DIRECTORS' GENERAL GORDON IMPLEMENTATION GROUP MEETING

Friday 14 March 2003
9.30 – 11.30am
18th Floor, 197 St Georges Terrace

TABLED BY WARBEY
Lynsey
Aug 21 2003

MINUTES

1. Directors General Present:

Jane Brazier (DCD) (co-chair)
Mike Daube (DoH)
Richard Curry (DIA)
Greg Joyce (DHW)
Paul Albert (DoE)
Commissioner Barry Matthews (WAPS) (co-chair)

Others Present:
Shawn Boyle (DPC)
Stuart Reid (DIA)
Lynsey Warbey (Secretariat)
Helen Phelan (Secretariat)
Lynn Barentine (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Alan Piper (DoJ)

2. Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the previous meeting on 16 December 2002.

3. Gordon Inquiry Secretariat

3.1 Intorduction of new staff

Everyone introduced themselves to assist new Secretariat staff.

3.2 Functions and Structure

Lynsey Warbey reiterated the core functions of the Secretariat as stated in the agenda item paper. The three core roles of the Secretariat are facilitation, monitoring and reports. It was reinforced that while the Secretariat may at times be involved in the start up of projects, the goal was to quickly move any project work to the relevant agency.   Noted

3.3 Update – Lynsey Warbey

Concerns were raised about the lack of apparent progress in implementing the initiatives in the Government's response to the Gordon Inquiry, particularly the necessary housing and works projects associated with the Policing and the Place Management initiatives. There is a push for the Directors General to speed up the process. There is also a pressure to immediately implement Place Management in the three priority communities of Balgo, Warburton and Kalumbaru. There is also a perception that too much time is being spent consulting with ATSIC Regional Councils and local communities.

Lynsey Warbey updated the meeting as follows in response to some of these concerns:
- Progress on key initiative funded for 2002/03
  o Child Protection Workers – consultation with ATSIC Regional

Councils on placement of these workers is progressing well and these positions should be advertised soon.

- o Increased policing in remote areas – the WA Police Service (WAPS) has made considerable progress in planning and preparation for the multi-functional facilities. Priority sites have been identified and communities consulted. Currently Richard Curry is approaching ATSIC for some funding for this project and a firm answer is expected within the next two weeks. This funding would be tied in to the Economic Development Strategy as well as to improving safety in communities. As soon as the outcome of these negotiations is known it is expected that the Department of Housing and Works will be informed as to the scheduling of the building works.

- o Expansion of Strong Families Program – this is being progressed by the Department of Community Development and is proceeding as quickly as possible.

- o Place Management – questions on this initiative were deferred to item 4.3 in the agenda.

- o Utilisation of untied funding of 5.2 million – the process of determining guidelines for application of these funds will be addressed with the Social Policy Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

- o Non-Funded projects:

  - ▪ Swan Valley Nyungar Community – there was considerable discussion on this issue. Each Department is undertaking individual efforts to improve the conditions within this community. However the consensus is that these efforts will not succeed while the current management committee is in place. There also is currently no measure with which to evaluate the success of the projects being undertaken.

    The consensus was that the current focus on providing better services to the community would not address the issue of child safety either from physical/sexual abuse, substance use or self harm. It was suggested and agreed that this issue needs to be referred back to the Ministers and a preferred solution to the problem be presented to the Cabinet Standing Committee on Social Policy. To facilitate this it was agreed that each Department should contribute information to a report on what was currently being done to try to address the problems within the community. It was also stated that ATSIC should be engaged in discussions to get their support for the alternatives.

- o Information Sharing Legislation – it was noted by the group that this is being progressed as part of the Privacy Legislation process.

- **ACTIONS:**
  - o Information will be provided to the Department of Housing and Works as to housing that will be required to provide for new staff deployed in communities.
  - o Secretariat to collate a report on projects currently being done in Lockridge by all Departments and the perceived effectiveness of these

programs. Departments should also provide information on the concerns and options for improving the management of this community.

4. **Issues arising out of Senior Officers' Gordon Implementation Group (SOGIG) meeting of Tuesday, 11 March 2003.**

    4.1   Relationship between SOGIG and Directors' General Gordon Implementation Group – the following points were noted.

- It is important for Senior Officers' Group members to brief their Director General on relevant issues discussed in those meetings.
- The minutes of the Senior Officers Group meetings will continue to be circulated to the Directors' General Group for their information.
- There will be two Senior Officers Group meetings between each Directors' General meeting.
- The Secretariat is responsible to both the Senior Officers Group and the Directors General Group but not for relaying information within Departments. It is important that Senior Officers communicate with all levels of their Departments to ensure Gordon Implementation is being progressed.

