Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

The committee met on Friday, 30 May 2014 from 9 am to 3.02 pm.

The committee called:
- the Department and agencies of the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio, including the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), the Office of Township Leasing and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), and
- the Department of Health.

Among other issues, the following issues were discussed:
- staffing levels at the TSRA
- current programs, funding and the composition of the consultative forum for the Office of Township Leasing
- mechanisms for obtaining bank loans under a township lease and available security
- the investigative activities of ORIC, including the complaints process, mechanisms for providing whistleblower protection and the process used to investigate specific allegations
- the Arrulka Business Aboriginal Corporation, and the process by which grant recommendations may be made
- the status of particular programs highlighted in the Closing the Gap Budget Papers 2013-14 including the Community Development Fund, Municipal and Essential Services, the Bringing Them Home program, the Link Up program and the Indigenous Youth Careers Pathways program
- the services currently being delivered and funded by the government
- the effect of the budget on the Indigenous community and related service providers
- the location and number of staff to provide future services to remote and very remote communities
- the cessation of funding for Child and Family Centres
- education issues, including truancy officer numbers and turnover, school attendance rates, program evaluation and the frequency of reporting data from state and territory jurisdictions
- the funding split for the Municipal and Essential Services Program
- the status of township leasing at Yirrkala and Gunbalunya
- cuts to the budget of Indigenous health programs and the impact on services
- the effect of the Medicare co-payment in program review
- future funding for renal services.