

# **Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

## **Answers to Questions taken on Notice**

**Parliament House, Canberra  
14 November 2008**

**Senator Scullion: Perhaps on notice you might like to make some comments on the following. In what areas do you think we need better baseline data to measure the effectiveness of not only the intervention but others areas of our broad purview, which I do not want to go into describing prescriptively but I think you understand? What general areas do you think we need to identify to start doing some more work in, like asking the ABS extra questions? (14 Nov 2008 p. 23.)**

Answer: There is considerable scope to improve the sharing of information between governments. Following the Northern Territory Emergency Response, there has been much better sharing of data. Importantly, the sharing of administrative data is a key aspect of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery which is an agreement between the Commonwealth, states and the Northern Territory in recognition of the need to work together to achieve improvements in Indigenous remote service delivery outcomes.

In response to the second part of your question the Department works closely with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to improve on information collected through the ABS survey program and the Census. The Department has contributed funding to the extension of the 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) to address priority data gaps, particularly relating to Indigenous children under 15 years, maternal health and social capital.

The Department also manages the Footprints in Time - Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children. This study is tracking the long-term development of 2,200 Indigenous children from communities across Australia and will help us understand the links between early childhood experiences and outcomes in later life for Indigenous children.

To help provide a basis for the evaluation of government initiatives the Department is developing baseline community profiles for a number of larger Indigenous communities, particularly in the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region in Western Australia. The community profiles utilise administrative data, national survey data and qualitative data provided by each community.

**Senator Siewert: Would you be able to provide the committee with a list of the places that you went to and also the feedback?**

**Ms Cattermole—We are still drawing that together, so there may be a timing issue. We can perhaps take that on notice as we work through it at the moment. We are just in the middle of that right now, but we can certainly provide you with a list of everywhere we have been in the last three or four weeks. (14 Nov 2008 p. 28.)**

Answer: Further to Ms Cattermole's response to the question raised by Senator Siewert on 14 November 2008, the following additional information is provided. Consultations on the discussion paper Increasing Indigenous Employment Opportunity: proposed reforms to the CDEP and Indigenous Employment programs were held between 20 October 2008 to 7 November 2008 in the following locations:

<b>State:</b>	<b>Location:</b>	
<b>ACT</b>	Canberra	
<b>NSW</b>	Albury	Penrith
	Bourke	Sydney
	Coffs Harbour	Tamworth
	Dubbo	Wagga Wagga
	Newcastle	Wollongong
	Orange	
<b>NT</b>	Alice Springs	Papunya
	APY Lands	Tennant Creek
	Borroloola	Ti Tree
	Darwin	Tiwi Islands
	Galiwinku	Wadeye
	Hermannsburg	Nhulunbuy
	Katherine	Maningrida

<b>State:</b>	<b>Location:</b>	
<b>QLD</b>	Brisbane	Normanton
	Cairns	Palm Island
	Mt Isa	Rockhampton
	Roma	Woorabinda
	Townsville	Weipa
<b>SA</b>	Adelaide	Port Augusta
	Ceduna	
<b>TAS</b>	Flinders Island	Hobart
<b>VIC</b>	Bendigo	Melbourne
	Morwell	Mildura
<b>WA</b>	Broome	Kalgoorlie
	Derby	Kununurra
	Fitzroy Crossing	Perth
	Geraldton	Port Hedland
	Halls Creek	Warburton

**Senator Moore: I only have one question to put on notice but I want to do that on the record. It is to do with consultation. You know that we consistently hear about issues around consultation—how it is done and that there is not enough. Does OIPC have any particular role through the departmental heads group in looking at best practice for consultation and also looking at models that best work. I would like to have something on record from your department about how you see and define ‘consultation’. (14 Nov 2008 p. 32.)**

Answer: The Government has signalled that it wants to build genuine, sustained and constructive engagement and partnership with Indigenous people. As the lead agency for Indigenous affairs, FaHCSIA is developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Framework to guide that engagement. It is proposed to have this Framework considered by the Secretaries Group on Indigenous Affairs to create a consistent approach to engagement across all Government agencies.

**Senator Moore: Could we also have a copy of the review that you talked about on ICC? Certainly. Of course we will make that available. (14 Nov 2008 p. 33.)**

Answer: The Evaluation of Indigenous Coordination Centres report has been approved by the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for public release and is available on the FaHCSIA website at: <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/indigenous/publications.htm>

**Senator Adams: Is the government looking at any further construction of pools in remote areas and communities?**

**Mr Yates—I would have to take that on notice. There is not a remote pools program per se. Most of those initiatives have emerged out of working with individual communities and identifying with them key priorities. In the instance that you mentioned, there was a very substantial investment by the community itself. But I will take that on notice because it is an issue that has come up in a number of different portfolios from time to time and they have played a part in this. I will take on notice what else might be in the pipeline in terms of pools. (14 Nov 2008 p. 33.)**

Answer: FaHCSIA is not aware that the Australian Government is considering building any more pools in remote communities at this stage. A significant contribution was made by the Australian Government to a number of pools in remote communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia from 2006 after reaching agreement with State and Territory Governments and the specific communities about contributing to the recurrent costs of the pools.