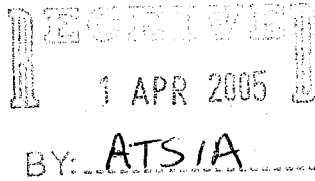


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**From:** Monika Schuhmacher  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 April 2005 11:03 AM  
**To:** Committee, ATSIA (REPS)  
**Subject:** INQUIRY INTO INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

1 APRIL 2005  
P1 : A3/1



Ms Cheryl Scarlett  
Inquiry Secretary  
Standing Committee on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Affairs

I thank the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs for the opportunity to contribute to this Inquiry.

In Council's submission I wish to refer to two local organisations and their respective operations.

- 1 Ngurrala Aboriginal Corporation was established under a CDEP Program and has provided much needed employment opportunities for local Aboriginal residents.

However, I am not certain this Corporation would be operating profitably in its own right ie I believe that it is very reliant on the CDEP Program to balance its budget, as it were.

Ngurrala certainly performs an important role in Nambucca Shire Council's local government area where there is a high rate of unemployment-certainly higher than the National average and of course in such situations the unemployment rate for Aboriginal people is even higher.

Ngurrala has undertaken contractual work for Council, including mowing of parks, reserves and sports grounds.

- 2 Bawrunga Aboriginal Medical Service bulk bill, and is very reliant upon the cash flow created through this to fund its operations.

Bawrunga has established a number of medical outposts throughout the Shire and it was hoped that Bawrunga would attract Government recognition and assistance with a view to expanding thereby providing additional employment opportunities for our local Aboriginal people.

The local Aboriginal community does not appear to be as well organized as the community based in Kempsey where training and employment opportunities are provided through the Durri Aboriginal Medical Service (which also provides medical services in our Shire).

These employment opportunities include aged care, a bush tucker garden etc.

Conclusion

5/04/2005

Council has employed Aboriginal persons from time to time including in public works, parks and gardens, youth workers etc.

Council appoints on merit and sometimes training opportunities are not available or are not taken advantage of on the part of local Aboriginal youth and this does not make them competitive in the job application process.

There is no easy answer for a small community such as ours because in a lot of cases, people do not have the time to act as mentors.

I believe, in the case of retirees (and there are many retirees resident in our Shire) we have an untapped source which could provide some excellent mentors if only an appropriate program could be implemented and funded.

However, for a local government authority such as Nambucca Shire, although we can identify many wants, it is difficult to address these with our limited resources.

Please acknowledge receipt of this submission.

**TOM PORT  
GENERAL MANAGER**

Mr Tom Port  
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