

Communique - Meeting No. 008/2020

07 & 08 October 2020

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No. 008 on Wednesday 07 October and Thursday 08 October 2020 at Hale 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 discussed the Office of Accountability & Advocacy with the Council. The Minister also provided an update on the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill 2020*.

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:

Department of the Premier and Cabinet - Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy and Closing the Gap National Partnership Implementation

The WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy (the Strategy) is under development by DPC and has been informed by feedback from the consultation process that concluded on 28 February 2020. The Strategy is due to be completed in December 2020, following consideration by the Council and approval by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the WA Government. It is proposed that the Strategy align with the Closing the Gap National Partnership Implementation.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet – Whole of Government Land and Native Title Policy Framework

The overall objective for the Framework is to promote a proactive and consistent approach to Crown land administration that maximises opportunities for Aboriginal people to achieve their aspirations for involvement in decision making on land; recognition and protection of Aboriginal culture and heritage; and social and economic development. Following consultation with all stakeholders, the framework will be developed for consideration by the WA Government in 2020/21.

Road Safety Commission – Aboriginal Road Safety Policy

The Road Safety Commission is currently preparing a new State Road Safety Strategy (the Strategy) supported by an action plan will include a specific focus on Aboriginal road safety. The Strategy and action plan will be released before the end of 2020. With an announcement of tangible actions expected in May 2021.

Mental Health Commission – Mental Health Act 2014 Statutory Review

Section 587 of the Mental Health Act 2014 (the Act) requires the Minister for Mental Health (the Minister) to undertake a statutory review of the operation and effectiveness of the Act, as soon as practicable five years from the commencement of the Act. A report of the review will be prepared and tabled in Parliament by the Minister.

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.

Mental Health Commission – Young People Priority Framework

The Mental Health Commission is developing a Young People Priority Framework to guide the mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Sector, and State Government agencies, in supporting and responding to the mental health and AOD needs of young people aged 12 to 24 years.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet – Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing

On 5 August 2019, the WA Government committed to introducing Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing legislation for the WA public sector. The proposed legislation will create a framework for government agencies to protect personal information and responsibly share personal and other information with government agencies and with external bodies in certain circumstances.

Complex Task Team for Remote Aboriginal Communities

In April 2020, the State Emergency Coordinator established a Complex Task Team (CTT) for Remote Aboriginal Communities within the State Pandemic Coordination Centre to provide a cross-agency mechanism for addressing the immediate risks and needs of remote Aboriginal communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CTT continues to provide regular updates to AACWA as a standing agenda item.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet – WA Recovery Plan Implementation

The WA Recovery Plan was released on 26 July 2020 and includes over 500 initiatives that will be implemented to support the State's economic and social recovery from COVID-19. This includes over 300 infrastructure projects. Underpinning realisation of these projects is collaboration, building on the strong connections built between Aboriginal leaders, government and community groups during the pandemic to maximise employment and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Department of Education – Response to COVID-19 in Western Australian Remote Public Schools

An immediate impact of COVID-19 has been on the school attendance of Aboriginal students. The Department of Education is developing a Remote Area Schooling Strategy to strengthen the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students in remote public schools in WA through improved engagement of Aboriginal communities, organisations and families.

Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services

The Inspector gave a presentation to the Council outlining the functions of the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services.

The next meeting of the AACWA is scheduled for Wednesday 09 & Thursday 10 December 2020.



Ms Gail Beck
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA



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