

Response to the First Report of the Indigenous Implementation Board.

Minister's foreword.

I acknowledge the first report of the Indigenous Implementation Board and the directions and recommendations contained within.

The need for Aboriginal people¹ to take the lead is a theme in the recommendations of the Board and is one which is certainly endorsed. There is significant activity currently occurring in reforming how services are provided to Aboriginal people to improve their life outcomes, and I am committed to working innovatively and establishing effective mechanisms for engagement, as recommended by the Board.

Many of these new approaches include a much greater involvement of Aboriginal people at an advisory as well as a local level – to ensure that programs and resources are provided in a way that Aboriginal people will have control in the planning and development.

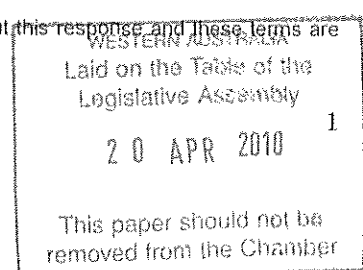
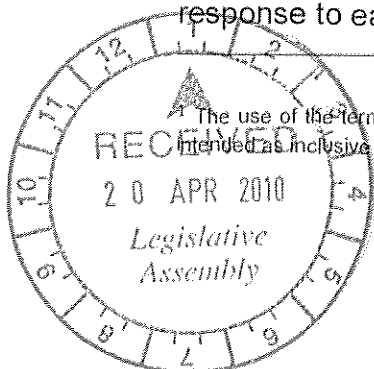
A promising example of this way of working is the Regional Operations Centre in the Kimberley, developed through the COAG *National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery* (RSD). This model has great potential for local level engagement and real input of Aboriginal people in the development and design of services.

The establishment of the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council has been a significant step in raising the voices of Aboriginal people and is now achieved.

The Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee has been developed as a coordinated group of Directors General who are able to take an innovative and practical approach to issues by working directly with each other and with specific communities. This group also involves the Chairperson of the Aboriginal Advisory Council, to ensure that strong collaboration occurs and the views of Aboriginal people are represented in the decision making of this group.

Overall, I endorse the recommendations of the Board, and will work to deliver clear outcomes in response to each of them. Some of this work naturally will take time to initiate and develop, whilst some important initiatives are already underway. A response to each recommendation follows.

¹ The use of the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous are used interchangeably throughout this response and these terms are intended as inclusive of the Torres Strait Islander people of Western Australia.



1. *The Board recommends that Indigenous people must be involved in target setting and additionally, that it is critical that greater investment in economic development and the local Indigenous workforce occurs to achieve the targets. It is recommended that Ministers support Directors General to work in the new ways required to provide a more sustainable quality of life and enhance the capacity of Indigenous people to contribute to the common wealth of Western Australia.*

This recommendation is welcomed and it is my intention to develop long term reforms which will involve engaging with Aboriginal people at both an advisory level, such as with the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council, and at a local level in decision making around issues that affect their lives.

The Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) initiatives in Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage has provided the opportunity to establish local forums where community members can have input to the implementation and roll out of initiatives under the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership.

The Aboriginal Justice Agreement (2004) Program has been a major initiative in engaging with Aboriginal people through involvement in local and regional justice forums. These forums have provided an opportunity for engagement, but there is still a need to ensure that the views, issues and priorities of Aboriginal people are being addressed. To this end, an impact evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement (2004) Program is underway to review how well the program is meeting these goals and how these processes can be strengthened.

A range of targets for improving Aboriginal outcomes have been developed by the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee. These three year targets include many initiatives which are aimed at improving outcomes, but in line with the Board's recommendations, involve greater investment in the Aboriginal workforce. Several of the targets relate to the development of economic opportunity as well as cultural and social wellbeing.

Whilst these initiatives set targets at a high level, there has been significant engagement of Aboriginal people in how they are developed and implemented 'on the ground'.

A range of activity is also occurring in respect to Aboriginal economic participation.

