable paradigm shift and one which the committee feels should only occur after extensive consultation with the Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust community councils, ACC and ICC.

Recommendation 33

The committee recommends that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care direct the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Program to review the operation of community councils and table this review within six months of the tabling of this report. The review should include:

- (a) an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages to community councils in operating under the *Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984* and the *Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984*;**
- (b) an analysis of the impact of establishing community councils under the *Local Government Act 1993*;**
- (c) an analysis of which structural arrangements would provide the most funds and best assist community councils to undertake their role as local governments; and**
- (d) an analysis of which structural arrangements for local government would provide the best outcomes for residents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.**

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APPENDIX A — CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The following advertisement appeared in the Courier-Mail and Cairns Post on Saturday 1 February 1997.



PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Call for Submissions Cape York Infrastructure

The Public Works Committee, an all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, inquires into public works constructed by the Queensland Government and its Government Owned Corporations.

The committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into the provision of infrastructure in Cape York. To help in its inquiry, the committee is asking for submissions from interested individuals and organisations. You should base your submission on the terms of reference for the inquiry, which are: **in relation to the provision of infrastructure in the Cape York region, with particular regard**

to:

- health
- law and order
- utilities
- housing
- education
- sporting facilities

the committee is to inquire into and report on:

1. **the purpose of the work and the suitability of the work for the purpose**
2. **the necessity for and advisability for the work**
3. **the value for money achieved, or likely to be achieved, by the work**
4. **the concurrent costs or estimates of concurrent costs of the work**
5. **the present and prospective public value of the work, including the impact of the work on the community, economy and environment**
6. **procurement methods for the work**
7. **the balance of public and private sector involvement in the work**
8. **the performance of the constructing authority, consultants and contractors for the work.**

Submissions can be made to the committee by writing to:

The Research Director
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 28 February 1997.

If you need further information, contact the committee's research director on (07) 3406 7689 or the research officer on (07) 3406 7926.

Len Stephan MLA
Chairman

APPENDIX B — LIST OF SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

1. Mr Stewart T Daniels
Unit 4/6 Mayers Street
Manunda
CAIRNS QLD 4870
2. Mr Reg Williams
Chairman
Bamaga Island Council
BAMAGA QLD 4876
3. Mr Daniel Elu
Council Clerk
Seisia Island Council
VIA BAMAGA QLD 4876
4. Mr Douglas Allard
Secretary
Cooktown & District Cricket Assn Inc
PO Box 734
COOKTOWN QLD 4871
5. Mr Brian Ledwidge
Chief Executive Officer
Cook Shire Council
PO Box 3
COOKTOWN QLD 4871
6. Mr T D Nevard
Manager — Environmental Services
Mareeba Shire Council
PO Box 154
MAREEBA QLD 4880
7. Mr Darren Cleland
Strategy Development Manager
FNQ Network
PO Box 3065
CAIRNS QLD 4870
8. M Newman
Secretary
Rossville & District Citizens' Assn Inc
MS 15
COOKTOWN QLD 4871
9. Ms Barbara Flick
Executive Director
Apunipima Cape York Health Council
PO Box 2797
CAIRNS QLD 4870
10. Ms Su Groome
Acting Manager
Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc
PO Box 6182
CAIRNS QLD 4870
11. Cape York Regional Advisory Group
c/- Mr Craig Mallett
Project Manager, CYPLUS
Department of Local Govt & Planning
PO Box 5194
CAIRNS QLD 4870
12. T C Melchert
Chief Executive Officer
Douglas Shire Council
PO Box 357
MOSSMAN QLD 4873
13. Hon Bob Quinn MLA
Minister for Education
PO Box 33
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
14. Hon Tom Gilmore MLA
Minister for Mines & Energy and
Member for Tablelands
PO Box 1205
MAREEBA QLD 4880
15. Mrs Naomi Wilson MLA
Member for Mulgrave
PO Box 505
EDMONTON QLD 4869

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| <p>16. Mr Jim Wauchope Director, Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Department of Families, Youth & Community Care GPO Box 806 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>17. Mr John Lister Chief Executive Officer FNQEB PO Box 358 CAIRNS QLD 4870</p> <p>18. Mr J P O'Sullivan Commissioner Queensland Police Service GPO Box 1440 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>19. Mr Kevin Martin Director-General Department of Justice GPO Box 149 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>20. Dr R L Stable Director-General Queensland Health GPO Box 2457 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>21. Mr Kevin Davies Director-General Dept of Public Works and Housing GPO Box 2457 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>22. P J Bevin A/Director-General Department of Natural Resources GPO Box 2454 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>23. Mr Peter Woolley Manager Local Government Funding Division Department of Local Govt and Planning PO Box 187 BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002</p> | <p>24. Mr John Hocken Director-General Department of Emergency Services GPO Box 354 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>25. Mr Keith Hamburger Director-General Qld Corrective Services Commission GPO Box 1054 BRISBANE QLD 4001</p> <p>26. Mr Stewart T Daniels (supplementary submission)</p> <p>27. D Camp President Mareeba Dist. Chamber of Commerce PO Box 163 MAREEBA QLD 4880</p> <p>28. Mr Denis Getawan Chairman Umagico Council VIA BAMAGA QLD 4876</p> <p>29. Mr Colin Bond Chairman New Mapoon Council New Mapoon VIA BAMAGA QLD 4876</p> <p>30. Mr Edwin Woodley Chairman Marpuna Community Aboriginal Corporation PO Box 213 WEIPA QLD 4874</p> <p>31. Mr John Carroll A/Director-General Department of Economic Development and Trade PO Box 168 BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002</p> <p>32. Cape York Regional Advisory Group (supplementary submission)</p> |
|--|--|
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33. Mr P L Ellis
Director-General
Department of Premier and Cabinet
PO Box 185
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002

