

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Topic:** Empowered Communities Project

**Senator:** Senator Rachel Siewert

**Question reference number:** 129

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 11 April 2014

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

1. Please provide more information on the 'Empowered Communities' project. The news report stated that Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet associate secretary Liza Carroll, David Tune from Treasury and Finn Pratt from Social Services will sit on a committee with Noel Pearson to coordinate government services to eight communities from around Australia. Was the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples invited to participate in this project, and for what reasons?
2. Will the 'Empowered Communities' approach be available to all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia?
3. What are the goals and timelines for the completion of this project?
4. What outcomes are to be achieved?
5. How will Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people know whether the project is succeeding?

**Answer:**

1. Empowered Communities involves Indigenous people from eight regions working with governments and the corporate sector on the empowered communities project. This will result in options for a new model being developed for the Government to consider. Details of the Steering Committee membership can be found at <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/parliamentary-secretary-tudge-project-launched-to-empower-communities/>.

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The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples is not represented on the Empowered Communities Steering Committee. Some of the Indigenous organisations working with Empowered Communities are also members of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples.

2. The eight regions involved in the design of Empowered Communities are:

- North East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands, Central Australia
- East Kimberley, Western Australia
- West Kimberley, Western Australia
- Cape York, Queensland
- Goulburn Murray, Victoria
- Inner Sydney, New South Wales
- Central Coast, New South Wales

The design phase of the model will primarily engage with the eight regions.

3. An Empowered Communities Taskforce has been established to work with Indigenous people in the eight regions to design new approaches to service delivery and community engagement and responsibility. The Government will consider options for a new model in mid to late 2014.

4. The model will be designed with the aim of improving the way governments and Indigenous communities work together.

5. Empowered Communities is in the design phase and the Government will consider options for a new model in mid to late 2014, which will include measures of success.