

Report by the
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island
Advisory Board
on the community consultation on the
Aborigine's Welfare Fund

“TALKIN’ UP THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE”

ELDER’S FORUM



Held at the
Dreamtime Lodge Motel & Conference Centre
Bruce Highway, Rockhampton
26–28 March 2001

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Acknowledgments

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (the Board) would like to thank the many Community Organisations throughout Queensland that assisted their Community Elders to attend this Elders Forum.

The Board would like to acknowledge the Key Presenters for their support and contributions to the Elders Forum including:

- Mr Russell Doctor, Mr David Wragge & Mr Angelo Vasta - QAILSS, Negotiating Team;
- Kerry Tim, Cathy Boman, Ms Helen Hamley and Ms Lesley Williams – Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy;
- Mr Cecil Fisher;
- Mr George Mye;
- Ms Gloria Beckett & Ms Ettie Gleeson – Grassroots Murrie Action Group;
- Mrs Val French – Queensland Council of Older Persons; and
- Ms Peta Jervis – Office of Ageing, Department of Families Youth & Community Care

The Board would like to acknowledge the permission given to use photographs and quotes by individual participants of the Forum that are used throughout this report and its Appendices.

The Board would especially like to acknowledge and thank:

- Mr Bill Buchanan (Cardno MBK) for being our Forum Facilitator;
- Mr Max Parsons, Acting Regional Manager and staff of the Rockhampton DATSIP Office for their support including Ms Stacey Gooda and Ms Rhonda Thompson;
- Ms Di Wallace – Tropical Consultants (Recording/Transcripts);
- Ms Leslie Barney, Department of the Premier and Cabinet;
- Ms Lynne Matsen, Ms Rhianna Patrick, Ms Basana Neliman, Mr Ray Brown and Di Andrews, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy;
- Mr Bob Blair and the dedicated staff of the Dreamtime Centre at Rockhampton; and
- Ms Stacey Miller and the staff of local Murrie Radio Station 4US.

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This Forum was proudly hosted by:

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy
Office of Ageing, Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland*



Foreword

**By Dr Robert V Anderson OAM
Chairperson
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (ATSIAB)**

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and representatives of Community based organisations and Government who participated in the Elder's Forum. The courage of participants in telling their stories and the preparedness of those government and community organisations in acknowledging the depth of emotional and legal complexity these issues represent, for most of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is a sign we can reconcile these issues.

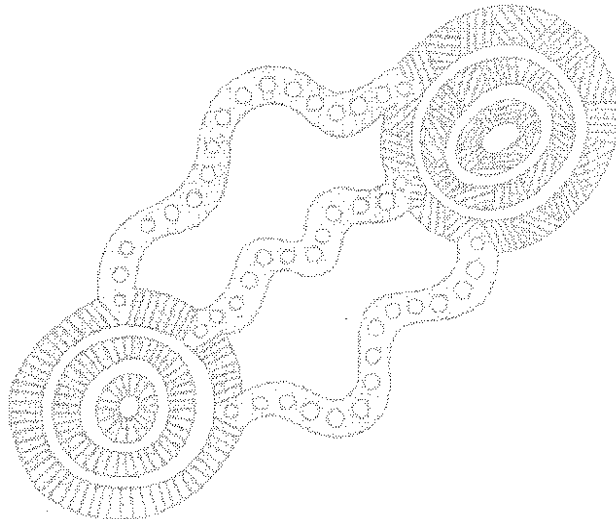
The initial objectives of providing information about the past and present situation with respect to moneys now held in the Aborigines Welfare Fund (AWF) and seeking advice regarding future directions for progressing this matter was a major focus of this Elders Forum.

The outcomes of the workshops and the open forum with the Minister, the Honorable Judy Spence, indicates the need for an extended period of consultation about the AWF at the local Community level. The volume of information about the AWF presented at this Forum was both complex and confronting in nature for most Elders participating, the need for a further Elders Forum was acknowledged by the Minister and should be actively pursued in the near future. This will then enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and the Queensland Government to progress this matter as well as the recommendations of the 1998 Elders Forum and other issues of importance.

This Forum Report should be embraced by all as an indication by our Communities Elders to be heard further on all matters of importance. I am pleased to recommend the outcomes of the Elder's Forum deliberations as a valuable contribution to the development of an effective and inclusive process to address our past, present and future issues with respect to the Aborigines Welfare Fund.



**Dr Robert Anderson OAM
Chairperson
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board**



1. Terms of Reference

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board were appointed by a decision of the Queensland Cabinet in June 1999. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board is responsible for advising the Queensland Government on the development and implementation of policy relating to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland.

Through the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, the Board is required to advise on matters such as:

- The broad priorities for expenditure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs;
- Implementation of recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody;
- The means of advancing Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- Commonwealth-State relations in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs; and
- Any other issues that may be determined by the Minister.

As the Government's peak advisory body on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy, the Board is also responsible for coordinating advice provided by its constituent bodies, as required by the Minister.

Board Membership

ATSIAB comprises of 12 representatives from Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.