APPENDIX C — LIST OF WITNESSES**CAIRNS 10 APRIL 1997**

1. Ms Su Groome
Acting Manager
Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc
PO Box 6182
CAIRNS QLD 4870
2. Mr Jim Petrich
Chair
c/- Cape York Peninsula Development
Association
PO Box 646N
CAIRNS QLD 4870
3. Cr Christopher Lewis
Mayor
Mareeba Shire Council
PO Box 154
MAREEBA QLD 4880
4. Mr Ken Rudge
Engineering Technical Adviser
Mareeba Shire Council
PO Box 154
MAREEBA QLD 4880
5. Mr Bob Scott
PO Box 220
KURANDA QLD 4872
6. Mr Ken Hobday
Manager, Property & Facilities Branch
Queensland Police Service
GPO Box 1440
BRISBANE QLD 4001
7. Snr Sgt Craig Fraser
Property & Facilities Branch
Queensland Police Service
GPO Box 1440
BRISBANE QLD 4001
8. Supt Col McCallum
District Officer (Cairns)
Queensland Police Service
GPO Box 1440
BRISBANE QLD 4001
9. Mr John Lister
Chief Executive Officer
FNQEB
PO Box 358
CAIRNS QLD 4870
10. Mr Glenn Walden
Business Manager Generation
FNQEB
PO Box 358
CAIRNS QLD 4870
11. Mr Leslie Baird
Manager Representation Section
Aboriginal Coordinating Council
17 Aplin Street
CAIRNS QLD 4870
12. Mr Ramon Davis
Housing and Information Policy Officer
Aboriginal Coordinating Council
PO Box 6512
CAIRNS QLD 4870
13. Mr Alfred Lacey
Executive Member
Aboriginal Coordinating Council
PO Box 6512
CAIRNS QLD 4870
14. Mr Peter Opio-Otim
Executive Director
Aboriginal Coordinating Council
PO Box 6512
CAIRNS QLD 4870

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15. Ms Erna Hayward
Regional Director
Department of Families, Youth
& Community Care
PO Box 5941
TOWNSVILLE MC QLD 4810
16. Mr Trevor Satour
Manager, Aboriginal & Torres Strait
Islander Affairs
Cape York Region
Department of Families, Youth
& Community Care
PO Box 5941
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810
17. Mr Gerhardt Pearson
Chairperson
Apunipima Cape York Health Council
PO Box 2797
CAIRNS QLD 4870

BRISBANE 28 APRIL 1997

1. Mr Peter Woolley
Manager
Local Government Funding Division
Department of Local Govt and Planning
PO Box 187
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
2. Mr Bill Gilmore
A/Manager
Local Government Operations &
Development Division
Department of Local Govt and Planning
PO Box 187
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
3. Ms Julie Ling
Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Infrastructure
Department of Local Govt and Planning
PO Box 187
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
4. Mr David Jay
Director, Capital Works and Assets
Management Branch
Queensland Health
GPO Box 48
BRISBANE QLD 4001
5. Mr Ian Whitehead
Director
Program Development
Office of Sport & Recreation
GPO Box 354
BRISBANE QLD 4001
6. Ms Pam Armstrong
Manager
Infrastructure Development
Office of Sport and Recreation
GPO Box 354
BRISBANE QLD 4001
7. Mr Alex Ackfun
General Manager, Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Housing
Dept of Public Works and Housing
GPO Box 70
BRISBANE QLD 4001
8. Mr John Budby
Principal Consultant, Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Education
Department of Education
PO Box 33
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
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- | | |
|---|---|
| 9. Ms Dale Ryder Project Officer Govt Infrastructure Coordination Div Department of Premier and Cabinet PO Box 185 BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002 | 10. Mr Tim Reddel Govt Infrastructure Coordination Div Department of Premier and Cabinet PO Box 185 BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002 |
|---|---|

BRISBANE 30 APRIL 1997

1. Mr Peter Noonan
Executive Director
Regional Infrastructure Development
Group
Department of Natural Resources
GPO Box 2454
BRISBANE QLD 4001

 2. Mr Geoff Johnson
General Manager
Forest Resources
Department of Natural Resources
GPO Box 2454
BRISBANE QLD 4001

 3. Mr Glen Starkey
Senior Policy Officer
Regional Infrastructure Development
Group
Department of Natural Resources
GPO Box 2454
BRISBANE QLD 4001

 4. Mr Steve Bredhauer MLA
Member for Cook
PO Box 2080
CAIRNS QLD 4870
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APPENDIX D — EXHIBITS

Several organisations tabled unpublished documents at public hearings held as part of this inquiry. These documents are called exhibits and a list follows.

