

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Senate Select Committee on Social Security Legislation Amendment (Remote Engagement Program) Bill 2021

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: National Indigenous Australians Agency

Topic: Co-Design process

Senator: Thorpe

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Question:

Senator THORPE: I understand that. My question is: Who decides where these pilots go? How is that decision made? Who makes it and is it co-designed? Co-design is not just about designing it; it is about co-decision-making, I thought. So when do the blackfellas come in to co-design this program—at the end or at the absolute beginning—to decide who gets a trial site? And if they're not making decisions about where the trial sites are then why aren't they?

Mr Bulman: I understand the question. Ultimately, the decision will sit with the government of the day. They will take a decision on this. There will be, like I said, engagement about the willingness to be a part of the pilot or not. We have had quite a lot of people write to the government expressing interest to be in the pilot, which we will take into account.

Senator THORPE: Could I put on notice then the process in which that decision is made so it's open and transparent, particularly if you want to be going down the track of co-design in the future and ensuring good faith?

Mr Bulman: Yes.

Answer:

Pilot sites will be selected to reflect the diversity of remote Australia to ensure the new program has the flexibility to be tailored locally.

Pilot sites will be selected by the Minister for Indigenous Australians to reflect:

- a cross-section of jurisdictions
- differing geographic proximity to regional centres
- regions with varying proportion of job ready Community Development Program (CDP) participants.

Prior to any public announcement, the Australian Government will engage with relevant local Indigenous leadership and stakeholders, State and Territory Governments and CDP providers in the pilot sites to confirm their willingness to be part of the pilot.

A local co-design group will be established in each pilot site to co-design how the Remote Engagement Program pilot will be implemented in the pilot site.