Dr. Robert V Anderson OAM

Chair of ATSIAB, Chair of State Reconciliation Committee

Ms Cheryl Buchanan

Deputy Chair of ATSIAB, and the former Indigenous Advisory Council

Mrs. Rose Colless

Cairns Elder

Mrs. Ruth Hegarty

Brisbane Elder

Mr. Henry Garnier

Chair of the Island Coordinating Council

Mr. Alfred Lacey

Deputy Chair of the Aboriginal Coordinating Council

Ms Penny Tripcony

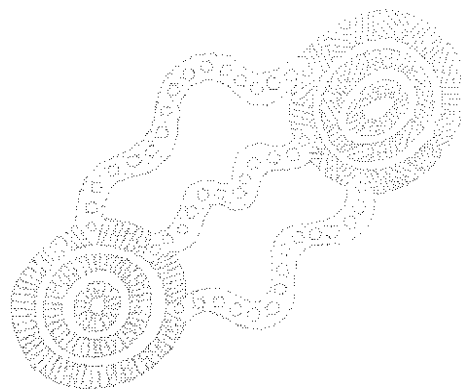
Chair of the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee

Associate Professor Jacinta Elston

Head of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Studies at James Cook University

Ms Leanne Wilson

Indigenous Policy Officer, Department of Main Roads



Mr. Richard Hoolihan
TAFE Teacher, Townsville

Vacant Position (1)

2. Background

On 10 December 2000, the Honourable Judy Spence MLA, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, in a media release titled the "Wisdom of the Elders to resolve Indigenous Fund", announced the intention of the Queensland Government to hold a special Elders Forum to help map a strategy for settling the AWF.

"The Goss Government decided to freeze the fund in 1992, when the balance was less than \$3million. Since then the only activities on the fund have been the payment of interest from Queensland Treasury, and now it totals \$7.9million".

In 1997 ATSIC granted funding to QAILSS to investigate the savings accounts and wages of indigenous Queenslanders to ascertain whether or not there was sufficient evidence to initiate court action in order to obtain reparation for individuals who worked under the scheme. This research continued through to 2000 when the State Government agreed to attempt to negotiate a settlement. At that time, the efforts towards court action were put on hold for an indefinite period while the possibility of an amicable settlement was discussed.

The Queensland Government acknowledges the need for all interested parties to be heard on matters of importance in relation to the Aborigines Welfare Fund.

• Why an Elder's Forum is Important

The 1998 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders' Forum

In November 1998, Queensland's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders' Forum was held. The three-day Forum, held in Brisbane, was co-sponsored by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care (DFYCCQ) and (DATSIPD) and was held to celebrate the 1999 International Year of the Older Person.

A number of recommendations arose from that Elders' Forum, including:

- *Funding be made available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders groups to raise their status and recognition within their communities;*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages be recognised and taught to children in schools.*
- *The establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders Lobby Group*

While some recommendations have been actioned, the third recommendation, to establish an Elders lobby group named the *Queensland Custodian Body of Elders*, is still to be progressed.

The 2001 Elders' Forum held at the Dreamtime Centre in Rockhampton aimed to:

- *Provide information and consult with Elders over issues surrounding the Aborigines Welfare Fund;*
- *Discuss payments made to Torres Strait Islander people;*
- *To resolve the Welfare Fund issues in the Torres Strait;*
- *Suggest what should be done with the remaining money from the Aborigines Welfare Fund once individual payments have been made;*
- *Establish an Elders' Lobby Group;*
- *Talk up general issues and general business.*

The Hon. Judy Spence MP in her media statement on the 10th December 2000 announced the intention of the Government to have the Board hold this Elder's Forum and provided a range of reasons for her decision including:

"...the full story of the Welfare Fund and where the wages went has never been properly told.." and that **"...the Beattie Government has spent two years unravelling its history with an aim of lifting the veil of mystery...."**

The Minister further stated, **"...the next step is assessing how we can use the \$7.9 million in a way that respects the wishes of the majority of people who were affected..."**, and that, **"...it will take the wisdom and understanding of Elders to help settle the issue, which is why we will hold a special Elders Forum, early in 2001...."**

3. Elder's Forum

□ Forum Agenda

The Elder's Forum was held over a three day period with two days set aside in the agenda for matters relating to the Aborigines Welfare Fund, a half day for other business and an open forum session with the Minister. (See Appendix A – "Forum Agenda" for details).

□ Participants

There were 238 registered participants from 57 Communities in attendance at the Elder's Forum. (See Appendix B – "Participants Registration List" for details).

□ Key Presenters

- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services Secretariat – Aborigines Welfare Fund Negotiating Team

The Elder's Forum was addressed by Mr David Wragge, Mr Russell Doctor and Mr Angelo Vasta, on the progress of current negotiations with the Queensland Government being undertaken by the Negotiating Team. (See Appendix D)

- Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy
- Queensland Council of Older Persons
- Office of Aging, Department of Families Youth and Community Care
- Community Groups/individuals
 - ◆ Mr Cecil Fisher
 - ◆ Mr George Mye (Torres Strait Islands)
 - ◆ Grassroots Murrie Action Group

4. What the Community Elders said:

During the course of the Forum many participants expressed their personal and in some cases traumatic experiences, with respect to their lives under the Acts, which involved the operation of the AWF and associated accounts. The proposed recommendations of the workshops (Appendix G), were discussed in part by the Elder's Forum during the plenary sessions on Day Three and a number of general directions emerged with respect to Government addressing these recommendations including:

- The need for proper recognition of the cultural leadership role of the Elders in our Communities by all persons including the Government and Community sector organisations;
- The urgent need for inclusion of Elders' representation in all future negotiations/discussions with respect to the AWF and other associated matters;

- In acknowledging this role the Government should facilitate and resource the formation of a State-wide Elders Body as a matter of priority to progress this and other related matters;
- The urgent need for further information sessions and consultation on the AWF matter to be undertaken at a regional and local level prior to the negotiation of any future settlement of the AWF; and
- The need for the truth to be told in respect of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples suffered and the role of the Government during the time the AWF operated.

