

EL 9 - MAY 2005  
ATSIA

**From:** Kevin Bird  
**Sent:** Friday, 27 May 2005 3:28 PM  
**To:** Committee, ATSIA (REPS)  
**Subject:** FW: Our response to ATSIA Request worth a read

Submission No.	85
Date Received	27-5-05

All,

I am sure you are aware of Councils response to the Australian Governments Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs request on submissions on the current inquiry on Indigenous Employment.

I do not wish to comment on the response but wish to provide information that you may not be aware of.

As we all know the Nambucca Valley has the highest level of unemployment as indicated by the end December 2004 SLA report of all LGA's in NSW of some 13.3%

The issue of endemic unemployment in the Valley of both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people is of major concern to all in an economic/social /educational and cultural perspective.

However, many organisations and agencies have focused on this issue for a considerable period of time.

In the case of Wesley Uniting Aboriginal Employment Services in the Nambucca Valley has provided the following to the community:

Since July 2003 some 500 plus Nambucca Valley unemployed residents have been provided with a range of direct services.

Since July 2003 some 70 unemployed Aboriginal people have obtained long term sustainable employment with private employers, public, local government, health, education and community service organisations in the Nambucca Valley.

Since July 2003 some 64 unemployed Aboriginal people have been assisted into education and accredited training courses conducted by TAFE and other Training Service Providers.

Since July 2003 some \$130,000 in Employer Wage Assistance has been provided to the above employment sectors by Wesley Uniting Employment Services.

Since July 2003 some \$90,000 has been expended on the purchasing of various forms of assistance eg clothing, work related tools and equipment, purchase of mentoring assistance by organisations and accredited individuals within the Valley, accredited formal training with local training providers etc. The majority of this expenditure has occurred with local business in the Valley.

These employment positions are non CDEP and provide wages. Very much in line with the new CDEP agenda recently announced by the Commonwealth Government.

Wesley Uniting Employment provides to the Nambucca Community other services. Such as the provision of Work For The Dole Projects, provision of the Personal Support Assistance Program, provision of Literacy and Numeracy Training and Alcohol and Drug Assessment and Counselling Programs. We have as you know been advised this week that our EOI to manage and implement the Nambucca Valley YOUTH Night Patrol has been successful. Following the employment of staff and the operational aspects I am aiming for an August commencement. I also anticipate advice on our 'Links to Learning - SANDS' tender following this weeks State Government Budget announcements.

The Nambucca Aboriginal 'Green Team' which has been recognised as an employment/training model in

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many parts of NSW was in the initial start up phase was financially and logistically supported by Wesley Uniting Employment.

We have been involved in the creation of a significant number of Traineeships and have brokered financial assistance with those employers from other State and Federal Government Agencies.

Providing and sourcing formal accredited training ranging from Land Care Management, Health Care, Aged Care, RSA and RSG Introduction to Technology, Medical Reception, Child Care, Horticulture and Metal Fabrication to name a few.

Much of the above has been achieved to date by forming alliances with Community groups, local employers, relevant agencies and providers. Much has been done and much more is to be done.

Wesley Uniting Aboriginal Employment Services has currently 7 Aboriginal and non Aboriginal staff with annual wages \$100,000 + which in the main is spent in the Nambucca Valley.

The Aboriginal based Medical Services in the Valley (Bowraville Aboriginal Medical Outpost and Darimba Maara Aboriginal Medical Centre located in Nambucca Heads) who provide bulk billing, medical services to all members of the Nambucca Valley (both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal) have received employment and financial assistance as detailed above from Wesley Uniting Aboriginal Employment.

Wesley Uniting Aboriginal Employment Services, Nambucca Heads is ranked in the top 5% of Employment Service Providers (some 2700) in Australia by the relevant Commonwealth Government agencies responsible for performance assessment and outcome achievement of contracted service providers.

Further to the above, the recent announcements by the Commonwealth for a significant % of people currently in receipt of Parenting and Disability Support Payments/Pensions to actively participate in seeking employment and formal training as part of the changed mutual obligations will increase the demand and necessitate strong partnerships and community based alliances to ensure successful outcomes are achieved.

Much is still needed to be done by all for the Aboriginal Community and indeed the whole of community given the above 13.3%, sending balanced positives with balanced negatives normally attracts the ear of Governments.

Regards  
Kevin Bird.

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