1. Far North Queensland Electricity Board
PO Box 358
CAIRNS QLD 4870
 - 1a. A copy of overhead transparencies used in their evidence
 - 1b. *Guidelines for electrical installations at isolated systems*

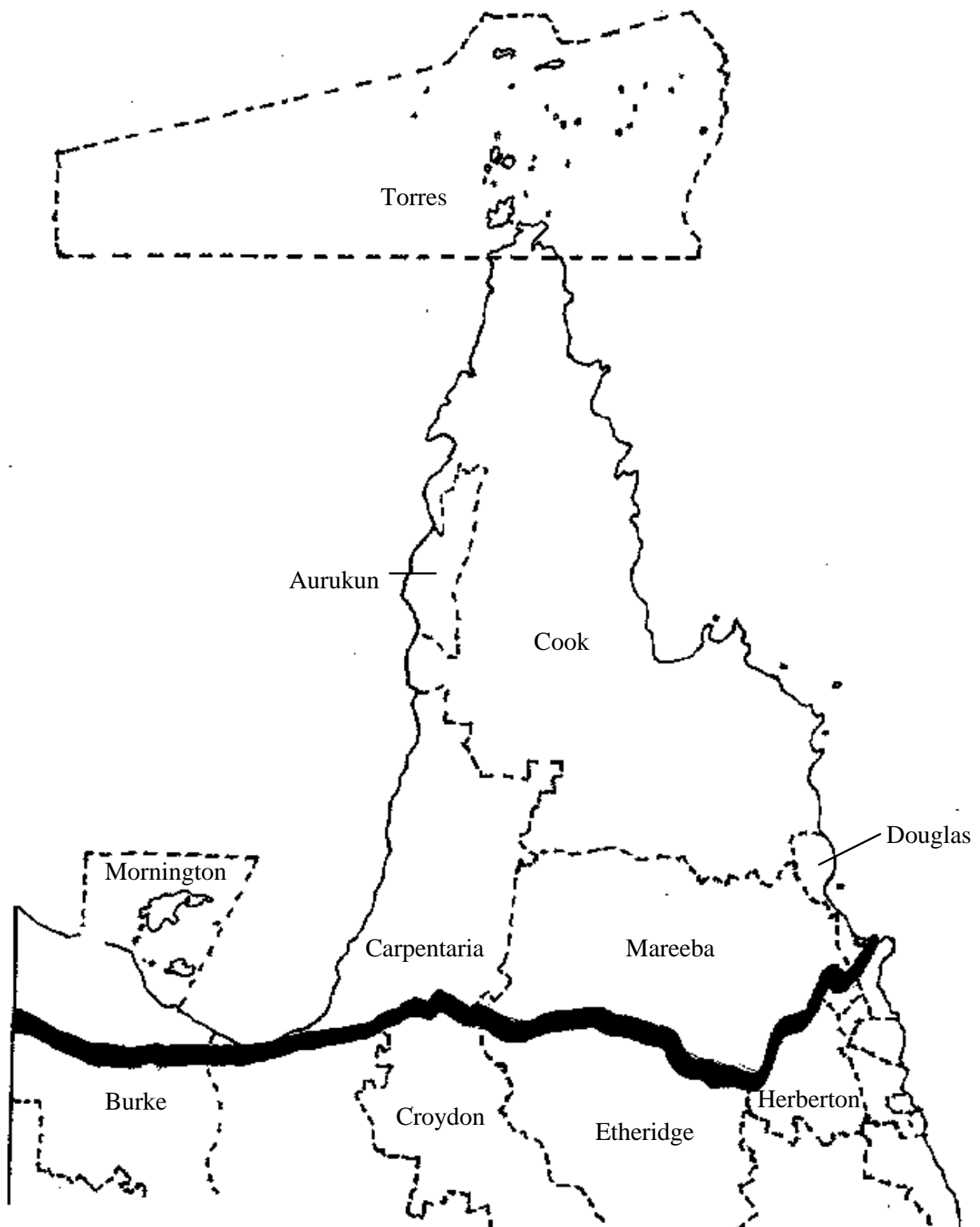
 2. Department of Families, Youth and Community Care
GPO Box 806
BRISBANE QLD 4001
 - 2a. A copy of funding grants approved by the Department of Local Government and Planning's, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infrastructure Program 1996-97 and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission's National Aboriginal Health Strategy, 1996-97.
 - 2b. A copy of the full text of Mr Trevor Satour's speaking notes, prepared for the public hearing.
 - 2c. A print out of the funds allocated to groups in 1996-97 under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Program.