◆ Workshops

Five Workshop groups were formed from those participating in the Forum to discuss issues and put forward recommendations for the Queensland Government to consider in relation to settling the AWF. The workshop groups were formed from a range of cultural and geographical interest groups including two Women's Business Groups, a Torres Strait Islander Group, A Men's Business Group and a Woorabinda Workshop Group. A Chairperson and a Co-Facilitator were nominated for each workshop group to assist in documenting the outcomes of discussions and subsequent recommendations the groups reached on these issues.

The outcomes of these workshops tend to reflect the complex nature of the issues surrounding the past and present circumstances of the AWF and the associated accounts that directly or indirectly relate.

• Summary of Workshop Outcomes

The issues raised and proposed recommendations for each group can be viewed at Appendix G. Summary of issues raised includes:

- The need for a 'Body of Elders' that advises Government on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and for this body to be involved in decision-making. The body to have geographical and gender representation and to be properly resourced.
- The need for further consultation to be undertaken at a Regional and local level about the AWF, before negotiations proceed;
- Representation of the Elders in all levels of the AWF negotiation process;
- Issues including handing back houses and other assets purchased from the AWF and associated accounts to community control and where appropriate to individuals;
- The AWF money must go back to those people who earned it. (or their families if they are deceased).
- That the Government holds a Torres Strait Islander Elder's Meeting Forum to discuss the wages and savings accounts of Torres Strait Islander Workers to address the issues and proposed recommendations raised in Appendix G3;
- The need for the full story to be told about the operations of the AWF and associated funds and the effects this had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this State;
- The people on Church Missions and other areas should not be discriminated against with respect to the current compensation payments of \$7000.00 for receipt of under award wages being administered by FAIRA; and
- The Minister to make available the funding and resources to conduct further meetings for the Elders to progress these matters as a matter of priority.

□ Question Time with the Minister Judy Spence

The Minister the Honourable Judy Spence, provided participants with an opportunity to inform her directly about issues they were concerned with during a Question Time session convened by the Forum Co-ordinator on the third day of the Elder's Forum. This session dealt with issues relating to the AWF and associated accounts as well as other matters raised by individual participants for the Minister's consideration.

The summary section identifies key issues discussed relevant to progressing matters in relation to the AWF. These should be read in the context they were discussed, that is Minister Spence responding to an individual participant's question.

Summary of issues raised during this session included:

- The Queensland Government must recognise the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to be included in the consultations and negotiations about settling the Aborigines Welfare Fund;
- The Queensland Government accept responsibility for its actions and tells the full story in respect of the AWF and the associated accounts and the effect this had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this State;
- There is an urgent need for communities and individuals to have access to information about their moneys and how the AWF and associated accounts operated before negotiations proceed and for information/consultation processes to be undertaken across the State including the Torres Strait region;
- The Government needs to give a commitment that any records held on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples are not destroyed;
- The negotiating team convened by the QAILSS has little representation of Elders and it is unclear as to who and how the Queensland Government and the negotiating team is consulting about the issues of concern to the peoples of the rural areas, remote areas, isolated areas, as opposed to coastal areas, the missions and the settlements;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should receive compensation for the way they were treated under the Act by the Government, the employers they were contracted to work for by authority of the Government who mistreated our people;
- The need for the Queensland Government to review its decision to only pay compensation for the under award wages to those still living and to pay those families of deceased persons, as they suffered the effects of reduced incomes as well;
- The need for the Queensland Government and the wider community to acknowledge the truth about what happened to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including the after effects of prolonged separations, sexual abuse, fraudulent use of the moneys, and other practices that undermined their human rights by many of those responsible for their care and welfare; and
- For the Government to acknowledge that it is trying to remedy, one form of discrimination by introducing discriminatory processes in trying to settle the matter of the under award wages payments process being undertaken.

5. Forum Co-ordinator's Comments

The Advisory Board and the support staff assisting in organising this Forum are to be commended for their capacity at such short notice to ensure this Forum was the success that it was for all participating during the three days at Rockhampton. The presenters had a difficult task by comparison when we look closely at the complex nature of the issues surrounding the AWF and the associated accounts.

The Elders of those Communities attending this Forum have greatly assisted our Communities and the Queensland Government in determining the course of future actions for settling the matter of the AWF. Whilst they did not give precise instructions for immediate settlement of the outstanding moneys held in the Welfare Fund at this time, their deliberations and subsequent advice through the recommendations of the workshops provides us with a clear message for more widespread consultation on this matter.

The presentation of information with respect to the operations of the Queensland Council for Older Persons and the Office of the Aging was well received and should be workshopped in more detail at future Forums that are focussed on establishing a state-wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders representative body.

In summary, I would like to thank all those persons who assisted the Board in convening this historic event and commend the outcomes to the Advisory Board and the Queensland Government for action.

