

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2010-11 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 245

Topic: Coordinating Services at the grass roots level.

Hansard Page: 25/2/2011-CA65

Senator Adams asked:

I am very interested to know just how the agencies are coordinating the approaches in addressing Indigenous disadvantage at the community level, how you are working together on that, getting down a bit into the grass roots area.

Answer:

Across Australia, 29 Indigenous Coordination Centres work with local communities to ensure services are delivered in a coordinated and customised way. They also negotiate regional and local partnerships. The Centres are located in urban, regional and remote areas. They operate in a whole-of-government way, tailored to the needs of local communities.

Six Regional Operations Centres serve 29 priority locations identified under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery. The Operations Centres involve co-located staff from relevant Commonwealth, state and territory governments. Local governments are also becoming increasingly involved and are being encouraged to participate in the work of the Operations Centres. This model of collaboration and engagement led to the development of Local Implementation Plans in each location. The Local Implementation Plans are all based on strong community engagement to identify and reach agreement with government on service priorities.

Supporting the Regional Operations Centres are Boards of Management in each jurisdiction to monitor the performance of the National Partnership Agreement and address implementation issues. The Boards of Management consist of senior officials from the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.

In addition, Government Business Managers work and live in remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory and the 29 identified priority Remote Service Delivery communities. Assisted by Indigenous Engagement Officers, they are responsible for monitoring and facilitating the implementation of initiatives under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery and Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory.

The Australian Government acknowledges that sustainable progress in remote Indigenous communities depends on partnerships with local people, developing community leadership skills for individuals and building the capacity of community organisations and service providers.