

Question on Notice

No. 496

Asked on Thursday, 15 March 2007

Ms DARLING asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland (Mr Shine) -

QUESTION:

What is the process for establishing a Murri court at a new location?

ANSWER:

Murri Courts have been established by local agreement and mutual support between magistrates and representatives of Indigenous communities, especially Indigenous Elders.

The functions performed by Murri Courts are constituted under the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* in the adult jurisdiction and the *Juvenile Justice Act 1992* in the youth jurisdiction. These Acts state that magistrates must have regard to any submissions made by a representative of a community justice group in the offender's community. The process for efficiently bringing matters relating to Indigenous offenders onto one list on a chosen day when Indigenous Elders or Community Justice Representatives can attend has evolved into the Murri Court.

Where a need for a Murri Court has been identified, it is necessary for there to be discussions between the local community and the local magistrate. Their agreement is essential for the Murri Court to be established.

The Government has committed \$5 million over the next three years for Murri Courts.