Meetings have been held between Indigenous Implementation Board members and key staff of the Department of Indigenous Affairs to discuss the provision of

Aboriginal Economic Development services following the disbanding of the Aboriginal Economic Development Unit in the 2009/10 State budget.

I have requested the Department of Indigenous Affairs to give close consideration to any capacity gaps in economic development support as a result of the disbanding of the Aboriginal Economic Development Unit, and how these could be addressed as a future priority.

The Department of Indigenous Affairs is focusing effort on:

- The need to enhance its capacity to provide Aboriginal economic development policy advice to Government and its agencies.
- Assistance to the Aboriginal community with the identification and analysis of economic opportunities resulting from native title, Aboriginal owned lands and regional development initiatives.
- The need to develop with private industry and the education sector a program in support of Aboriginal entrepreneurs.
- The need to develop an Aboriginal *Women in Business* strategy and support program.
- The need to encourage private Non Government Organisations such as the "Indigenous Enterprise Partnership" to establish operations within WA.
- The need to provide corporate governance support to Aboriginal trusts, organisations and companies.

The corporate and non government sectors are also being encouraged to provide expertise and assistance to Aboriginal communities and organisations with economic development capacity building, including corporate governance training, partnership building, employment strategies, and management and leadership skills.

The Department of Indigenous Affairs is the responsible State agency for the COAG National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation which is including significant work on the four components of this bilateral plan:

- a. creating real sustainable employment in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidisation through the Community Development Employment Projects Program;
- b. strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;
- c. incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into all new major COAG reforms contributing to Closing the Gap targets; and
- d. Reviewing all Public Sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to increase employment to reflect the Aboriginal working age population share, with a goal of 3.2% by 2015.

Innovative procurement practices and Indigenous workforce development strategies are being trialed in implementing the East Kimberley Development Package National Partnership (EKDP NP) and Remote Indigenous Housing National Partnership. These projects will inform future workforce planning and procurement strategies to increase Indigenous employment.

To assist with Indigenous employment outcomes from the EKDP NP, an on-the-ground facilitator role is currently being trialed in the East Kimberley to provide a point of contact between potential Aboriginal employees, employment and support services and employers. This role is being supported by the Departments of Training and Workforce Development, Indigenous Affairs and State Development.

Early successes are already being seen on the ground through procurement for the EKDP NP. For example, the Industry Training Unit, Department of Treasury and Finance, has been engaged to provide apprenticeship and traineeships for the project. The ITU program will utilise a Group Training Organisation to provide sustainable employment for the full length of apprenticeships/traineeships where necessary beyond the length of the two-year build provided for in the NP.

It is expected that for the EKDP projects 20 apprentices/trainees will be engaged, 10 in housing and 10 in education and health construction projects. A significant proportion of these positions will be filled by Aboriginal employees. Pre-apprenticeship training began during January 2010.

2. The Board supports the use of liquor restrictions as part of an integrated whole of government strategy designed to build and maintain sustainable communities. It recommends that these restrictions and strategies be supported by and developed in consultation with the whole community immediately that restrictions are imposed.

The support of the Indigenous Implementation Board for the use of alcohol restrictions is welcomed. More information is becoming available that the use of restrictions is having a major impact on the wellbeing of communities. Recent findings in relation to the restrictions in Halls Creek echo those from Fitzroy Crossing in that, since the introduction of restrictions, there are significantly fewer alcohol related assaults and hospital admissions. Women of the community have reported that the restrictions are leading to Halls Creek being a better place for their children.

Unsupported liquor restrictions are unlikely to provide sustainable change. Experience and research evidence reinforces that effective alcohol management occurs as a result of community action supported by competent expertise. Effective alcohol management plans include liquor restrictions or other alcohol control measures that are tailored to the unique needs of the area.

Reducing harmful alcohol use and related problems creates an opportunity for other social and economic strategies and services to effectively establish.

