

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: National Place-Based Advisory Group

Question reference number: HS 51

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written question

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 December 2012

Number of pages: 14

Question:

Please table the minutes and any relevant documents and working papers relevant to the workings of National Place-based Advisory Group?

Answer:

The National Place-based Advisory Group has met on five occasions thus far.

Communiqués summarising the key discussions and outcomes from the meeting are attached. These Communiqués are also made available on the Social Inclusion website:

<http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/australian-social-inclusion-board/working-groups/national-place-based-advisory-group/communiqu%C3%A9s>

Terms of Reference for the National Place-based Advisory Group are also attached.

National Place Based Advisory Group

Communiqué from the Inaugural Meeting

19 September 2011

The National Place Based Advisory Group met for the first time at the Australian Parliament House on 19 November 2011. Established by the Minister for Human Services and Minister for Social Inclusion, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, the National Place Based Advisory Group will provide advice on initiatives that will support the development of effective local solutions to achieve social and economic participation outcomes, with a particular focus on the very long term unemployed, jobless families and teen parents.

The National Place Based Advisory Group comprises leaders and influencers from a cross section of Australian society. The character of the group and the diversity of its membership reflects the great national challenge and aspiration that all Australians are able to contribute to and share in Australia's economic prosperity.

The National Place Based Advisory Group will operate as a sub-group of the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

Called *Better Futures, Local Solutions*, the Australian Government is implementing a range of place-based initiatives in ten Local Government Areas (LGAs) with high rates of entrenched disadvantage and it is on these areas, and approaches for addressing disadvantage within them, that will be the initial focus of the National Place Based Advisory Group:

Playford (SA) Hume (Vic) Shepparton (Vic) Burnie (Tas) Bankstown (NSW)
Wyong (NSW) Shellharbour (NSW) Rockhampton (Qld) Logan (Qld) Kwinana (WA)

Government Action Leaders have also been established in all 10 LGAs.

At its inaugural meeting, the National Place Based Advisory Group affirmed governance principles for place based initiatives articulated by the Australian Social Inclusion Board in 2011. These are:

- A clear connection between economic and social strategies;
- A framework for providing integration of effort across governments;
- A meaningful devolution that allows significant and meaningful local involvement in determining the issues and solutions;
- Capacity development at both the local level and in government, without which greater community engagement or devolution of responsibility will be impossible; and

- **Funding, measurement and accountability mechanisms that are designed to support the long term, whole of government and community aims for the initiative, rather than attempting to build an initiative around unsuitable measurement and accountability.**

The Advisory Group also considered:

- **Strategies to connect social policy aspirations with on the ground service delivery and economic opportunity;**
- **Strategies to engage employers so support and education provided to the most vulnerable members of the community translates into real employment opportunities;**
- **Specific issues faced by teenage parents and strategies to prepare for or maintain their connections to employment pathways;**
- **The challenges in adopting a genuinely place-based approach in the context of current accountability models.**

Members of the Advisory Group have undertaken to:

- **Engage at the local level and meet with a Government Action Leader and other community base stakeholders to build understanding of the Australian government's *Better Futures, Local Solutions* initiative and the potential that exists in deriving new responses to disadvantage and disengagement;**
- **Identify and explore new strategies to engage business communities and other employers in the *Better Futures, Local Solutions* approach;**
- **Support better understanding of the individual community economies and needs and develop strategies to work across all levels of the government, the community and business, to achieve alignment between policy objectives and opportunity;**
- **Support mapping of existing services to avoid duplication and to recognise the successful programs already introduced into these communities both locally and by all levels of government;**
- **Support the evaluation of the individual measures being implemented through *Better Futures, Local Solutions* and the place-based approach.**

The members acknowledged and welcomed the challenges of working differently with all levels of government, communities and business; and are committed to fostering place-based solutions that will support the most disadvantaged and their communities.

The next meeting is proposed for the 15 November 2011.

