



23 December 2003

«Jobtitle» AREYONGA COMMUNITY INC.
 «Coy» SHIRLEY DAVIES
 «Add1» CEO
 «Add2»
 «City» «State» «PostCode»

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee is holding an inquiry into legal aid and access to justice. During the inquiry, the Committee has received submissions from providers of Indigenous legal aid services, including Katherine Regional Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre, and the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement. The Committee is interested to find out more about the standard and level of legal services in Indigenous communities.

The Committee would appreciate your feedback on the following questions, plus any other matters you would like to raise.

1. Are you satisfied with the availability of lawyers in your community? If not, why? How do you think services could be improved? **YES**
2. Are you satisfied with the quality of legal advice and representation provided by legal services in your community? If not, why? **YES**
3. Does your community have access to legal advice by telephone? Is this service used? Is it useful? **YES. VERY MUCH.**
4. Do you think the lawyers who attend your community have sufficient awareness of relevant cultural matters, or would more training assist? Can you give examples? **No lawyers dont need do visit.**
5. Do circuit courts (magistrates or higher level courts) visit your community on a regular basis? How often does this happen? Do people have access to lawyers before the magistrate or judge visits, or only on the same day? **YES a nearby community provides this**
6. If a person is held in custody awaiting a court appearance, what length of time will that person generally need to wait until court? **usually released without bail to appear**

- 7. Are interpreters needed in your community to assist people whose first language is not English? Are interpreters used during (a) consultations with lawyers and (b) court appearances? How frequently does this happen? Should there be more interpreters? Is more training needed?
- 8. *No need in Areyonga*
Are lawyers available to assist in all criminal matters in your community? Is legal advice and/or legal representation available in non-criminal matters, such as family law or civil cases? Is there a need for more legal advice and representation in non-criminal matters?
- 9. *No not relevant to Areyonga*
Where family violence has occurred, do all parties have access to legal advice and representation, or is that only provided for the person who is charged with an offence? Are there sufficient services for the person who has been assaulted?

YES.

Thank you very much for your assistance. Your response by 3rd February 2004 would be appreciated. If you have any queries please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 3560 or legcon.sen@aph.gov.au.

Yours faithfully



Senator The Hon. Nick Bolkus
Chair

the members of the community travel to Alice (230kms) to see a legal Aid who have interpreters.

Court is once a month 100km away on another community.

we have no problems here