I agree there is a need to develop whole of government strategies in implementing these services. The draft Regional Alcohol Management Plan for the Kimberley was endorsed by the Kimberley Interagency Working Group and recommends a range of strategies and actions to address alcohol related harm and other matters across the Kimberley. The Kimberley Interagency Working Group is working collaboratively, using a place based approach and solution broking focus, on a range of matters including management of alcohol and other drugs.

Another effort to support and engage communities and to empower them to find local solutions is a recent partnership between Healthway and the Drug and Alcohol Office to offer a Community Alcohol Grants Program. This program will support local groups in identifying and addressing issues of alcohol related harm at a local level. The funding is available to incorporated organisations for local community projects aimed at preventing and reducing alcohol related harm.

3. The Board recommends State and Commonwealth Governments commit adequate funding in the next budget, including that which is required to train and accredit Indigenous translators and interpreters, implement the State Language Policy and provide all Aboriginal Australians with health and legal services in a language they can understand.

This recommendation is currently under consideration. The Department of Indigenous Affairs is well progressed in the development of an Aboriginal Languages Policy, which articulates the importance of language as a critical element of cultural identity and for linking people to their land, history and spirituality, and the extent to which a strong cultural identity can contribute to Aboriginal peoples overall wellbeing.

Based on the development of this policy, work is underway in clarifying the means by which services can be provided to Aboriginal Western Australians in a language and manner they can understand. The release of the Aboriginal Languages Policy will be a means to enhance the delivery of services to Aboriginal people for whom English is not a first language.

The Commonwealth and State Governments, through the COAG Remote Service Delivery Agreement, have committed to funding for Aboriginal interpreters in priority sites in the Kimberley. Discussions will continue with the Commonwealth regarding expansion of these commitments.

The 2009 Social Justice Report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner has made a range of recommendations around strategic and programmatic action to preserve Indigenous language and to hold the different levels of government to a consistent position on language policy and action. These recommendations to the Commonwealth Government include the development of a national working group with a task of establishing a national Indigenous languages body.

Further, it has been recommended that such a body determine the required resources for the preservation and promotion of Indigenous languages and that this resourcing is committed to by government. This type of negotiation is likely to occur through national agreements in the COAG process, to which Western Australia would be party.

Discussions are occurring between the Department of Indigenous Affairs, the Office of Multicultural Interests and the Equal Opportunities Commissioner to clarify and define to any government body formed, the needs of Aboriginal Western Australians for Interpreter services and how these can be met.

4. *The Board recommends that before the end of the 2009 calendar year, that all tiers of government, business and non-government organisations provide an indicative assessment of the investment occurring in Indigenous affairs, including specific information on expenditure to achieve Indigenous outcomes and its effectiveness.*

I acknowledge and agree that an assessment of investment in Indigenous affairs is critical to working differently to achieve better outcomes. An indicative expenditure has been provided late in 2009 as a result of work underway through the National Indigenous Expenditure Report.

In December 2007, COAG, including Western Australia, agreed to report transparently on expenditure regarding services for Aboriginal people. This commitment was progressed by the Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations, with a decision to develop a national framework for reporting Indigenous expenditure. Western Australia has agreed to be a partner in this development through the COAG process.

An initial collection of expenditure data is now being trialed in all jurisdictions, including Western Australia, with a view to producing the first Indigenous Expenditure Report in mid 2010, based on 2008-2009 financial year expenditure.

This expenditure mapping is long term and has the strength of being across both State and Commonwealth levels of government, so that a fuller picture is provided. It is anticipated it will continue to improve as a means of mapping expenditure to consider outcomes from investment and the impact of frameworks such as the COAG Building Blocks and Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage.

The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) is managing the collection of expenditure data from all agencies. For the first report, agencies have been requested to provide expenditure on indigenous specific programs and total expenditure on an annual basis.

Collection of data from agencies has taken place and expenditure data on Indigenous specific and mainstream Programs was provided to the Indigenous Implementation Board in December 2009 in response to the request for this information.

Further information will be provided to the Board as the data collection is refined and detailed.