Ms Cheryl Buchanan
Elders Forum Co-ordinator
Deputy Chairperson
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board

APPENDIX A

Forum Agenda Talkin' Up the Past Present and Future Elders Forum Dreamtime Centre, Rockhampton 26-28 March 2001

Monday, 26 March 2001

- 8:30 Arrival and Registration
- 9:30 Welcome by Local Traditional Elders
- 9:35 Opening Address by **Dr Robert Anderson**, Chairperson, ATSIAB
- 9:50 Forum Aims and the Role of ATSIAB by **Cheryl Buchanan**, Deputy Chairperson, ATSIAB and Elders Forum Co-ordinator
- 10:20 Overview of Proceedings and Introductions By Bill Buchanan, **Forum Facilitator**
- 10:30 *Morning Tea*
- 11:00 Presentation by Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Legal Services Secretariat (QAILSS), **Mr John Leslie**
- 1:00 *Lunch*
- 1:30 Presentation by **Anne Dutney**, Acting Director-General for the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy
- 1:45 Presentation on the Aborigines Welfare Fund by Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, **Kerrie Tim** (Executive Director), **Cathy Boman** (A/Director, Strategic Projects and Services Directorate), **Ms Lesley Williams** and **Ms Helen Hamley** (DATSIP Work and Savings History Branch)
- 3:00 *Afternoon tea*
- 3:15 Continue Presentation and Workshops
- 4:45 Summary of Days Proceedings
- 5:00 *Forum Close (Day 1)*

Talkin' Up the Past Present and Future Elders Forum
Dreamtime Centre, Rockhampton
22-28 March 2001

Tuesday, 27 March 2001

- 9:00 Review of Day One
- 9:15 Continue of Presentation on Aborigines Welfare Fund
- 10:30 *Morning Tea*
- 11:00 Presentation - Community Perspective's
Mr **Cecil Fisher**
Gloria Beckett and **Eddie Gleeson** (Grassroots Murri Action Group)
Mr **George Mye** and Ms **Flo Kennedy** (Torres Strait Representatives)
Mr **Elimo Tapim** and Mr **Steve Mam**
(National Secretariat of Torres Strait Organisations Representatives)
Mr **Henry Garnier** (Chairman, Island Co-ordinating Council)
- 1:00 *Lunch*
- 2:00 Workshop Session 1 – Aborigines Welfare Fund
- 3:00 *Afternoon tea*
- 3:30 Workshop Session 2 – Workshop will be conducted in the format of Men's and Women's business to ensure cultural issues are fully dealt with in respect of the Aborigines Welfare Fund (Workshop Groups to prepare recommendations report for the Plenary Session)
- 4:30 Plenary Session
- 5:00 *Forum Close (Day 2)*

Talkin' Up the Past Present and Future Elders Forum
Dreamtime Centre, Rockhampton
26-28 march 2001

Wednesday, 28 March 2001

- 9:00 Review of Day Two Proceedings
- 9:15 Open Forum Session to discuss future networking of Elders
- 10:30 *Morning Tea*
- 11:00 Presentation by **Ms Val French**, Chairperson, Council of Older Persons, Office of Ageing
- 11:20 Presentation by **Ms Peta Jervois**, Director of the Office of Ageing, Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland
- 11:40 Open Forum Session – General Business
- 1:00 *Lunch with Minister Judy Spence (Media will be present)*
- 2:00 Open Forum with **Minister Judy Spence**
- 3:00 *Afternoon tea*
- 3:30 Forum Plenary
- 4.00 Closing Address by **Dr Robert Anderson** and **Ms Cheryl Buchanan**
- 4:30 *FORUM CLOSE*

This Forum has been hosted by the following organisations:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board;
- Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy; and the
- Office of Ageing, Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland.

WE WISH YOU ALL A SAFE JOURNEY BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITIES!

APPENDIX B

Participants Registration List

Board Members who attended Forum

Brisbane	Dr Robert Anderson (Chair) Ms Cheryl Buchanan (Deputy Chair) Mrs Ruth Hegarty
Cairns	Mrs Rose Colless
Torres Strait	Mr Henry Garnier

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS NAME	
Barcaldine	Mr David Thompson	
Biloela	Colin Booth	Millie Maywee
Brisbane	Mr Keith Arnold Aunty Jane Arnold Mrs Ada Branfiled Mrs Ella Gordan K Doctor Ms Vanessa (Barney) Kirk Mr Norman Brown Mrs Jeanette Kirk Mr Kevin Bond Mr Robert Lacey (Jnr) Ms Gwen Graham Iwez Kyle Mrs Faye Gundy Mr George Hopkins Mr John Brady Mrs Melita Orcher Ms Dell King Mrs Estelle Senior Mrs Lorelle Bird Ms Yvonne Watson Ms Ann Sheridan Ms Ettie Gleeson	Mr Hughie Kirk (Senior) Mr Vincent Serico (Senior) Mrs Lynne Matsen Mr Steve Mam Ms Mynhia Browning Ms Valda Jones Mr Peter James Mr Neville Turbane Mr Simon Leedie Mr Wayne Blackman Mr Robert Henry Toby (Snr) Mr Angelo Vasta (QAILSS) Ms Val French Mrs Val Coolwell Mr Alwyn Hill Mr Peter Bird Mrs Grace Hegarty Mr Robert Bond Mr Robert West Mr Glen Wagg Mrs Gloria Beckett
Charters Towers	Mr Charles Masso Mr Adam Jerri	Mr Robert Masso Ms Tracey Jerri
Gladstone	Mr Charles Coleman	
Glasshouse Mountains	Mrs Valmi Dedsman	
Gracemere	Ms Leisa Sjaardema Mrs Margaret Saltner	Mr Alick James Saltner
Gympie	Mr Harold Leedie	Mr Bill Glenbar
Hopevale	Mr Roy Mclvor	Ms Glenis Woibo
Injinoo Community Cape York	Mr Gordon Pablo	

