

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates Hearing 25-29 May 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Tiwi Land Council
Outcome/Program: Outcome 2: Indigenous
Topic: Tiwi Land Council

Senator: Senator Nova Peris OAM
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Question:

What is the process for women from the eight land owning groups to become members on the Tiwi Land Council?

Are women excluded from becoming members of the Tiwi Land Council? If so, why are they?

Do Tiwi women have custodial responsibility to their traditional estates? If so, what is it?

Are Tiwi women consulted on Tiwi Land Council matters that relate to the women's respective clan estates? If not, why not?

Answer:

Trustee (8 people representing the 8 land owning groups) positions are handed down based on Tradition, a person's Land Owning Group is handed down by the father along with a person's totem, while the Mother's side determines skin group which dictates who you should marry, other relationships and settling family arguments. Both equally important but different roles traditionally.

Women have been included on the Tiwi Land Council in the past but have stood down largely due to cultural reasons, including brothers and sisters not being permitted to talk to each other, or be in close proximity, as well as a son and his mother in law also not permitted to engage in conversation.

Please note that Trustees do have the ability to nominate women on the Tiwi Land Council and if the nomination is accepted, then women are able to hold positions on the Tiwi Land Council.

Women are not excluded from becoming members of the Tiwi Land Council.

Women belong to a land group based on their Father's side and as such have a role in their traditional estates.

Yes, they are consulted.