5. The Board recommends that reform of the Department of Indigenous Affairs be accelerated and that the reform include adequate resources to more effectively support the work of the Board, as a coordinating Secretariat.

The reform of the Department of Indigenous Affairs is well underway and is being directed at developing the Department's capacity to lead and influence State Government actions in Indigenous affairs in line with policy drivers such as the COAG Indigenous reform agenda, COAG Closing the Gap targets, and priority issues and locations identified by the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee.

Previous reviews into DIA have identified the necessity to provide adequate resources and to build capacity within the Department to lead and influence across government and the corporate sector, provide expert services and advice on matters relating to land, heritage and culture and to develop and implement a strategic approach to meet closing the gap targets.

The State Government is committed to positioning DIA as the State's lead agency in Indigenous affairs and ensuring it has the capacity to deliver on the government's priorities in Indigenous affairs. To this end additional funding has been provided to assist in building this capacity. The Department has a focus on achieving sustainable economic benefits for Aboriginal people through partnerships and other opportunities arising from the development of the State.

Critical to the success of DIA is its capacity to work with a broad range of stakeholders across government, community and business to deliver outcomes in key areas such as health, education, policing and housing, and to create conditions that enhance employment and economic security.

With this in mind DIA has allocated a substantial portion of its resources towards supporting the Government established consultative mechanisms of the Indigenous Implementation Board and the WA Aboriginal Advisory Council. DIA has also invested in the development and support of the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee. These groups are already having an effect on the way DIA does business by ensuring a more outward looking and consultative agency with improved capacity to develop strategic partnerships and projects.

Other areas of reform have included engaging in major state developments such as the Gorgon Project, Ord Stage 2, Oakajee and Browse LNG Project which present opportunities to create sustainable economic benefits for Aboriginal people, through Native Title negotiations and partnerships between Aboriginal communities, governments and industry. A key focus of the DIA reform process is

on building the agency's capacity to lead actions within government to maximise the benefits that these developments present for Aboriginal people.

Improving the Department's capacity in this area is particularly important, given expectations that DIA will take up responsibility for leadership of Aboriginal economic development policy and strategies on behalf of the State Government and as required under COAG agreements.

In response to stakeholders needs, the Department is purposefully working to more effectively assert its leadership and influencing roles in Indigenous affairs. This positioning is active across a broad spectrum of activity including:

- Intergovernmental agreements and partnerships;
- Local initiatives such as the Yagan Memorial Park;
- Heritage preservation on the Burrup Peninsula;
- Reconciliation action planning across State, local and non government and private sector organisations; and
- Resolution of land tenure issues critical to government service delivery and State development projects.

In relation to the non-government sector, the Department is also working to increase its capacity to offer governance support, intervention and corporate development.

With the consolidation of its new executive structure, the Department has committed to the creation of a strategic framework which provides the basis and direction for the finalisation of its strategic plan and subsequent development of business and regional plans. The Department's new structure better positions it to address Government's goals and its outcome of *sustainable improvement in social, cultural and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people*.

As recommended by the Board, the Department is purposefully working to more effectively assert its leadership and influencing roles in Indigenous affairs.

6. *The Board recommends that all future COAG agreements affecting the lives of Indigenous Western Australians must appropriately involve local governments and broad Indigenous representation at the beginning of and throughout the agreement making process."*

This recommendation of the Board is agreed. It is essential that local government representation is included in COAG processes.

The Remote Service Delivery (RSD) Bilateral Agreement in Western Australia commits to the engagement of local governments (and other service delivery partners) and the signing of an MOU to clearly establish roles, operational processes and structures for integrated service planning and service delivery.

Actions are already being undertaken to more clearly define the role of local government in the RSD locations specifically, and in remote communities more broadly.

At the State level, a working party led by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has been established to understand the need and costs of providing essential services, infrastructure and municipal services to remote communities in WA. The Working Party comprises of representatives from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Department of Local Government, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Department of Housing, Department of Treasury and Finance, Department of Regional Development and Lands, Department of Planning, Department of Water and the Office of Energy. This group has a goal to pursue a realistic collaborative program of essential services and infrastructure works with the Commonwealth Government.