 3. Aboriginal Coordinating Council
PO Box 6512
CAIRNS QLD 4870
 - 3a. A copy of the ACC 1995 Housing Needs Assessment Survey Statistical Reports

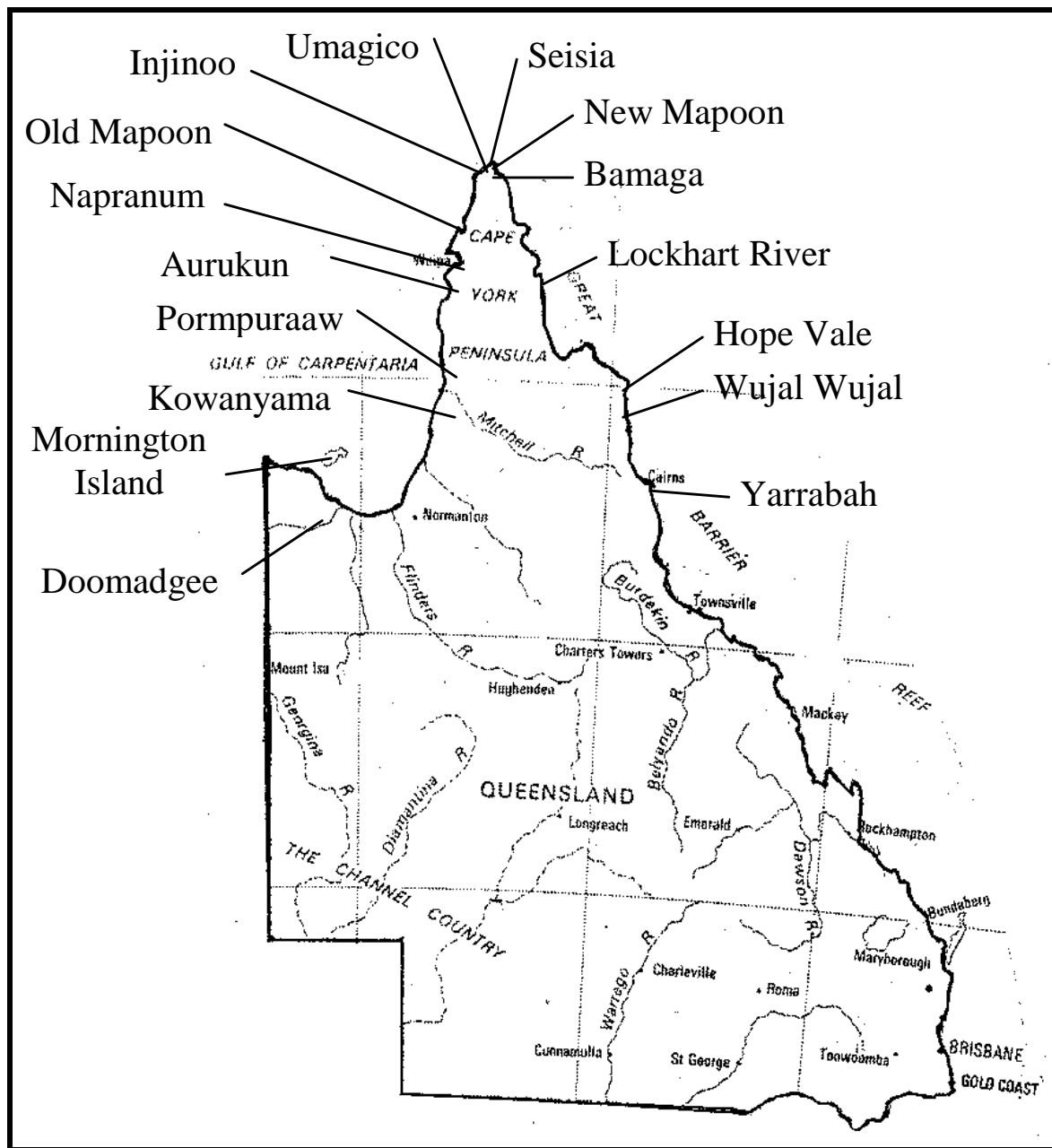
 4. Office of Sport and Recreation
Department of Emergency Services
GPO Box 354
BRISBANE QLD 4000
 - 4a. Far north needs analysis and community information study — summary of draft survey results
 - 4b. Approved grant applications for sport and recreation facilities over the last five years
-

