

Communique - Meeting No.3 (Held via Tele-Meeting)

30 April 2020

Due to COVID-19 and the associated travel restrictions, the Council held Meeting No. 3 on 30 April 2020 via teleconference. The Council intends to hold monthly meetings from May to September 2020 by this means of communication, unless the travel restrictions are lifted and it is safe for the members to meet in person.

Key items discussed and considered by the Council included the following:

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's (DPC) Director Aboriginal Engagement provided an update on COVID-19 in relation to remote Aboriginal communities. Key points included:

- establishment of a Critical Task Team (CTT) for remote communities, led by the Deputy Police Commissioner;
- DPC is working closely with the CTT in regard to health and safety measures and bio-security issues for Aboriginal people in Western Australia; and
- DPC is also working closely with the Department of Communities.

CLOSING THE GAP UPDATE BY WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S REPRESENTATIVES

The Council's WA Closing the Gap (CGT) representatives provided an update to members on progress of the national agreement. Western Australia, together with Victoria, has been leading the way in negotiations, particularly the inclusion of housing issues and cultural language in the agreement.

Key points from the update included:

- Commonwealth Government – the need to be realistic about how much the agreement will cost;
- it is not just about remote Aboriginal communities, but towns as well; and
- some 900 Aboriginal people have returned to communities, some of which have not been in operation for the last 10 years.

ROLE OF THE ABORIGINAL ADVISORY COUNCIL IN COVID-19 RESPONSE

Members provided a regional update for their areas on the COVID-19 response by government. It was agreed lifting the regional boundary restrictions is too early yet.

ABORIGINAL ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Council is currently preparing a communication strategy to enable effective dissemination of information in regard to Aboriginal affairs in Western Australia. While this will include information sharing relating to COVID-19, the strategy will focus on the longer-term sharing of critical and relevant information with Aboriginal people.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Aboriginal Affairs Co-ordinating Committee has extended its membership to include the Co-Chairs of the Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Council's Closing the Gap Co-Chairs, who represent Western Australia at the national level. The first meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee, which includes the Council representatives will be held on 27 May 2020. This additional representation will enable the two groups to work in a more effective and efficient way in relation to Aboriginal affairs in this State.

The revised schedule of Council meetings is available on its website at www.dpc.wa.gov.au.



Ms Gail Beck
Co-Chairperson



Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado
Co-Chairperson

* Confidential agenda items are not included in this Communique.

Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.