It is expected that one or more of the Remote Service Delivery locations will be pilot sites for the development of comprehensive local government business plans for delivery of services to Aboriginal people.

The Regional Operations Centre in Broome has initiated significant engagement with the four local government areas regarding their roles in the priority locations. As a result planning workshops are underway with the Kimberley Country Zone, comprising four local government authorities, to discuss and review roles, responsibilities and links to the work being undertaken more broadly by the State and Commonwealth.

The Director General of the Department of Indigenous Affairs has written to the Kimberley Country Zone inviting them to place an officer in the Kimberley Regional Operations Centre to work as part of a collaborative cross-government approach.

Early discussions demonstrate support for this approach, and arrangements will be further discussed and progressed.

I am pleased that the Western Australian Local Government Association has expressed its desire to be part of the process including formalising arrangements through signing of agreements or Memorandums of Understanding.

The Western Australian Government has made a range of recommendations to the Commonwealth on a variety of actions from the Working Group on Indigenous Reform to strengthen the links to local government and inclusion of Aboriginal representation as part of the implementation of the National Partnership Agreements.

Through the COAG Remote Service Delivery National Partnership, the Department of Indigenous Affairs is the lead agency in reforming the way governments provide services to remote Aboriginal communities through a single government interface and engaging Aboriginal people to actively participate in services to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage

This has involved building community governance and engaging communities as partners in each Remote Service Delivery location. Local Implementation Plans involve government and communities in each location agreeing on the range of services to achieve the COAG targets. These plans are developed through local consultation processes, including the engagement of local area co-coordinators and two Aboriginal engagement officers in each community.

This work has included support for baseline mapping and service audits to determine current social and economic indicators, government investments and service gaps.

The integrated service planning and service delivery mechanisms are a beginning to enable government to effectively work together at the local, regional and state levels and better coordinate services.

7. *The Board recommends that the State Government undertake immediate consultation to identify appropriate regional mechanisms comprising Indigenous and non-Indigenous representation, industry and three tiers of government to:*

- a. Administer investment from Bilateral agreements and report on progress against agreed outcomes;*
- b. Ensure engagement with Indigenous communities, organisations and people to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of services and intended Indigenous outcomes.*
- c. Establish a set of Indigenous service delivery priorities for each of the WA regions based on identified requirements of the region and determined in consultation with Indigenous people.*
- d. Undertake broader regional planning that includes development of a service delivery baseline and identification of performance improvements needed for service delivery to communities in each of the WA regions.*
- e. Support the Board in the development of a proposed regional framework that can underpin the strategies above.*

I endorse the recommendation and the government is working to be responsive to the needs and issues of Aboriginal people in the regions.

As stated earlier, the Broome Regional Operations Centre is testing new ways of working to ensure engagement and a single government interface. The Regional Operations Centre is undertaking a range of promising practices aiming to address the areas outlined in the recommendations above in the COAG priority locations.

The Department of Indigenous Affairs' Director, Remote Service Delivery, who is also the Deputy Manager of the Regional Operations Centre (ROC), is the Chair of the Kimberley Interagency Working Group (KIWG). KIWG has recently reviewed its Terms of Reference, goals and objectives and as a result, is now a solution broking group with a place based approach underpinning their activity. It is anticipated that this work will provide learning that can be transferred across regions as opportunities emerge.

The Regional Operations Centre is already achieving outcomes as a single interface with government for Aboriginal people. It is trialing a range of initiatives

and planning models which engage Aboriginal people on a local basis in the design and delivery of services.

The work of the Indigenous Implementation Board in undertaking regional conversations has also assisted to identify key issues for Aboriginal people in the regions, which will inform the work of government. The Aboriginal Justice Agreement process has also proved a vehicle for engaging with local community to identify issues and directions. This process will be refined and improved through review and evaluation.