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

PARTICIPANTS NAME

Ipswich	Mrs Eileen Conlon Mr Ron Conlon	Mrs Helen Daylight Mr Cecil Fisher
Kallangur	D Chambers Ms Angela White	Mr Russel Doctor Mr Charlie Chambers
Lockhardt River Community	Ms Veronica Piva	
Lowood	Ponjydflydu	
Mackay	Ms Cheryl Tomarra Ms Sonelia Saunders Ms Elizabeth Talbot Ms Thelma Mooney	Mr Hugh Dodd Ms Beryl Tyson Mr Reginald White
Mapoon	Ms Beryl E. Woodley	
Napranum	Mrs Mary-Ann Coconut	
Mareeba	Mr Rodney G. Riley	
Maryborough	Ms Harriet Tanna	
Morayfield	Mr Thomas John Lacey Mr Bob Lacey (Snr)	Mrs Bertha Lacey
Mornington Island	Ms Roberta Felton	Mrs Louisa A Roughsey
Mount Morgan	Mrs Rose Barnes	
Mundubbera	Mrs Sally West	Mr Victor West
Oakey	Mrs Olive May Murphy	
Pialba	Ms Nellie Richards	Ms Joan Ahwang
Rockhampton	Mr Telly Gela Ms Esmay Lynch Ms Diana Stanley Ms Ivy Powder Ms Dawn Kenny Mrs Gloria Paterson Miss Kate Wragge Ms Annie Asse Mr Albert Mason Mr Brian Muir Ms Cheryl Pickering Mr Gary Marshall Frescon Ms Liz Mitchell Ms Winifred Munns Ms Gwen Saunders Mr Angus Commollatti Mr John Osmond Munns Mr Frank. R. Tiers Mr Clinton Hill Ms Julie Richards Ms Mary Bird Mr Mc Lofty Asse Mrs Mary P. Tabua Mr Neza Saunders Ms Christine Lawton	Ms Stacey Miller Mrs Josephine Gela Ms Desley Combo Childs Ms Valerie Tilberoo Ms Gwenodliae Fuller Mr Lency Tapim Mr Edward Tapim Mr Micheal Songoro Mr Eddie Ghee Mr Murray Ghee Ms Daphne Auda Ms Beatrice Henry Ms Mavis Garrett Ms Maryann Novak Ms Annie Gela Ms Lily Tabuai Mr Herbert J. Fisher Ms Venus Williams Mr Eddie Daylight Ms Patricia Thompson Mrs Joyce Rutherford Mr George Asse Mrs Jean Kemp Mr Neil Fraser Mr Norman Fisher

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

PARTICIPANTS NAME

Rockhampton continued	Mrs Elizabeth Wragge	Mrs Edna Holmes
	Mr Geoffrey Booth	Ms Venita Mann
	Mrs Margaret Lawton	Mrs Florence Fisher
	Ms Janet White	Mr Jack Gela
	Ms Ellen Barsah	Ms Maureen Albury
	Mrs Beryl Pickering	Mrs Ada Kemp
	Mr Eddie Barsah	Ms Madeline Chubb
	Mrs Connie Coolwell	Mr Edward Chubb
	Mr Kai George	Mr Des Hamilton
	Mr David Wragge	Mr Stewart Frescon
	Ms Patricia Weazel	Mrs Olive Donald
	Ms Del Waterton	Mrs Cheryl Conlon
	Ms Sandra McConnville	Mrs Irene Currie
	Mr Hedley Malone	Mrs Edna Alley
	Mr Edgar Hatfield	Mrs Millie Songoro
	Ms Anita Paterson	Mr Fergus Waterton
Mr Oliver Holt	Mr Reg Little	
Ms Gillian Tatow	Mr Richard Fraser	
Mrs Ursula Doyle		
Sarina	Mrs Merna Hegarty	A Brown
	G Brown	
Thursday Island	Ms Flo Kennedy	Ephram Bani
	Bua Mabo	
Townsville	Mr Ernie Hoolihan	Mr Victor Jose
	Mr Elemo Tapim	Ms Mary Butler
	Mrs Thelma McAvoy	
Weipa	Mrs Ruth Hennings	
Winton	Mrs Marlene Fraser	
Woorabinda	Mr Edgar Freeman	Mr William Bluemink
	Mr Brian Fisher	Mr Joe Adams
	Mr Robert Bundle	Mr Joe Adams (Snr)
Wujal Wujal Community	Ms Linda Walker	Marie Creek
	Ms Eileen Walker	Ms Doreen Doughboy
Yallambee Mt Isa	Mr Ronald Hemo	
Yarrabah	Mr Graham Fourmile	Mr Peter Kyle
	Mr Roy Gray	Mr John Creed
	Mr Alan Kynuna	Mr Vincent Schrieber
Government Departments QLD	Ms Sharon Clark, Office of Ageing	
	Ms Peta Jervois, Office of Ageing	
Office of the Minister	Mr Alf Nagaiya (Minister's Adviser)	
N.S.W. Westmead	Mr David Barnes	
A.C.T. Torrens	Mrs Wilma Dalton	

APPENDIX C

Media Statement by the Honourable Judy Spence MP (10th December 2000)



Queensland
Government

Wisdom of Elders to resolve Indigenous Fund

The State Government will throw open the books on the Aborigines Welfare Fund in a bid to resolve one of the biggest challenges for reconciliation in Queensland.

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, Judy Spence, said the Government will also convene a meeting of Elders from around the State to help map a strategy for settling the Welfare Fund.

The fund, set up in 1943 for the benefit of Aboriginal people, has had a complex and chequered history and now contains \$7.9 million.

"The fund is an open wound for Indigenous Queensland workers, whose wages were compulsorily banked into this fund, supposedly so that it could be used for their benefit," Ms Spence said.

"Setting the record straight and resolving the fund are essential for complete reconciliation in Queensland.

"The full story of the Welfare Fund and where the wages went has never been properly told.

"Between 1943 and 1966 portions of the wages of Indigenous workers were banked into the Aborigines Welfare Fund.

