

Communique - Meeting No. 009/2020

09 & 10 December 2020

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No. 009 on Wednesday 09 October and Thursday 10 December 2020 at Dumas House in West Perth.

Due to the COVID-19 travel and social distancing restrictions, some members joined the meeting via videoconference. The Co-Chairs, Ms Gail Beck and Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado, chaired the meeting.

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

Address by Minister Wyatt

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Ben Wyatt MLA, attended the meeting and provided his final address to the Council. The discussion focused on the Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The Minister thanked the Council for its support and advice over the past two-years.

Presentations by Agencies

A number of presentations were made during the meeting, providing information or seeking advice in relation to consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders as follows:

Infrastructure WA - Aboriginal Engagement Plan

Infrastructure WA has developed an Aboriginal Engagement Strategy that seeks to develop on-going relationships through consistent and meaningful consultation. An early version of this plan was discussed at the July 2020 meeting of the Council.

Remote Aboriginal Communities: Emergency Mobilisation Unit

The Remote Aboriginal Communities: Emergency Mobilisation Unit (formerly the Complex Task Team) continues to provide regular updates to AACWA as a standing agenda item.

Fair Food WA

Aboriginal people experience significantly higher levels of food insecurity, across both the metropolitan and regional areas, than the general population. This is compounded in Aboriginal communities because food insecurity increases with remoteness in Australia.

The *WA Food Relief Framework Report* was launched in 2019 with the vision of 'securing the basic right for every person in Western Australia to be food secure, with support from all sectors of the community'. The Framework Working Group was established to provide leadership and guidance for ongoing implementation of the recommendations.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet – Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy and Closing the Gap Implementation

The final draft of the WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy was presented to the Council. The strategy includes the Office of Accountability and a new Aboriginal Regional Representative Structure as pivotal planks of that strategy, as outlined by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in his speech for NAIDOC Week 2020.

During the meeting, it was announced that the WA Government would commit \$4.8 million over four years to build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community-controlled service sector in Western Australia. Building strong community-controlled service sectors is a priority reform under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia

2 Havelock Street, West Perth, W.A. 6005. Locked Bag 3001. West Perth, W.A. 6872
Telephone (08) 6552 5000 • Facsimile (08) 6552 5001 • WAAAC@dpc.wa.gov.au • DPC.WA.gov.au

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.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation – Aboriginal Water and Environmental Advisory Group

The Aboriginal Water and Environmental Advisory Group (AWEAG) was established in 2018 to provide advice and support to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) in the development of policy and legislation. The AWEAG provides advice to DWER on policy, legislation and programs to make sure Aboriginal knowledge, values, and needs are incorporated across the work of the department.

Independent Reference Group on Out-of-Home Care

The purpose of the Out-of-Home Care Reform Program Independent Reference Group (IRG) is to provide advice and support on the commissioning of out-of-home care (OOHC) services funded by the Department of Communities (Communities).

Communities and the IRG held workshops with community members, community service organisations, Aboriginal community controlled organisations, advocacy groups, government agencies, carers, families and children in OOHC to co-design service system principles, outcomes and frameworks.

Department of Communities – Aboriginal Family-Led Decision Making

The Hon. Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Child Protection recently announced the WA Government will invest \$715,000 for an Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM) pilot to support improved collaboration with Aboriginal families at risk of child protection intervention.

AFLDM is practiced in other Australian jurisdictions and supports the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by creating spaces for communities to make culturally based and family-driven decisions for their children.

State Emergency Management Committee – Community Disaster Resilience Strategy

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) has sponsored a project to develop a Community Disaster Resilience Strategy for Western Australia. The purpose of the project is to reduce the long-term impact of disasters on Western Australian communities.

Over the past three months, an initial round of broad community engagement forums has been undertaken with metro, regional and rural communities in most regions. A discussion paper outlining key issues and ideas is now being prepared.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Aboriginal Sandalwood Industry Advisory Body

The 'WA Sandalwood Taskforce' report to the WA Government was published in October 2020 with eight recommendations that will support increased economic opportunities for Aboriginal communities in the wild sandalwood industry.

A key recommendation in the report is the establishment of an Industry Advisory Body that is representative of all interests to monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

Mental Health Commission – Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Board

The Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Board (AODAB) commenced on 1 July 2015 with the purpose of providing advice to the Mental Health Commissioner about matters relevant to section 11 functions of the *Alcohol and Other Drugs Act 1974*.

To ensure the board has diverse perspectives and expertise in the sector, the Minister for Mental Health, Hon Roger Cook MLA, requested one of the new members be nominated by the Council, and specified that the nomination be a young person.

The Council nominated Ms Keisha Calyun for appointment to the AODAB in 2021.

The next meeting of the AACWA is scheduled for Wednesday 27 January 2021.



Ms Gail Beck
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA



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

* Confidential agenda items were not included in this Communique.