The focus of the Indigenous Implementation Board is endorsed, and I am looking forward to further advice from the Board in relation to governance processes at a regional level.

8. The Board recommends that Royalties for Regions allocate a recurrent stream of funding for Indigenous leaders to engage their communities in regional planning.

I support this recommendation and understand that the Department of Indigenous Affairs is providing support to the Board to facilitate Royalties for Regions funding for Aboriginal conversations across the regions. There is recognition of the need for extensive consultation on a regional basis with Aboriginal people about local priorities and issues.

Initial conversations in the Kimberley and the Pilbara have been provided funding through the Department of Indigenous Affairs, as have recent conversations in the Goldfields and with the Nyoongar people of the South West of the state.

The Director General of DIA has written to the Aboriginal leaders and organisations who have conducted Indigenous Regional Conversations since the first report of the Board, offering DIA support with implementing their vision.

Discussions have occurred between the Department of Indigenous Affairs and the Department for Regional Development and Lands toward ensuring these important conversations continue through a recurrent source of funding.

I acknowledge and strongly support the initiative of the Board to build these processes for engagement and participation. The conversations held to date have been an important and impressive avenue for consultation and it is anticipated that they provide the potential for government to be increasingly involved. One off events will not prove as useful as ongoing engagement and recurrent dialogue between the government and Aboriginal people at a regional level.

9. *The Board recommends the WA AAC is established and resourced as a matter of urgency, with clear terms of reference to engage with and champion the Indigenous voice and to participate equitably in partnerships with Governments and Industry in decision making that affect the regions.*

I have established the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council (WAAAC) which held its inaugural meeting on 9 September 2009.

The WAAAC meets every two months and at its first meeting, Mr Wayne Bergman was elected as Chairperson. In November 2009 the WAAAC held a planning workshop to develop its Strategic Plan which was finalised at the WAAAC February meeting in Broome.

The WAAAC presents a significant opportunity to build genuine, respectful and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal people. It will also help achieve better life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and children.

The operation of the WAAAC is a requirement of the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* and I have reintroduced the Council after it not having sat for several years. Re-establishing the 12-member WAAAC has provided a communication channel between the State Government and Aboriginal people, with members of the community able to bring the Council's attention to matters of importance to them.

The terms of reference of the WAAAC are derived in accordance with Section 18 of the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972*, and are:

To provide leadership, advice and direction to the Minister Indigenous Affairs through the Department of Indigenous Affairs on:

- Indigenous aspirations on priority issues and interests;
- the necessary performance/outcome targets required to realise these aspirations; and
- the needs of the Western Australian Indigenous community and the provision of feedback to stakeholder groups.

I welcome and encourage collaboration between the Indigenous Implementation Board, the WA Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee as a means to provide advice to me to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.

10. The Board recommends that the Remote Aboriginal Communities Policy be developed with the Commonwealth and Local Government so that it provides consistent advice and guidance to those involved in the development of any Regional Plans.

The State Remote Aboriginal Communities Planning Framework is well advanced, with the aim of guiding sustainable investment in remote Aboriginal communities.

The policy commits the Government to a rigorous and holistic process, conducted in consultation with Aboriginal people, in order to determine priority locations and strategies for investment and the provision of government services within discrete community clusters. Once established, these investment priorities will guide government decision making in regards to the planning and delivery of services and infrastructure within the cluster. The policy, however, does not provide an arbitrary set of criteria against which individual communities are to be assessed and investment and service delivery decisions consequently made.

This policy framework represents a strategic tool for the systemic, structural reform of government and community based decision making regarding remote Aboriginal communities. It does not preclude government from making arrangements for the delivery of services and/or infrastructure when specific opportunities or emergency need arises.

The Framework and the aligned Implementation Plan have been developed by the Department of Indigenous Affairs in consultation with the majority of agencies that provide services to remote Aboriginal communities including the Department of Local Government and the Department of Regional Development and Lands.