National Place Based Advisory Group

Communiqué from the 15 November 2011 Meeting

The National Place Based Advisory Group met for the second time in Melbourne on 15 November 2011. Established by the Minister for Human Services and Minister for Social Inclusion, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, the National Place Based Advisory Group provides advice on initiatives that will support the development of effective local solutions to achieve social and economic participation outcomes, with a particular focus on the very long term unemployed, jobless families and teen parents.

The National Place Based Advisory Group invited four Government Action Leaders (GALs) to the meeting with a view to gaining a better understanding of what is happening in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) represented and how the introduction of the place based measures are being received in those areas.

Government Action Leaders from Burnie - TAS, Kwinana – WA, Hume – VIC and Shellharbour – NSW attended and shared their experience with the advisory group. There were some consistent themes raised by the GALs with regards to the challenges currently being faced, including:

- the need for early intervention to convince families and communities of the value of having their children gain an education;
- finding ways to re-engage children that have disengaged from the education system;
- educating employers on the benefits that can be gained locally by employing long term unemployed 'local' individuals; and
- matching job opportunities to existing skill sets and developing ways to support both employers and new employees to help retain people in jobs.

The Advisory Group also heard some of the specific location based challenges the LGA's are experiencing and acknowledged the need to ensure solutions are tailored to the individual needs of the LGAs.

Members of the Advisory Group have undertaken to:

- provide advice to the Minister about how to promote change in these areas and acknowledge this as an opportunity to trial different approaches in the LGAs through the implementation of the place based measures; and
- provide advice and expertise into the overall BAFW evaluation strategy and the evaluation of the place based approach.

The following areas have been identified as requiring further research and analysis with a view to providing specific advice to the Minister on possible solutions to local issues:

- procurement of Social Services – and challenges for programs with short term funding arrangements;
- feasibility of implementing post-placement support to both employees and employers;
- engagement strategies that support a whole of family approach to re engagement with education, infrastructure and employment opportunities; and
- finding ways to encourage job service agencies to work collaboratively instead of competitively within these communities.

The meeting discussed the importance of close engagement by and with State Government in the implementation of the place based approach. The Department of Human Services is developing a discussion paper as a basis for establishing a formal ongoing dialogue between the Commonwealth and participating States.

The members acknowledged the value of having the GALs attend the meeting and look forward to a continuing dialogue with them through the National Place Based Advisory Group meetings.

The next meeting is proposed for 22 February 2012.

Tony Nicholson, Chairperson

29 November 2011

National Place Based Advisory Group

Communiqué from the 22 February 2012 Meeting

The National Place Based Advisory Group met in Melbourne on 22 February 2012. The Minister for Human Services, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, attended the meeting and outlined his expectations of the Group for the coming year. Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, Local Member for Hume, was also in attendance.

The National Place Based Advisory Group provides advice on initiatives that will support the development of effective local solutions to achieve social and economic participation outcomes, with a particular focus on the very long term unemployed, jobless families and young parents.

The Minister emphasised the importance of employment participation in strengthening communities and the strong connections required between service delivery and the needs of employers in realising that aspiration for disadvantaged job seekers. The Minister asked the Advisory Group to provide advice on innovative ways to strengthen employment participation in the ten Local Government areas.

The Minister also stressed the importance of considering ways in which government programs may be able to be made more flexible at the local level in order to be more effective. He undertook to speak with ministerial counterparts to support implementation of innovative approaches.

The National Place Based Advisory Group invited two Government Action Leaders (GALs) to the meeting to discuss the key issues and common themes across the Local Government Areas (LGAs). Government Action Leader for the Rockhampton LGA, Deborah Sear, and Government Action Leader for the Greater Shepparton LGA, Mark Georgiou, supported consideration of a range of issues that support or act on obstacles to social and economic participation with the Minister and National Place Based Advisory Group, these included:

- employer engagement;
- alternative education options;
- transport;
- childcare; and
- volunteering.

The National Place Based Advisory Group discussed these issues in detail, sought additional information and undertook to provide advice to the Minister on possible approaches including through the mechanism of the Local Solutions Fund. Members undertook to provide initial advice by the end of March 2012.