"Indigenous workers, who paid taxes like other citizens, were forced to make an additional contribution to their own welfare.

"Indigenous People had no say in this. As much as 10% of gross wages was taken, but some workers were not even aware of this.

"This was part of a draconian system of control over all aspects of Aboriginal people's lives. They were not informed of how much money was in their accounts, were not trusted with any significant sums of money and had to seek permission to spend even small amounts.

"The bulk of wages was held in the Queensland Aboriginal Account, which was closed in 1993 after the money was returned to individual account holders.

"The Beattie Government has spent two years unravelling its history with the aim of lifting the veil of mystery.

"The next step is assessing how we can use the \$7.9 million, in away that respects the wishes of the majority of people who were affected."

Ms Spence said she was not deterred by the refusal of another group to continue negotiating over the future of the fund. "The Beattie Government was committed to negotiating settlements with Indigenous people, rather than forcing people to go to the courts in order to see justice done.

"It will take the wisdom and understanding of Elders to help settle the issue, which is why we will hold a special Elders forum, early in 2001.

"These are the people whose labour, wages and savings were controlled by past Governments.

"They were victims of injustice and they deserve to have the Welfare Fund settled in their lifetimes."

After 1966 the Fund was used as an operating account for a range of enterprises and programs, including farms, shops and Commonwealth-State housing grants.

The Goss Government decided to freeze the fund in 1992, when the balance was less than \$3 million. Since then the only activities on the fund have been the payment of interest from Queensland Treasury, and it now totals \$7.9 million.

Contact: Fiona Kennedy 3227 8825 /0409 061 266

APPENDIX D

Paper and Recommendations put to the Elders Forum by Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services Secretariat, Negotiating Team for the Aborigines Welfare Fund.

INFORMATION SHEET – ELDERS' FORUM – 26, 27, 28 MARCH 2001

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS & WAGES PROJECT

RE: ABORIGINES' WELFARE FUND AND ASSOCIATED ACCOUNTS

**PRODUCED BY QAILSS ON BEHALF OF THE
INDIGENOUS NEGOTIATION TEAM**

Between 1897 and 1975 the Queensland government had in place a statutory regime of labour and wage control in relation to indigenous Queenslanders. This system was commonly known as "being under the Act". Not every indigenous Queenslander was affected by the legislation, but those who were tell stories of oppression and degradation that are simply astounding.

A negotiation team (eventually consisting of 10 members) was constituted in such a way as to ensure fair representation of all areas of Queensland in the discussions. A list of those members is attached to this document. The negotiations were held up for some time initially because the State Government refused to pay for the negotiation team members to attend meetings. The Government also initiated some adverse publicity in the Sunday Mail in relation to the negotiations, attempting to use previous disagreements between the negotiation teams to cause discontent amongst community members and to make it even more difficult to resolve the complex issues surrounding the savings accounts.

Finally, before the state election, a proposal was forwarded to the State Government so as to facilitate concrete discussions in relation to the project. A copy of this letter is also attached to this document. This proposal covered much more than the \$7.9 million in the Aborigines' Welfare Fund. It allows for reparation payments to be made to people who were subjected to the "protection acts" and to the descendants of such people who may have died.

It is important to note that the cost of such payments being sought from the State Government is a separate issue from the sum left in the Welfare Fund. There is approximately \$7.9million which is waiting to be distributed "for the benefit of Aborigines generally".

The larger sum that was the substance of the negotiations held in September 2000 is to represent some form of compensation for those who worked under the oppressive system then in place. It is in respect of this larger sum of money that we are awaiting a decision on whether or not the State Government is willing to resume negotiations. The State Government in a letter dated 21 December 2000 has indicated that its attitude will be revealed after this Elders' Forum. A copy of that letter is also attached to this document.

Cristy Dieckmann
Legal Coordinator of the Indigenous Team

21 March 2001

TO CONTACT QAILSS IN RELATION TO THIS PROJECT

PHONE 07 3211 3522 and ask for Cristy.
QAILSS Offices is located on Level 12, MLC Centre,
239 George Street, Brisbane.

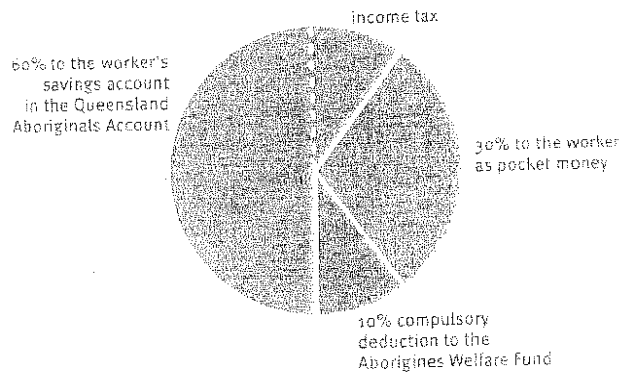
Wages and Savings of Indigenous Queenslanders 1897-1972

November 2000

What happened to the wages of Aboriginal workers?

- ✦ From the 1890s until 1972, the Queensland Government controlled the labour, wages and savings of most Aboriginal Queenslanders. Some workers lived on settlements and missions and did not strictly earn a wage but others were sent out to work for employers and did earn a wage.
- ✦ Many people say that they never got the wages they earned and that their wages were unjustly taken from them and put into the Welfare Fund.
- ✦ This information sheet will help to explain what happened.

Where did the wages go?



Queensland Aboriginals Account

The Queensland Aboriginals Account (QAA) was a single bank account used to control the wages and savings of Aboriginal people. Until 1966, Aboriginal people 'under the Act' were forced to make compulsory savings into this account.