-
- 4c. Working paper on sport and recreation planning in indigenous communities
 - 4d. Mornington Shire Council five year sport and recreation plan — feasibility study for indoor centre
 - 4e. Remote area indigenous sport and recreation officers — recruitment and career development strategy, north Queensland 1996
 - 4f. Shire of Carpentaria — sport and recreation development plan
5. Department of Public Works and Housing
GPO Box 2457
BRISBANE QLD 4000
- 5a. A copy of Alex Ackfun's presentation notes for the public hearing
 - 5b. Island Coordinating Council, *Torres Strait Housing Report: Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust Communities*
 - 5c. A copy of information supplied to prospective tenders for the construction of two houses on Hammond Island, Torres Strait.
 - 5d. *ACC 1995 Housing Needs Assessment and Triennial Allocations project 1996/99*
 - 5e. *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing: Annual Plan 1996/97*
6. Department of Premier and Cabinet
PO Box 185
BRISBANE ALBERT ST QLD 4002
- 6a. A copy of overhead transparencies used in their presentation at the public hearing
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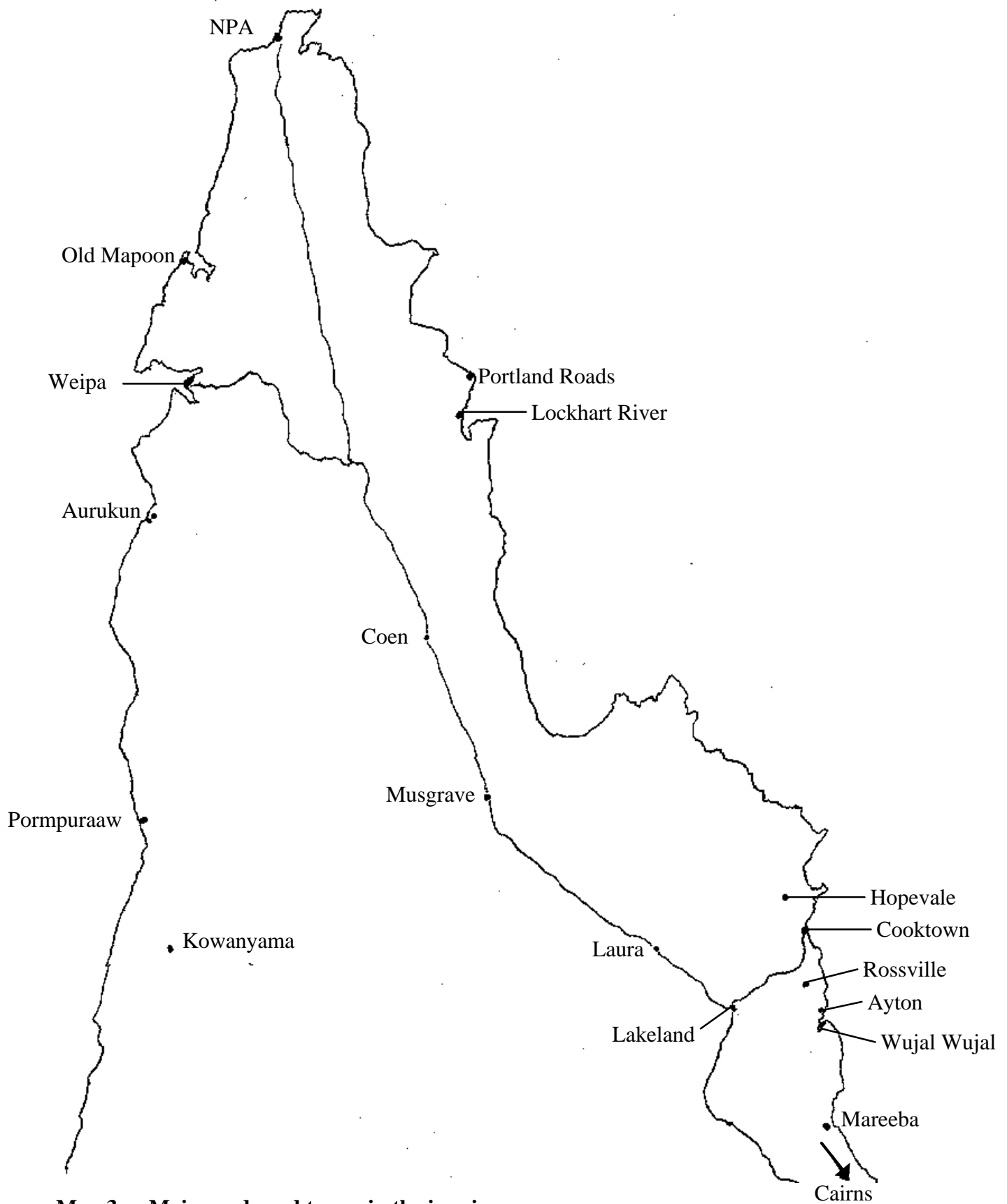
APPENDIX E — MAPS



