

Re : refusal of job agency to allow individuals to do mutual obligation hours at our social enterprise

We run a not for profit nursery social enterprise in Newman. There is a Martu board.

For a visual overview Please visit our Facebook page Newman Nursery- Martu Farm.

We have submitted a 11 page complaint to PMC through their official channels in Feb 2018. There has been no response to this complaint.

The job agency has also banned those doing court ordered community hours to continue to do them with us. The job agency states they must do them as part of work for the dole ie with the job agency.

We have raised our concerns with every member of parliament in our area and with Nigel Scullion.

Effectively the cdp program has nearly destroyed us, emotionally and practically.

Our response has been to open a nursery shop. The sale of our plants go to fund one local person in a part time traineeship. Even then the job agency keeps him on their work for the dole books - his name is listed on their daily Participation sheet for "strong men" activity. They breach him regularly. This is his first job ever. He and us get zero support for him emotionally or practically or financially. Yet when we had a Host Agreement with the job agency we got \$500 a month to keep him on the dole. He has diagnosable challenges.

A report on us has been produced by Melanie Flinestone at Department of Education and Training and David Peddler at Prime Minister and Cabinets.

Yet despite everything no resolve on the job agency refusing to allow anyone connected to Centrelink being involved with us. By the time people have done work for the dole they are too exhausted and busy to do any other volunteer work. Therefore excluding our organisation from the very demograph we wish to support. The Martu board started this initiative to respond to their local challenges.

We have stated that we are happy to Host people and no longer receive financial compensation for that. The job agency still says no. Originally they cancelled the Host Agreement stating we don't have ten participants as we are being paid for ten. We raised that we are dependent on their list and that their list is out of date with one person having left the country to back pack Europe four months prior. We offered a solution that they stop paying us but please do not stop even one person coming if that's what they want to do.

Tafe comes over and does on site cert delivery once a month.

We Transforming agriculture in the Pilbara initiative of Proof of Concept commencing shortly. This is with DPIRD. Will include a three year study and planting of the over 100 plus grape citrus and stone fruit. At present the very people we want to benefit from this are blocked by Community Development Program.

Yesterday a matriarch in her family took in some younger family members (over 18) to the job agency. She insisted they do their hours with us. The job agency refused.

Our Aboriginal elders are powerless.

Ironically the job agency Strong Women activity commenced at Martu Farm about five years ago. The job agency took over this community initiative. They had money and we only had volunteers. So they offered to pay the volunteer and provide a vehicle (we used personal vehicles) and pay for cleaning products (we could only afford what we bought ourselves. So at the time we thought this was amazing and wonderful. Over time they excluded the fantastic partnership we had until it became their program. They even changed the name from “strong women of the Farm” to “newman strong women”.

It’s very sad that we can get no resolve on people in our regional town Having the choice to engage with us.

Regards  
Angela

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