



Office of the Vice Chancellor

14 February 2014

018-14L

Dr Bill Pender
Joint Selection Committee on Northern Australia
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: jscna@aph.gov.au

Dear Dr Pender

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Inquiry into the Development of Northern Australia*.

Please find attached a submission from The University of Notre Dame Australia.

Yours sincerely

Professor Celia Hammond
Vice Chancellor

INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Submission from The University of Notre Dame Australia February 2014

After examining the Terms of Reference in relation to the Inquiry, The University of Notre Dame Australia suggests that the Terms of Reference include,

- *The Development of a framework that considers the educational needs of people in Northern Australia.*

The University also recommends that the Government should explore the following educational opportunities that would fit in with the abovementioned framework.

- Potential development for regions (e.g. mining, energy, agriculture, and tourism) will depend on a well trained and qualified workforce. This will require development of VET qualifications, and also university qualifications. Development of programs, which enhance adult literacy and numeracy and provide for well articulated courses which progress students through the AQF framework, with different entry and exit points will be required to prevent students from suffering educational underachievement.
- Cultural Awareness Training, at various levels, is critical, from the scope of individuals working in remote and rural communities, to organizations seeking to develop industry within various locations. The University's Broome Campus has excellent programs of Cultural Awareness Training.
- Professional development and training courses for Aboriginal communities will enable them to be skilled negotiators in managing their own needs and interests.
- Employees will leave northern Australia when their children reach high school age, if schooling is not of the same standard and opportunity as exists in metropolitan locations. A quality school system in Northern Australia is critical.
- Northern Australian residents should not need to relocate to pursue study and to achieve training and professional development. Technology, which necessitates effective access to the internet, can assist with quality learning, as can innovative programs such as block teaching and reverse block, commonly used already by institutions such as Notre Dame's Broome campus.

The University believes that social responsibility must be a key feature of all initiatives (schools, roads, training programs, social benefits and community resources) to ensure that the whole of Northern Australia benefits from future economic growth.