

Your Ref:
Our Ref: A812273
Enquiries: Robert Brock (9212 8134)

27 February 2020

Director
Aboriginal Policy and Coordination Unit
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Sir/Madam

A PATH FORWARD – DEVELOPING THE WA GOVERNMENT’S ABORIGINAL EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

Thank you for your email dated 16 January 2020 inviting Pilbara Ports Authority (PPA) to provide feedback regarding *A Path Forward – Developing the Western Australian Government’s Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy* (the Strategy).

PPA is supportive of the aspirations of the strategic elements outlined in the Strategy, which are complementary to many of the strategies being included in PPA’s *Engagement and Reconciliation Scorecard* which will be published in PPA’s *Cultural Heritage Management Plan* in early March (to be available on PPA’s website).

PPA recommend consideration be given to addressing the following points when further developing the Strategy. We have grouped them under headings that align with the three questions asked in the Strategy:

Description of the overall Goal, Principles, Strategic Elements and Framework

- Make specific mention of State policies that align with specific strategic elements. As an example, the Aboriginal Procurement Policy supports the strategic element of boosting economic opportunities;
- Provide tangible examples and/or case studies that clearly demonstrate how some of the key ideas outlined in the strategic elements can be achieved. For example, ‘Putting culture at the centre’ - Aboriginal language can be celebrated through nomenclature

strategies that seek to appropriately use the local Aboriginal language in the naming of key infrastructure;

- Explicitly identify the effective use of 'cultural leave' for Aboriginal staff as a way of acknowledging and respecting the significance of cultural practices and responsibilities to Aboriginal staff when discussing 'Putting culture at the centre' (page 13); and
- Provide greater detail in relation to 'agreements' between Government and Traditional Owner groups (pages 14-15). The current text could be considered too general as there are many types of agreements. The Strategy should specify what sort of agreements are being targeted.

Terminology

- Replace references to "Traditional Owner groups" with "Aboriginal people" throughout the Strategy to avoid causing feelings of exclusion to Aboriginal people who have not been successful in having themselves recognised as Traditional Owners during the Native Title process.

General

- Advocate for broad engagement with the Aboriginal community rather than engaging only with Aboriginal organisations that may or may not represent all of the interests of the local Aboriginal community; and
- Amend 'identifying and remedy laws, procedures and policies that have *discriminatory effects*' (Key ideas, page 23) to 'negative effects' as there are instances of positive discrimination with regard to employment and the supply of goods and services.

Although some of the strategic elements outlined in the Strategy are outside PPA's core business, PPA is supportive of the intent of the Strategy and looks forward to being engaged further in the Strategy's development and implementation.

If you have any queries regarding the comments above, please don't hesitate to contact PPAs' Heritage Specialist, Robert Brock on 9212 8134 or robert.brock@pilbaraports.com.au.

Yours sincerely



Roger Johnston
Chief Executive Officer