    4.2   Proposed Process for initial stages of Engagement and Prioritisation

- Stuart Reid reported on the progress of the ATSIC Regional Council meetings.
  - All initial meetings have gone well.
    In the Metro meeting, 11 March 2003, Councillors agreed to DCDs preferred option for deployment of Child Protection Workers. These positions will be advertised soon. The ATSIC Ward Councillors will be consulting with local communities as to the placement of Aboriginal Support Workers in time for their deployment at the beginning of the next financial year in July.
  - Upcoming meetings: Mulga Mallee - 28 March, Western Desert - 7 April, Noongah Country - 3 April.
  - It was stated that the ATSIC councillors have been enthusiastic about the willingness of Government Departments to consult and work together to make decisions.
  - DIA is coordinating the preparation of the meetings and is providing information packages to the Counsellors. They need useful information from all Departments to provide a summary of programs relevant to the Region.
  - DIA distributed a map of the Kimberley Region containing the location of services available in the region. This information was obtained by DCD and geographically mapped by DIA. It was agreed that this was useful and was needed for all regions in the state, as it will also highlight gaps in service to areas.
- Greg Joyce asked Commissioner Matthews about information on where building works were needed to inform the scheduling of works by the Department of Housing and Works (DHW). Commissioner Matthews stated that WAPS is currently working on this but was not able to provide that information at the moment as he is still negotiating with the Commonwealth for some funding. The urgency of provision of this information was noted and Lynsey Warbey was requested to coordinate

feedback to Greg Joyce on this issue.

Actions

- Lynsey Warbey to liaise with WAPS to provide feedback and information to DHW as soon as possible.

- All Departments to ensure that their Senior Officers obtain and provide information that allows the service mapping to be completed for all regions.

- Secretariat to provide a timetable of Regional meetings to all Directors General.

- All Departments to ensure that Senior Officers provide information to DIA for distribution to regional meetings in Information Packages. Information is requested that would be useful to better understand the range of services currently available.

4.3 Place Management

Discussion centred on the need to provide a clear policy framework for the implementation of Place Management while proceeding with projects to address the urgent need in 3 identified communities.

- It was noted that the Senior Officers' Group supported this two phase approach.

- It was stated and agreed that the term 'Place Management' may not be the best descriptive title for this initiative. It was suggested that, depending on the location, it could be described as basic Community Development to Place Coordination and perhaps the full theoretical Place Management concept in other areas. This highlighted the need for further development of a policy that would be appropriate to the varied needs of Indigenous communities in Western Australia.

  Richard Curry mentioned that DIA is currently providing a type of 'place management' in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder area. He also mentioned work in Albany and the need for this type of project in South Hedland and Carnarvon.

Actions

- The Social Policy Unit of the Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop policy on implementation of Place Management.

- Secretariat to work with the *Social Policy unit ???* to determine the process for assessment that will enable communities to be considered for short term community support to best utilise the multi-functional facilities that will be built in the first phase of the Gordon Response implementation.

5. Update on Negotiations with the Commonwealth

Richard Curry distributed 2 documents. Mr Curry stated that negotiations for the Bi-lateral Agreement were progressing well. The next meeting is a Roundtable in Canberra on 27 March. Mr Curry, Jane Brazier, Lynsey Warbey and Shane Boyle ??? will be attending this meeting. It was important that all Directors General inform Mr Curry about what they think should underpin the agreement. To this end, DIA would be organising a meeting sometime before the 27th of March to discuss how the Commonwealth might re-prioritise available funding.

- It was acknowledged that the Department of Health might choose not to enter into this process as they have many complex negotiations occurring with the Commonwealth at this time.
- The State may be able to negotiate with the Commonwealth for funding for specific projects as a part of the Bi-lateral agreement process.
- Richard Curry informed that a paper has been sent to ATSIC with a bid for funding for facilities and housing. This will go to the next ATSIC board meeting for approval.

Actions
- DIA to organise meeting of senior representatives from each Department to develop list of projects for Richard Curry and Jane Brazier to discuss with Commonwealth State managers prior to Roundtable on 27 March.

6. **Update on the Cabinet Standing Committee on Social Policy.**

Shawn Boyle distributed the submission to the Cabinet Standing Committee on Social Policy and this was noted by the Group.

7. **Government Employee Housing Authority issues arising out of Gordon Implementation Commitments.**

See item 4.2. This was discussed earlier as Greg Joyce had to leave early.

8. **General Business**

Richard Curry commented on the item in the Gordon Response that highlighted the retention of staff in remote areas as a major problem. He briefly mentioned that the Cabinet minutes of November 2002 noted that funding in the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) was to respond to needs of Indigenous Communities. Mr Curry stated that he is involved in a working group that includes ATSIC and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. He mentioned the Regional Infrastructure Funding Project, which focuses on recruitment and training to deal with this specific issue. He stated that this project would need strong funding commitment from the RIF of $100,000 per year for two years. No action was taken at this time.

NEXT MEETING: A schedule of meetings to the end of the calendar year will be prepared and circulated to all Directors General as soon as possible. Meetings will be every six weeks to follow every second meeting of the Senior Officers Group.

(Minutes taken by Lynn Barentine)