The National Place Based Advisory Group also discussed:

- formation and composition of the Local Advisory Groups;
- the need for programs to be flexible and location specific;

- educating communities on the benefits of the new measures and the differences between these and existing services;
- developing a post-placement support model for employees and employers;
- the role volunteers might play in supporting other community members;
- evaluation of the place based approach and supporting measures; and
- the opportunities to improve understanding of the Local Government Areas presented by the DEEWR-led labour market and employer surveys.

The next meeting is proposed for 23 May 2012. The National Place Based Advisory Group will explore connections with employers in greater detail at this meeting and invite a JSA Australia provider to discuss employer servicing.

Tony Nicholson, Chair

15 March 2012

National Place Based Advisory Group

Communiqué from the 23 May 2012 Meeting

The National Place Based Advisory Group met in Canberra on 23 May 2012. The Minister for Human Services, the Hon Kim Carr MP, attended the meeting and outlined his expectations of the Advisory Group and the importance of the place based initiatives.

The Minister explained that the government is seeking to fund clever and innovative solutions and noted that accountability is a very important part of the process. The Minister advised that while the government's intention is to implement successful initiatives that assist in addressing disadvantage in the ten Local Government Areas (LGAs), it is likely that some initiatives might not be successful, such is the nature of experimentation and innovation. These experiences are equally important in informing the government on the potential and opportunities for a place based approach.

The National Place Based Advisory Group invited the Chairs of the ten Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) to the meeting to discuss the key issues and common themes across the LGAs. The Chairs representing each of the LAGs are:

Cath Bartolo – Logan
Anita Dow – Burnie
Cathy Quinn – Bankstown
John Guilmartin – Shepparton
Veronica Bird – Shellharbour

Barbara Powell – Kwinana
Sandy Paton – Rockhampton
Warren Welham – Wyong
Paul Eddington – Playford
Rob Hudson – Hume

Government Action Leader, Alison McEvoy, and Community Action Leader, Kylie Faulder both from the Wyong LGA were also in attendance.

Key issues discussed by the Local Advisory Group Chairs included:

- their early experiences in guiding the first round of the Local Solutions Fund (LSF) in their local areas;
- the priorities identified by the LAGs that they would seek to address through the place based approach; and
- the potential benefits and opportunities arising from collaboration between service providers, local, state and federal governments.

The experiences of the Local Advisory Group led into a broader discussion at the meeting which explored:

- barriers to effective management of place based initiatives on the ground;
- the value in documenting the success stories experienced to date in implementing the Local Solutions Fund initiative in the LGAs and the potential use of the success stories to promote uptake of the initiatives and encourage communities to participate.
- evaluation of the place based initiatives and supporting measures;
- the opportunities to improve understanding of the Local Government Areas presented by the DEEWR-led labour market and employer surveys;

- development of a forward work program for NPBAG for the coming year;
- noting that such a program needed to reflect the strategic priority themes identified by LAGs;
- the need to promote effective collaborative models by Job Services Australia providers and other service providers to inform future opportunities for systemic change;
- making mainstream programs more flexible at the local level.

The Advisory Group has undertaken to provide the Minister with advice on strategic approaches to sustainable and transferable place based interventions to support government understanding about future opportunities for place based approaches.

The next meeting is proposed for 22 August 2012. The National Place Based Advisory Group will explore and monitor the effectiveness of the LAGs engagement with Federal, State and Territory Governments and collaboration between service providers within the LGAs.

Tony Nicholson, Chair

28 May 2012

National Place Based Advisory Group

Communiqué from the 22 August 2012 Meeting

The National Place Based Advisory Group (NPBAG) met in Bankstown, NSW on 22 August 2012.

The NPBAG provides advice to the Minister for Human Services on initiatives that will support the development of effective local solutions to achieve social and economic participation outcomes, with a particular focus on the very long term unemployed, jobless families and young parents.

