

Joint Communique - Meeting No. 021/2022

14 December 2022

Youth Justice: Advisory Groups Workshop

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA (Council) advises the WA Government on matters affecting Aboriginal people. It is positioned to build genuine, respectful, and reciprocal relationships between Aboriginal people and the State Government to achieve better economic, social and cultural outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. Council welcomed the Aboriginal Strategic Advisory Group, Department of Communities Executives, the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee and Department of Justice Executives for a facilitated discussion on how established WA Government advisory mechanisms can support greater coordination and engagement in responding to Youth Justice matters.

Aboriginal Advisory Group Update

Youth Justice is an issue that impacts the whole community, and how we treat and care for children is a reflection on us as a society. Ensuring that Aboriginal people are engaged fully and transparently when government is undertaking significant changes to policy and programs that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is important to us. By way of a majority decision, the Council will establish a Youth Justice Sub-Committee to assist it in the performance of its functions and enhance collaboration and engagement in advising the WA Government.

The WA Government is signatory to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and have set out the Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy as a commitment to improving engagement and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As Advisory Group Members, we are collectively committed to providing advice and seeking feedback on how that is being considered by governments in making decisions. Supporting diverse groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people and those with lived experience of the justice system, to have their voice heard as we pursue better outcomes for children in WA is non-negotiable.

The establishment of the Youth Justice Sub-Committee will further enhance the Council's contribution to the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee, which has a role in enabling whole-of-government coordination on strategic initiatives and policies that affect the cultural, health, social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

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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.

Whole of government effort and collaboration will improve the coordination of programs that intervene early with at-risk children and young people, and prevent or divert them from engaging with the justice system. For youth detainees, better coordination of government programs can improve pathways into and out of the justice and detention systems, provide better therapeutic outcomes while in detention, and reduce the risk of re-offending in the future.

We are presented with an opportunity to collectively inform Government on youth justice matters. Aboriginal Advisory Groups are committed to providing stewardship and direction to the Government of Western Australia. We are at the table ready to partner and will continue to ensure Aboriginal people are included in decision-making to achieve outcomes and solutions, which advance the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.



Ms Gail Beck
Co-Chair

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Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado
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