An individual ledger card record was kept for each person who had money banked into this account. This record, known as a Savings Account, showed their name, individual deposits and withdrawals and the balance they had in their savings account.

Many people did not know what was happening to their wages money. Unlike the rest of the community, Indigenous people did not have control over their own money. Government officials took money out of the account to pay for things like clothing, travel fares, postage, medical and dental expenses and purchase orders for the worker or

their family, but the workers themselves were often not told of this. This has led to concerns about how the money was spent and whether people got all the money they should have.

There are also concerns about possible fraud and mismanagement of savings accounts and wages. This is very hard to prove because so much time has gone by and because there is very little evidence on the records to show if there were any improper dealings with the accounts. However, the Government has put resources into investigating this.

By the early 1990's the savings accounts were closed. All of the balances were distributed.

Therefore, according to Government records there is no money in the QAA, which held the savings of Aboriginal workers.

Aborigines Welfare Fund

The Aborigines Welfare Fund was set up in 1943 for the general benefit of Aboriginal people. Despite what many think, the whole of the wages of Aboriginal people did not go into this Fund.

A part of Aboriginal workers' wages was taken and put in the Aborigines Welfare Fund. Some workers had 2.5 per cent of their wages taken, others had 5 per cent taken, still others had 10 per cent taken. (The proportion taken depended on each worker's family circumstances and location.)

This means that Aboriginal people were contributing to their own welfare.

Surplus interest earned from investment of balances in the Queensland Aborigines Account was also paid into

the Aborigines Welfare Fund. The Fund also held moneys from the operations of retail stores, cattle, farming and other activities conducted on settlements (now Aboriginal Deed of Grant in Trust or DOGIT communities) and unclaimed money from the estates of deceased or missing Aboriginal people.

There is now \$7.8 million in this fund, which has been frozen since 1993. By law, the money in this fund may only be used for the general welfare of Aboriginal people. This means that no money has gone into or out of the fund (apart from the interest it is earning) since 1993.

What is being done about this?

- The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development has created the Work and Savings Histories Unit to look at all issues arising from the past control of wages and savings of Indigenous people. Two separate areas are being looked at:

- **Wages and Savings of Indigenous Queenslanders 1897-1972:** The Queensland

Work & Savings Histories Unit

Ph: 3405 6695 or 3224 7540

Freecall: 1800 809 097

- **The Non-Payment of Award Wages Process 1975-1986:** If you worked for the Department after 1975 you may be eligible for a \$7000 payment. See the separate information sheet. The Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA) is coordinating this issue on behalf of Indigenous people.

If you want to know more, contact:

FAIRA: 1800 622 738 or fax: (07) 3391 4551 or www.faira.org.au

- Research is still being conducted into the accounts used to manage the wages and savings of Torres Strait Islanders.

For more information please contact



Queensland Government

Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Policy and Development

PO Box 397 Brisbane Albert Street Queensland Australia 4002

Rockhampton: (07) 4938 4690

Townsville: (07) 4799 7470

Cairns: (07) 4039 8177

Thursday Island: (07) 4069 1243

Malisa: (07) 4743 9444

South Queensland: (07) 3224 5917

www.indigenous.qld.gov.au

THE NON-PAYMENT OF AWARD WAGES PROCESS 1975 - 1986

INFORMATION SHEET

June 2000

Decision

In May 1999, the Queensland Government decided to compensate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worked for the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement or the Department of Community Services (now the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, DATSIP) between 1975 and 1986 and who did not receive award wages.

Background

Before 1986, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worked for the Department were paid at a "community" rate, which was less than the award rates. This became unlawful from 31 October 1975, when the *Racial Discrimination Act* came into force. The passage of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the chance to claim compensation if they were not paid award wages between 31 October 1975 and 29 October 1986.

Eligibility

People who worked for the Department at any time between 31 October 1975 and 29 October 1986, and who did not get award wages, can claim compensation of \$7,000 for discrimination. The amount of \$7,000 was set by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).

31 October 1975 is the date the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* came into force.

29 October 1986 is when award wages were paid to all Departmental employees.

You will only be able to claim money on behalf of yourself. You cannot claim on behalf of a relative who is no longer living unless that relative was still alive on 31 May 1999, when the Government made its decision.

People who decide to accept the \$7,000 must also agree not to later go to HREOC or the courts about the same claim.

FAIRA

The Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA) is responsible for the collection of claims from, and provision of legal advice to, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders living on the mainland (including Seisia and Bamaga).

ICC

The Island Coordinating Council (ICC) is responsible for collecting the claim forms and providing legal advice in the Torres Strait region. Mr David Abednego may be contacted on 4069 1446 for further information.

Procedure

Since the decision was made on 31 May 1999, FAIRA, the ICC and the Government have been working together to process the claims as quickly as possible. The Government aims to complete this process within two years. If you believe that you worked for the Department during the eligibility period, you will have to contact FAIRA or the ICC for advice and to complete a claim form.

Centrelink Benefits

People who receive Centrelink entitlements should contact their nearest Centrelink Office to discuss whether the compensation payment will affect their entitlement.

Taxation

The Australian Tax Office has advised that compensation payments will not be subject to income tax. GST will not impact on compensation payments.

ANY QUESTIONS?

