

Communique - Meeting No. 23/2023

4 and 5 April 2023

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No.23 on 4 and 5 of April 2023 at Dumas House in West Perth, with some members joining via videoconference.

The meeting was led by co-chairs, Ms Gail Beck and Mr Martin Sibosado. Several Western Australian (WA) Government agencies and the supporting agency for the Council, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC), delivered presentations during the meeting, providing information and seeking advice from the Council.

The key items discussed and considered by the Council included the following;

Ministerial Engagements:

Hon Dr Tony Buti: Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship & Multicultural Interests

The Council welcomed The Hon Minister Buti, Minister for Education, Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. Minister Buti provided an update on priorities within his portfolios, including the changes to the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021*, the upcoming referendum for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament (the Voice to Parliament), and his recent appointment as Minister for Education. Minister Buti also discussed electoral role registration, Closing the Gap targets, Native Title, and considerations regarding Western Australia's bicentenary in 2029.

Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson: Minister for Health; Mental Health

The Council welcomed the Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, Minister for Health, and Mental Health. Minister Sanderson discussed initiatives and priorities with the Council, stating that the WA Government is committed to prioritising engagement with Aboriginal Health Services, Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Hon Don Punch: Minister for Regional Development; Disability Services; Fisheries; Seniors & Ageing

The Council welcomed the Hon Don Punch, Minister for Regional Development; Disability Services, Fisheries; Seniors and Ageing. Minister Punch provided an update to the Council on his portfolio areas including details of the Elder Abuse Strategy, the WA Seniors Strategy, and Western Australia's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Minister Punch also discussed issues related to service-delivery in remote areas and reiterated the importance of culturally responsive services.

External Presentations:

Department of Treasury – Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy and Aboriginal Expenditure Review

The Department of Treasury (Treasury) presented the Council with an update of their recently developed Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy. Treasury has commenced identifying alignment with Closing the Gap Priority Reforms. In addition, Treasury are working towards embedding Aboriginal empowerment principles in the broader business areas of the Department. Treasury will provide the Council with a briefing on the budget process at the June meeting.

National Indigenous Australians Agency – Voice Referendum & Australian Government Updates

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) provided an update on Australian Government initiatives in Western Australia and the Voice to Parliament referendum. Two pieces of legislation were recently introduced to Parliament; the Referendum Machinery Provisions Amendment, and the Constitution Alteration Bill. NIAA provided information on the Community Development Program, their work in Prescribed Body Corporate capacity-building, and tourism grants for small businesses. The Council raised concerns with the Director identification number registrations processes and NIAA committed to supporting engagement with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations on this issue.

* Confidential agenda items were not included in this Communique.

Internal Presentations:

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing legislation

DPC provided the Council an update on the proposed Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing (PRIS) legislation. A key objective of the legislation is to support Aboriginal data sovereignty and governance in Western Australia, requiring that Aboriginal people and communities be involved or consulted when data about them is shared. Further engagement with the Council was requested to ensure Aboriginal perspectives are addressed in the development of the legislation.

Closing the Gap Implementation Plan and Productivity Commission Review

DPC provided the Council with an update on development of Western Australia's Closing the Gap Implementation Plan and the Productivity Commission's Closing the Gap Review.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for 8th and 9th June 2023.



Ms Gail Beck
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA



Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Aboriginal Advisory Council Western Australia 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.