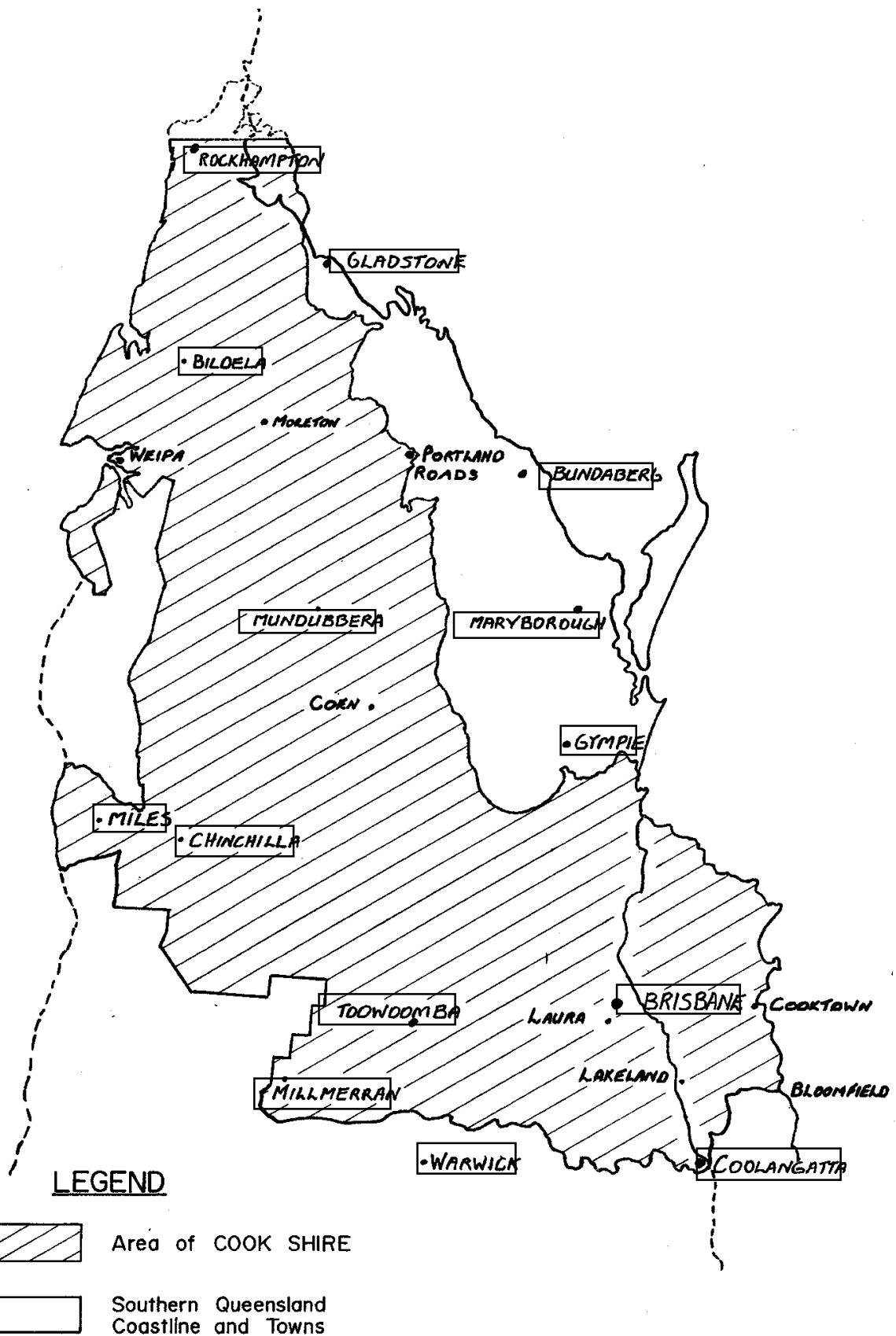
Map 1: The inquiry area and local government boundaries in far north Queensland



Map 2: Location of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities in the inquiry area



Map 3: Main roads and towns in the inquiry area



Map 4: Area of Cook Shire superimposed on southern Queensland
 (source: Cook Shire Council)

APPENDIX F — SPORTING FACILITIES — TABLES

Table 7: List of sporting facilities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Cape York inquiry area

BAMAGA

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Outdoor Courts | Two courts - Basketball Court, Tennis Court | Tennis, Basketball, Volleyball | Bitumen surface Poor condition No nets or hoops Application under 1997 Minor Facilities Program for small shed to store equipment Funding to upgrade courts from the CDEP Program |
| Northern Peninsula Area Oval | Oval - Multi Sport | Athletics, Carnivals, Cricket, Horseriding, Rugby League, Soccer | Oval is being upgraded |
| School Oval | Oval | Cricket, Rugby League, Touch | Small size field |

MORNINGTON ISLAND

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Main Oval | Oval | Touch, Football, Softball | Good condition |
| School Oval | Oval | School activities | Average |
| School Court | Basketball Court | Basketball, Handball | Has been upgraded Main court for competition |
| | Basketball Court | Casual use only | Located at the recreation centre |
| | Netball | | One at the school in poor condition |
| | Cricket Pitch | | At the school |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| | Five Public Parks | Meetings | |
| | BMX Track | | Good condition, recently upgraded |
| Recreation Centre | Recreation Hall | Discos, Youth Activities Little use overall | Poor condition, poorly located - next to the canteen Need a new facility |

DOOMADGEE

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | Indoor Court | Various Games, Picture Theatre | |
| | Oval | | |
| Old Oval | Oval | | |
| | Pool x 25m | School lessons only | Located at the school - not open to the public *Burning issue |
| | Basketball Court | | Located at the school |
| | Cricket Pitch | | Located at the school |
| | Four Public Parks | Meetings | Poorly maintained Some amenities - tables, benches, covered areas |

*A&TSIC funding has been allocated for the development of a Sport and Recreation Centre at Doomadgee, along with funding from Council savings. Negotiations are also occurring with CRA for additional community facilities.

INJINOO

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|----------------|---------------|---|--|
| | Paddock | Softball, Touch, Cricket | Poor condition No equipment |
| Community Hall | Hall | Basketball, Recreation, Feasting, Community Activities | Average condition Net full size for basketball Cement surface - poor condition for sport |

UMAJICO

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------|---|
| | O/D Basketball | Not used | Poor condition. Application for upgrade under 1997 Minor Facilities Program |

NEW MAPOON

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| | Oval/Field | Cricket, Touch Football, Rugby League, Training, Casual Use | Good condition. Lights new |
| | Oval | Not used | Poor condition |
| | O/D Basketball Courts | Casual, Basketball, Volleyball | Poor condition Goal post, no marking, dirt surface |

NAPRANUM

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-------------------|---|----------------------|
| | Oval | Touch, Casual use | Poor condition |
| | Sports Centre | Youth Centre, Events, After School Activity | Good condition - new |
| | Hall | Games | |
| | Basketball Courts | | Good condition |

AURUKUN

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Oval | Limited - used occasionally for football | Very poor |
| | Basketball Courts | School Programs, Casual use | Good |
| | Youth Drop-In Centre | Discos, Movies, Indoor Games | Average |