The Remote Aboriginal Communities Framework will serve as a mechanism to enable a consistent approach is taken to a range of regional planning activities, including those related to COAG Remote Service Delivery and the new regional planning committees being established by the Western Australian Planning Commission.

Through the implementation process, the Framework will drive and expand the development of policy. In particular, *the Guideline for the Planning for Aboriginal Communities – Provision of Housing and Infrastructure to Remote Aboriginal Communities in WA* (Guideline No.1) currently being prepared by the Western Australian Planning Commission in partnership with the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Department of Housing will form a practical, equitable and easily understood platform for the coordination and prioritisation of housing and infrastructure development in remote Aboriginal communities.

11. The Board recommends that, to maximise the benefit of any future investment, consideration is given to prioritise investment towards communities where the following outcomes are likely:

- a. Environments that foster strong families through an increased focus on children and preventative approaches;*
- b. Food security;*
- c. Investment in Indigenous workforce development;*
- d. Capacity to support infrastructure development;*
- e. A clear and broadly united community voice; and*
- f. Support to the development of Indigenous leadership and governance.*

The Remote Aboriginal Policy framework for assessing investment in communities is consistent with the components of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework,² a model which takes a holistic view of community, taking into account risk, access to and utilisation of assets, and the underlying legislative and policy context.

The investment assessment will be based on a number of factors including opportunities for economic participation, access to services and infrastructure, levels of community safety, cultural considerations and governance structures.

In summary, there is full agreement with this recommendation and a commitment that in the development of the operational tools for the framework all the issues identified by the Board will be considered and addressed.

² See Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, *Developing a Shared Model for Sustainable Aboriginal Livelihoods in Natural-Cultural Resource Management*

12. The Board recommends that the Auditor General consider measuring the effectiveness of:

- a. The current investment in Indigenous affairs against the intended outcomes; and*
- b. State agencies' involvement of Indigenous people in the design, delivery, evaluation and outcomes of service delivery, including that being driven through the COAG agreements related to Indigenous Affairs in WA.*

The Auditor General reports directly to Parliament and ultimately the people of Western Australia. The Government is not able to direct the independent and impartial office of the Auditor General to undertake any activity.

However it is understood that discussions have occurred between the Auditor General and members of the Indigenous Implementation Board on potential themes, issues and areas the Auditor General might examine. As is usual, the Government will work collaboratively with the Auditor General when projects are determined.

13. The Board recommends the AACC and WA AAC commission a WA Indigenous report card to be delivered every two years to compare progress at the regional and local level, allowing them to provide well informed advice to the State to make well-evidenced investment decisions and guide investment towards strategies that work.

I broadly support the recommendation that the AACC and the WAAAC have mechanisms in place to consider progress on Aboriginal outcomes.

Currently the AACC utilise the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) Report, provided every two years. This report provides measures on priority outcomes in areas of health, safety, development, economic participation and sustainability, along with targets and headline indicators and strategic areas for action to achieve improved outcomes for Aboriginal People. The OID report is inclusive of the COAG building blocks. The AACC are also informed on the progress of the COAG overarching bi-lateral implementation plan including measures and achievements related to it.

There is also support for baseline mapping and service audits being undertaken in the remote service delivery priority locations to determine current social and economic indicators, government investments and service gaps. This will enable evaluation of progress and could be a model to be rolled out in the future to other regional locations.

It would not be appropriate to invest in mechanisms at a state level which would duplicate these agreed activities. These existing measures and reporting will both set benchmarks and give a comprehensive overview of progress in a range of priority areas over time.

The AACC has also developed a set of activity targets which are defined over three years to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. Reporting on the progress of these targets will be reported to me on a six monthly basis through the AACC. The success and challenges in achieving these targets will assist in determining investment priorities and strategies.

I understand that as part of their strategic plan, the WAAAC have identified the need to develop a 'scorecard' that will focus on how the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is assessed and measured across the state. This will be a priority action for the WAAAC over the next six months.