The NPBAG invited Chairs of the Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) to the meeting to discuss key issues and common themes across the ten participating communities. The Chairs, or delegated representative for each of the LAGs were:

Cath Bartolo – Logan (QLD)
Sandy Paton – Rockhampton (QLD)
Gail Sulicich – Playford (SA)
Anita Dow – Burnie (TAS)
Barbara Powell – Kwinana (WA)

Cathy Quinn – Bankstown (NSW)
Samantha Hill – Shellharbour (NSW)
Warren Welham – Wyong (NSW)
Rob Hudson – Hume (VIC)
Greg Laidlaw – Shepparton (VIC)

Government Action Leader, Mile Musovski, and Community Action Leader, Carol Gereige from the Bankstown LGA were in attendance, together with Government Action Leader, Robert Meikle, and Community Action Leader, Carol Lymbery, from the Shellharbour LGA.

Key issues discussed by the Local Advisory Group Chairs included:

- The need to continually strengthen connections, particularly with industry and employers;
- The need to generate cultural change in communities in order to maintain and strengthen activities for young people and jobless families;
- A focus on marketing and communication to maximise community buy-in and celebrate positive outcomes;
- The changes needed in each of the local communities in order to create a positive and sustainable legacy.

Members discussed opportunities for strategic projects to support the government's place based trial and undertook to provide recommendations to the Minister for Human Services. Key themes were:

- **Employer Engagement - bridging the gap between local employers and local people**
- to provide strategies and direct assistance to employers to increase the uptake of local people into jobs available within their Local Government Area.

- **Affordable and Flexible Child Care** - to undertake Action Research to better understand issues regarding affordability, flexibility and quality of existing child care services in the ten Local Government Areas.
- **Innovation** - to build the capability of Local Advisory Groups through innovation, having 'fresh eyes' brought to bear on familiar problems and a preparedness to adjust mainstream programs to better reflect local circumstances.
- **Cultural Diversity** - to commission an Action Research project to identify the key dependencies or predictors of success necessary to maximise community interest and involvement in culturally and demographically disparate Local Government Areas.

The NPBAG also undertook to monitor the effectiveness of local community engagement with Federal, State and Local Governments, as well as collaboration between service providers within the Local Government Areas.

Local Advisory Group Chairs met separately to discuss the contents of a research paper commissioned by the Department of Human Services and prepared by the Council for the Humanities Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), titled "*Family-centric approaches to workforce participation*". A number of key themes emerged which were applicable to the ten place based communities and Chairs expressed a strong interest in exploring how these could be applied at the local level.

The next meeting is proposed for 28 November 2012.

Tony Nicholson, Chair

September 2012

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NATIONAL PLACE-BASED ADVISORY GROUP AUGUST 2011

1. Purpose

To advise the Minister on initiatives that will support the development of effective local solutions to achieve social and economic participation outcomes, with a particular focus on the very long term unemployed, jobless families and teen parents.

2. Background

Locational disadvantage and place-based initiatives

The Government is implementing place-based initiatives in ten locations with high rates of entrenched disadvantage:

• Playford (SA)	• Wyong (NSW)
• Hume (Vic)	• Shellharbour (NSW)
• Shepparton (Vic)	• Rockhampton (Qld)
• Burnie (Tas)	• Logan (Qld)
• Bankstown (NSW)	• Kwinana (WA)

Good governance of place-based initiatives

In 2010 the Australian Social Inclusion Board published its report on Governance models for Location Based Initiatives. This sets out five key principles for the implementation and management of place-based initiatives:

1. a clear connection between economic and social strategies;
2. a framework for providing integration of effort across governments;
3. a meaningful devolution that allows significant and meaningful local involvement in determining the issues and solutions;
4. capacity development at both the local level and in government, without which greater community engagement or devolution of responsibility will be impossible; and
5. funding, measurement and accountability mechanisms that are designed to support the long term, whole of government and community aims for the initiative, rather than attempting to build an initiative around unsuitable measurement and accountability.

(Governance Models for Location Based Initiatives, Australian Social Inclusion Board, Commonwealth of Australia 2011)

These principles informed the place-based measures announced as part of the Building Australia's Future Workforce package in the 2011-12 Budget, and are the foundation for the development of advice by the Advisory Group on successful delivery of place-based initiatives.

