



Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Inquiry into the NDIS Participant experience in rural, regional, and remote Australia

Answer to Question on Notice

Reference: QSC SQ25-000001

Indigenous and Remote Operations team

Date of Question: 12 February 2025

Hansard Page: Written

Question:

12. NDIS QSC – Indigenous and Remote Operations Team

a. Please provide more information on the recent activities of the Indigenous and Remote Operations Team.

Answer:

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission's Indigenous and Remote Operations (IRO) team is a dedicated unit that delivers culturally appropriate engagement activities with participants and providers in the Top End of Queensland, Northern Territory (NT), Western Australia (WA) and the APY lands. These activities are coordinated to suit the needs of each community and may include drop-in sessions, provider forums, participant sessions as well as stakeholder and community engagement and compliance monitoring site visits.

The IRO team also assists other NDIS Commission staff in regional and metropolitan locations where there is a First Nations cohort.

In 2024-25 FY, campaigns were undertaken in areas including APY Lands, Far North Queensland, Katherine, Kimberley, and Tiwi Islands. As well as several virtual engagements over the wet season. Over the last 7 months more than 36 communities, 92 stakeholders and 198 individuals engaged in the campaigns and 19 provider compliance or site visits undertake.

In 2024-25 FY the IRO team, supported by an Authorised Compliance Officer has taken regulatory action against three providers operating in Central Australia and issued 2 Compliance Notices, and 3 Infringement Notices.

In November 2024, the IRO team supported more than 20 sites visits to Specialist Disability Accommodation and Supported Independent Living locations. Over two days in Alice Springs, several site visits were conducted where officers conducted welfare checks, environmental scans, interviewed participants and support workers and gathered evidence for enforcement actions. These investigations remain ongoing.

Finally, the IRO works closely with stakeholders on integral programs and initiatives for First Nations participants in remote and very remote locations. This includes being a member of the Alternate Commissioning Strategic Oversight Group, a non-statutory advisory group that provides strategic policy oversight of the establishment and delivery of the Alternative Commissioning pilot sites in WA and NT.

The first 18 months of the IRO team operating has provided important insights to the NDIS Commission relating to its role and the needs of people with disability in regional and remote areas. The NDIS Commission is also actively working to strengthen our relationship with the National Disability Insurance Agency and other Commonwealth Agencies who operate with a remote service delivery model. These insights will also be used to drive continuous improvement in our operations.