

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 320

Topic: Remote Engagement Officer Network

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

What will the “Remote Engagement Officer Network” do?

Will the new Indigenous Engagement Officers be recruited from local communities

How will ‘Government Engagement Coordinators’ be different to GBMs and IEOs?

What proportion of this money will go towards improving consultation and participation with Aboriginal people?

Will efforts be made to improve consultation after the dismal reports of the Stronger Futures consultation process?

Answer:

The Stronger Futures Remote Engagement and Coordination measure is aimed at building on the significant improvements in the way the Government has been engaging with communities in the Northern Territory.

Over the next two years, a regional approach will be established that will support teams of Government Engagement Coordinators and Indigenous Engagement Officers. This will embed a more sustainable long-term approach to engaging with communities.

The role of the teams of engagement officers will be to ensure more effective engagement and understanding between government and Aboriginal people in communities. These teams will also have a key role in overseeing the government service system to identify what is working and what is not, and to work with communities to help ensure services are better targeted and working effectively, and are well coordinated across different agencies.

The numbers of communities where Indigenous Engagement Officers are employed will increase from 30 to 54 over the next two years. Indigenous Engagement Officers with an understanding of local issues and local languages will strengthen government’s relationship with Aboriginal people. It is anticipated that they will be recruited from local communities and this will see full and part-time job opportunities for up to another 60 local Aboriginal people created.