

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 290

Topic: Yura Yungi Medical Service

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Adams asked:

Allegations of financial mismanagement and bullying at Yura Yungi Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation.

- (a) Is ORIC aware of the above mentioned letter from Mr Robert Berwick, ex CEO of the Yura Yungi Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation dated 8 August 2011 which outlined "a number of the gravest concerns relating to the governance, operations and patient care provided by Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation as well as the unmanageable relationship held with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service Council and seek expedient action for Indigenous health reform in Halls Creek, Western Australia"?
- (b) Were the allegations in Mr Berwick's letter treated as a complaint? If not, why didn't anyone from ORIC contact him to explain how the complaints process worked? Has DoHA or ORIC received other complaints of this nature (i.e where ORIC knew of the complaint) that have been made to the Minister but there no subsequent formal complaint to ORIC?

Answer:

- (a) The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (the Registrar) is aware of Mr Berwick's letter dated 1 August 2011 addressed to the State Manager of the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) concerning the Yura Yungi Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation (the corporation).
- (b) The allegations in Mr Berwick's letter dated 1 August 2011 were treated by the Registrar as a complaint to OATSIH. The Registrar's office telephoned Mr Berwick and wrote to him on 5 and 22 August 2011 in relation to his letter. In the Registrar's letter dated 22 August 2011 Mr Berwick was advised that many aspects of his complaint related to service delivery standards and fell outside of the Registrar's jurisdiction, and his complaint would be best dealt with by OATSIH.

The Registrar's office also provided Mr Berwick with brief details of the outcome of the January 2011 examination of the corporation's books and records by the Registrar under section 453-1 of the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. Mr Berwick was advised of actions that members could take to resolve disputes within the corporation.

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It is not uncommon for ORIC to receive copies of complaints addressed to other agencies (including ministers), either copied directly by the complainant or by referral from the receiving agency.