

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Amendment (A Stronger Land Account) Bill 2014

The following responses are provided from Mr Joseph Elu, Chairman, Torres Strait Regional Authority to questions taken on notice on 13 February 2015.

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: *And therefore it [the Stronger Land Account Bill] could be seen as being discriminatory or not fair. Do you have any comments on that particular issue?*

Mr Elu: *I think we will take that on notice, because we are just getting our heads around PGPA at the moment. As you know, it came in last year.*

Response:

I have considered your question, and do not consider the proposed Stronger Land Accountability Bill to be discriminatory or not fair. In my role as Chair of the TSRA, I understand the need for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of an organisation's enabling legislation, this practice helps us to evolve and to put in place better governance practices as required. If the ILC Board are seeking arrangements to augment or strengthen their governance, and that augmentation is not already provided for under current legislation then I support the ILC Board in their efforts to change the legislation.

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: *What PM&C are saying is that, with the requirements in this bill, you are putting stronger governance measures on ILC than under the PGPA Act and/or replicating some.*

Mr Elu: *We shall take that on notice and look at what they are putting on the ILC.*

It appears to me that the ILC Board are seeking to implement stronger governance measures in their enabling legislation, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005*, to help them achieve the ILC's long term objectives. The ILC Board obviously believe that the proposed governance measures will augment those in the PGPA Act, rather than detract from them and that it will help them to better deliver against the ILC's strategic outcomes.