KOWANYAMA

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Oval | Football, Softball, Carnivals | Average condition |
| | Swimming Pool - 25m | Swimming, School use, Public Days | Average condition |
| | Basketball Courts | | Average condition |
| | Rodeo Ground | Annual Rodeo | Good condition |
| | Canteen/Hall | Licensed Premises, Discos, School activities | Adequate condition |

LOCKHART RIVER

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Oval | Football, Training, Touch | Average condition |
| | Hall | Not used | Poor condition - run down |

HOPEVALE

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| | Rodeo Grounds | Annual Rodeo | Average condition |
| | Basketball Courts | Not used | Poor condition |
| | Hall | Sometimes used | Average condition, but small |
| | Oval | School Activities | Located at the school |

WUJAL WUJAL

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | Oval | Football, Volleyball, Softball | Average condition - new facility |
| | Recreation Centre | Youth Activities, Basketball (one court) | Good condition |

YARRABAH

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | Oval | Rugby league, touch football, athletics | Average condition |
| | Courts | Outdoor basketball | Good condition |
| | Park | Touch football, fetes, celebrations | |
| | Multi-Purpose Sports/Community Hall | Basketball | Good condition |

WEIPA

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Assembly Hall | Community Hall | Bingo, Cabarets, Displays, Fitness, Cinema, Dancing, Meetings, Musicals, Plays, Youth Group | |
| BMX Track | BMX Track | BMX, Cycling | |
| Carpentaria Golf Club | Golf Course | Golf, Meetings | |
| Central Oval | Oval - Specific Use | Cricket | |
| Eastern Oval | Oval - Multi Purpose | Athletics, Baseball, Hockey, Touch Football | Good condition |
| Evans Landing Oval | Oval - Multi Purpose | Athletics, Rugby League, Soccer | |
| Nanum Sports Complex | Recreation Centre Squash Courts | Basketball, Tennis, Volleyball Squash | |
| Raceway Weipa | Track - Car/Motorcycle | Motorcar Racing, Motorcycle Racing | |
| Weipa Bowls Club | Four Lawn Bowling Greens | Lawn Bowling, Cabarets, Dancing, Meetings | |
| Weipa Municipal Pool | 50m Pool | Swimming | |
| Weipa Picture Theatre | Community Hall, Cinema | Cinema, Badminton, Bingo, Cabarets, Dancing | |
| Weipa Rifle & Pistol Range | | Rifle Shooting, Pistol Shooting | |
| Evans Landing Wharf | Marina | Fishing, Power Boating, Sailing, Yachting, Swimming | |
| Hibberd Centre | Community Hall | Arts & Crafts, Bridge, Cabarets, Dancing | |
| House on the Hill | Community Hall | Ballet, Cabarets, Dancing, Displays | |
| Uningan Nature Reserve | Park | Bushwalking, Picnicking | |
| Weipa Horse Club | Equestrian Centre | Displays, Horseriding, Rodeo | |

POMPURAAW - essentially no facilities

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|---------------|----------------------|---|
| | School Oval | School activities | Average, sand based |
| | Clearing | Discos | Used to be a tennis court/basketball court Has potential for development |

OLD MAPOON - essentially no facilities

| Facility Name | Facility Type | Activities Supported | Comments & Condition |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Cleared Ground | Rugby League | Planning to clear ground for new oval |

Source: submission 24

Table 8: Approved Grant Applications for Sport and Recreation Facilities 1994-1996

| Organisation | Project Description | Year | Amount (\$) | Comment |
|---|--|---------|-------------|--|
| Mornington Shire Council | Feasibility study for a multi-purpose indoor complex | 1994 | 6,350 | |
| Karumba Recreation Club Inc. | Construct an office and extend to toilet facilities | 1994 | 10,000 | |
| Cooktown Bowls Club | Provide floodlights | 1994 | 5,936 | |
| Carpentaria Shire Council | Construct dam, install pipelines and pumping and sprinkler systems for ovals. Construct masonry block change rooms | 1995 | 42,000 | |
| Coen Regional Aboriginal Corporation | Construct a pre-fabricated recreational centre and change rooms | 1995 | 23,320 | |
| Ang-Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation (Laura) | Install a fibre-glass swimming pool and filtration system and construct of safety fencing | 1995 | 9,237 | |
| Doomadgee Aboriginal Community | Feasibility study for the construction of a multi-purpose indoor sport and recreation facility | 1995 | 5,000 | Never used Now lapsed |
| Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Community | Purchase and install mobile basketball backboard, goal and net posts; line marking, construction of ablutions | 1995 | 20,000 | |
| Seisia Island Council, Bamaga | Complete and fit out a multi-purpose facility - community hall | 1996 | 25,000 | Short on funds No activities at present |
| Normanton Gun Club | Install an olympic discipline double trap layout | 1996 | 15,000 | |
| Mornington Shire Council | Provide a youth drop-in centre at Gununa | 1996 | 30,000 | |
| TOTAL | | 1994-96 | 191,843 | |