3. Role and Operation of the Advisory Group

The Advisory Group will operate as a sub-group of the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

The role of the Advisory Group is to provide advice to the Minister for Human Services on the management and implementation of the place-based participation initiatives, including:

- best practice approaches to boost engagement, capability and workforce participation through place-based initiatives in disadvantaged communities;
- effective involvement by all levels of government in place-based initiatives;

- local economic development strategies and engagement with the business sector in place-based approaches, particularly in regional Australia;
- advancing place-based approaches through philanthropic partnerships;
- support for the not-for-profit sector in place-based service delivery;
- research and evaluation of place-based approaches; and
- criteria for the assessment of expressions of interest for grant funding under the Local Solutions fund.

The Minister for Human Services will outline priorities for the Advisory Group prior to its first meeting. From time to time the Minister may identify further specific tasks and priorities for the Advisory Group, which will be agreed in consultation with the Chair.

The Advisory Group will meet at least quarterly.

Face to face meetings will be held in a location determined by the Chair in consultation with other members and the Office of the Minister for Human Services.

Advisory Group meetings by teleconference may be convened as agreed by the Chair. These meetings will be reported in the same way as face-to-face meetings.

Following an initial face-to-face meeting it is expected that the majority of work of the Advisory Group will be undertaken via teleconference and email.

Advisory Group members may be given access to Commonwealth information which is confidential and/or not for circulation outside of the Advisory Group. Members have a responsibility to adhere to any non-disclosure requirements attached to specific documents or information provided to members, or as otherwise directed by the Chair of the Advisory Group.

Advisory Group members are required to comply with the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct.

4. Membership

Members of the Advisory Group will be appointed by the Minister for Human Services.

The Chair of the Advisory Group will be an ex officio member nominated by the Minister from the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

Members will be appointed based on skills and experience relevant to advancing the development, implementation and evaluation of place-based initiatives, and will be drawn from business, philanthropy, academia and the not-for-profit sector.

An Australian Government official from the Department of Human Services, state or territory government official and a local government official will be appointed as ex officio members of the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group will have no more than ten members, excluding the Chair.

Appointments will be for an initial term of 12 months.

Membership of the National Place-Based Advisory Group

1. Chair: Tony Nicholson
2. Deputy Chair: Catriona Noble
3. David Thompson – CEO, Jobs Australia
4. Lin Hatfield Dodds – National Director, Uniting Care Australia
5. Narelle Clay – CEO, Southern Youth and Family Services

6. Deb Nelson – Managing Director, Yarn'n Aboriginal Employment Services
7. Mark Considine – Dean of Arts, University of Melbourne
8. Barry Sandison – Deputy Secretary, Participation, Families and Older Australians, Department of Human Services
9. Gill Callister – Secretary, Victorian Department of Human Services
10. Adrian Beresford-Wylie – CEO, Australian Local Government Association
11. Phillip Butler – Director, Textor Technologies Pty Ltd

5. Secretariat

Secretariat to the Advisory Group will be provided by the Department of Human Services.

The Secretariat will make arrangements for booking and payment for travel and accommodation for Advisory Group meetings.

The Department of Human Services will meet the cost of economy class travel, accommodation and out of pocket expenses associated with face to face meetings and other approved activities undertaken by Advisory Group members.

Sitting fees do not apply.

6. Reporting

The Advisory Group will report to the Minister for Human Services.

The Chair of the Advisory Group will issue a Communiqué outlining the outcomes of Advisory Group deliberations within ten days of its meetings.

Outcomes of Advisory Group meetings, including any advice provided to the Minister for Social Inclusion, will be tabled by the Chair at the following meeting of the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

The Minister for Human Services will report on the work of the Advisory Group to other Ministers.

The Australian Government official appointed to the Advisory Group will be responsible for reporting outcomes of the Advisory Group to the Place-Based Measures Officials Working Group and the Building Australia's Future Workforce Implementation and Evaluation Steering Committee.