




Speech By
David Kempton

MEMBER FOR COOK

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2014

MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Cook Electorate, Napranum

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (3.25 pm): Eric Deeral, the first Aboriginal parliamentarian in Queensland, said in his maiden speech nearly 30 years ago that the old hand-out philosophy did much to destroy the initiative of Aboriginal and Islander people and that we must try to restore their pride and initiative. There is strong evidence that by raising community awareness, providing economic opportunity and encouraging community responsibility it is possible to create sustainable change in remote Indigenous communities. The best example of this remarkable community advancement can be seen in Napranum in the western Cape York area with their whole-of-community change program. Napranum was labelled one of the most disadvantaged communities in Queensland despite being only kilometres from the Rio Tinto mining operation at Weipa. Napranum's people, like Indigenous people throughout Queensland, were overrepresented in most of the negative social indicators such as incarceration, unemployment, substance abuse, domestic violence and short life expectancy. Further, the important indicators such as numeracy and literacy, health standards and career opportunity continually fell short of national standards.

In 2011 the Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council embarked on an ambitious program to turn these numbers around. The council partnered with Dynamic Exchange to build a new community through community growth and economic development. The results are both outstanding and remarkable. In just two years the community says it has experienced a 60 per cent increase in employment, an 80 per cent reduction in children attending the safe house, an 80 per cent decrease in adult domestic violence and a 50 per cent decrease in adult court appearances. They have put in for an alcohol management plan review. They say they feel respected. The oval is packed with kids playing sport and the community is happy. The council says it has increased its employees from 60 to 100, it has constructed 17 houses and 14 worker accommodation units, built an administration centre and supermarket, renovated the community hall and sports oval, erected a war memorial and established a day-care centre.

Freddie Ara, a young electrical trade assistant from Napranum, stated that this program—

... has helped us gather people and share ideas. This program has given us a reason to communicate, talk about common goals and has given us something to look forward to. I am looking forward to completing my certificate training. It is all I ever think about.

Local boys are now motivated and actively looking for work. This never happened before. We used to depend on Centrelink. But no more! The youth are seeing changes in the community and they want to contribute. There is no damage to the housing—

That is, the housing that they build—

because everybody is respecting our work. I feel great. I am focused and confident. I feel no shame.

Mr Deeral would be well pleased with this outcome.