Source: exhibit 4b

Table 9: Approved Grant Applications for Sport and Recreation Facilities 1997

| Organisation | Project Description | Year | Amount (\$) | Comment |
|---|--|------|-------------|--|
| Carpentaria Shire Council | Extend, resurface and line mark the netball, basketball and tennis court surfaces. Relocate existing lighting and install timer switches and new irrigation. | 1997 | \$13,819 | |
| Seisia Island Council | Construction of multi-purpose playing field to cater for rugby league and touch football. Upgrade of hardcourt area to cater for basketball and volleyball | 1997 | 5,050 | |
| Bamaga Island Council | Construction of a multi-purpose fitness facility with ablutions | 1997 | 13,854 | Activities to be catered for include low-impact aerobics, mini-gym, keep fit and recreation activities |
| Umagico Aboriginal Council | Upgrade from existing concrete basketball court to acrylic surface | 1997 | 6,150 | |
| Ang-Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation (Laura) | Construction of ablutions at recreation reserve opposite the Peninsula development at Laura | 1997 | 24,975 | Activities include touch football, rugby league, softball |
| Napranum Aboriginal Community Council | Upgrade courts from dirt to bitumen surface and provide safety fencing around the court | 1997 | 7,500 | |
| Coen Social and Progress Association | Upgrade the tennis court to a multi-purpose hard court area to include activities such as basketball, volleyball and tennis | 1997 | 13,500 | |
| TOTAL | | 1997 | 84,848 | |

Source: exhibit 4b

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

| No. | Report | Date Tabled |
|-----|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Annual Report for the Period Ending 30 June 1989 | 6 July 1989 |
| 2 | Inquiry into the Proposed Construction by the Brisbane and Area Water Board of a Dam on the Albert River at Wolffdene (September 1989) | 28 September 1989 |
| | Report for the Period 1 July to 19 October 1989 | 19 October 1989 |
| 3 | No Public Works Committee Report No. 3 was issued | |
| 4 | Annual Report for the Period 6 March to 30 June 1990 | 23 August 1990 |
| 5 | Bundaberg Hospital Redevelopment - Stage Two (October 1990) | 24 October 1990 |
| 6 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing - The Future (May 1991) | 28 May 1991 |
| 7 | Annual Report for the Period 1 July 1990 to 30 June 1991 | 18 July 1991 |
| 8 | Building Another Mental Institution or Housing a New Mental Health Service? - A Report on Community Debate Concerning Construction of the New Kirwan Psychiatric Rehabilitation Unit (October 1991) | 24 October 1991 |
| 9 | Consultation and Planning for Schools and Colleges between State and Local Authorities (November 1991) | 5 December 1991 |
| 10 | The Proposal to Build a 33-Level Office Block at 111 George Street (November 1991) | 5 December 1991 |
| | Annual Report for Year 1991-1992 | 25 November 1992 |
| 11 | Kirwan Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centre | 2 March 1993 |
| 12 | The Proposed Upgrade of the Townsville Correctional Centre | 3 March 1993 |
| 13 | Public Housing in Toowoomba | 19 March 1993 |
| 14 | The Development of the Sciencentre - the Old Government Printery | 13 May 1993 |
| 15 | Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies | 13 May 1993 |
| 16 | Cairns Courthouse, Police Headquarters and Watchhouse Complex | 20 May 1993 |
| 17 | Replacement Schools for Herberton and Mission Beach | 15 July 1993 |
| | Annual Report for Year 1992-1993 | 1 September 1993 |

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|------------|--|--------------------|
| 18 | Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre | 13 October 1993 |
| 19 | The Construction of New Government Office Accommodation in Rockhampton | 18 November 1993 |
| 20 | Health Facilities in Far North Queensland - Preliminary Report | 3 December 1993 |
| 21 | Health Facilities in Far North Queensland - Final Report | 25 February 1994 |
| 22 | Cairns Convention Centre | 28 April 1994 |
| 23 | Landsborough Highway, Jessamine Creek, and University Road, Townsville | 28 April 1994 |
| | Annual Report for Year 1993-94 | 2 August 1994 |
| 24 | The Development of Mountain Creek High School | 31 August 1994 |
| 25 | Nambour Hospital Block 6 and Associated Matters | 9 September 1994 |
| 26 | Queensland Cultural Centre - Stage Five | 28 October 1994 |
| 27 | Technology Facilities Toowoomba College of Technical and Further Education | 23 February 1995 |
| 28 | Development of the Teemburra Dam and Associated Irrigation Areas | 24 March 1995 |
| 29 | Development of the Mackay Small Craft Harbour | 31 March 1995 |
| 30 | Development of the Hervey Bay Courthouse | 6 June 1995 |
| 31 | Development of the Bundaberg Police Headquarters and Watchhouse | 6 June 1995 |
| | Annual Report 1994-95 | 19 October 1995 |
| 32 | Redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital | 23 July 1996 |
| 33 | Expansion of the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre Farm | 23 July 1996 |
| | Annual Report 1995-96 | 8 October 1996 |
| 34 | Construction of the new Woodford Correctional Centre | 29 October 1996 |
| 35 | Tilt Train Project | 26 March 1997 |
| 36 | The Expansion of the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal | 8 May 1997 |
| 37 | Redevelopment of the Princess Alexandra Hospital — interim report | 27 May 1997 |
| 38 | The Provision of Infrastructure in Cape York | |

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