For further information contact:

FAIRA on 1800 622 738

ICC on (07) 4069 1446

Work & Savings Histories Unit, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DATSIP) 1800-809 097
or your local Regional Office of DATSIP (See addresses over)



**Queensland
Government**

Department of
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Policy

THE NON-PAYMENT OF AWARD WAGES PROCESS 1975 - 1986

INFORMATION SHEET

June 2000

DATSIPD Regional Offices

South Queensland Regional Office - Brisbane

17 Mary Street, Brisbane
Phone: (07) 3225 8982
Fax: (07) 3224 8981

West Queensland Regional Office - Mount Isa

50-52 Miles Street, Mt Isa
Phone: (07) 4744 7333
Fax: (07) 4743 9611

Central Queensland Regional Office - Rockhampton

Beaumont Centre, Victoria Parade, Rockhampton
Phone: (07) 4938 4690
Fax: (07) 4938 4369

Far North Queensland Regional Office - Cairns

1st Floor, 36 Shields Street, Cairns
Phone: (07) 4052 3177
Fax: (07) 4031 1114

North Queensland Regional Office - Townsville

4th Floor, State Government Building
Corner Stanley and Walker Streets, Townsville
Phone: (07) 4722 1470
Fax: (07) 4722 1549

Torres Strait Regional Office - Thursday Island

Court House Building, Victoria Parade,
Thursday Island
Phone: (07) 4069 1243
Fax: (07) 4069 1781

ANY QUESTIONS?

For further information contact:

FAIRA on 1800 622 738

ICC on 4069 1446

Work & Savings Histories Unit, Department of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DATSIP) 1800-809 097
or your local Regional Office of DATSIP



**Queensland
Government**

Department of
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Policy

APPENDIX F

SPEECH NOTES FOR

CECIL FISHER

CONFERENCE IN ROCKHAMPTON

Firstly, I would like to thank the Advisory Board for making this meeting possible. I would like to pay respect to the Elders of this land the conference is held and our ancestors and those who have gone before.

To me there is apriority to set up the State Queensland Elders Body. The other three things in this order Welfare Fund, Trust Account and Discriminatory Wages.

1. Aborigine Welfare Fund

The Government should facilitate setting up The Queensland Elders Body (Committee). The Government should put the 7.9 million dollars in a trust fund of the Queensland Aboriginal Elders Body.

This Elders Body, one of their first commitments should be to have three or four meetings in a year for the next two years to resolve the welfare trust as we know this money was 5% to 10% of Queensland Aboriginal workers money, endowments, wills, etc.

The Elders should be able to get an informed opinion on the distribution of the welfare money in the next 2 years.

The Beattie Government now has a very large majority and should expect to have a lot of public support to repay Aboriginal monies they spent from the Aboriginal trust fund over the last twenty to fifty years up to 1991. This money should be returned in this Governments term. A three years arrangement.

2. The Aboriginal Trust Fund

The Aboriginal Trust Fund was money which were wages, endowments and other monies belonging to the Aboriginal people from the early nineties to the nineteen sixties. Over the years Aboriginal people worked (slaved) for these monies. The money was put in a Trust Fund, but the government legislated or decided to spend this money.

If it was private company holding monies in trust it would have been wound up, charged with cheating or misappropriation and the Directors or Managers would be jailed and struck off. But because it was the government who acted as protectors for Aboriginal people, they were allowed to get away unscathed. The Government's own final report of the

investigation into the Aboriginal Welfare Fund and the Aboriginal accounts admits these assets have never been accounted for. Report on hand.

A number of cases exist of misappropriation or misapplication and the lack of adequate control of a large volume of undetected fraud, the size of which is interminable today.

This Welfare Fund account was used by the Director or Protector or Superintendents of various Missions to do as they pleased – another slush fund for government. The government admits the recording system over some twenty to thirty years from the 1940s cannot be located.

The Queensland government invested money in properties, Hospital Boards in Townsville, Redcliffe, Toowoomba, and community stores. Money was also invested in other places, for example Cloncurry House for visiting Aborigines in 1956; 1947 money for house in Weipa; 1954 Palm Island; 1954 – 1957 purchase of the original Aitkenvale Hostel, land; and I am told and know the Department of Aboriginal Affairs bought houses in nearly every major centre in Queensland to house Aboriginal people. I am not saying the houses should not have been bought, but not with money from the Aboriginal Trust Fund.

In the report of the investigation of the Aboriginal Welfare fund attachment No.1.1 confidential Cabinet documents have been excluded, also attachment 1.4 has been excluded from this report from advice by Crown Law. Because of the lack of these attachments this report is tainted and leaves a suspicion that the government is hiding something. The Beattie government should legislate to refund all these monies and other outstanding monies. They should also pay compound interest on these monies over the many years they were trustees for the Aboriginal Trust Fund. The government should repay with compound interest into the Elders Trust Fund. The Elders should then proceed to implement a plan to repay the Aboriginal people for their monies held in Trust. Perhaps these properties bought with Aboriginal Trust Fund money should be handed back to the Elders and a company set up to run it. The Elders could seek ATSIC, Regional Housing Bodies, Companies to oversee these houses, etc.

3. Discriminatory Wages

One of my last concerns is for the Church controlled Missions, i.e. Hopevale, Wujal Wujal, etc. The Churches were in control of these Missions up until 1986 and therefore the Queensland government refuses to acknowledge these Missions as their responsibility.

The Churches and the Government should act responsibly and come to some common ground accepting the Churches were agents for the government and pay a similar compensation for the discriminatory treatment of Aboriginal people similar to Government run missions.

One of the other duties of the Elders would be to over see the investigation of the Church run mission to clear this situation then a suitable solution could be formulated or a class action claim of vicarious liability by the Elders against the Queensland Government. This could be done through the Human Rights Commission under the Race Discrimination Act 1975 (vicarious liability).

4. Funding

If this Committee is going to work it will need to be properly funded. As a goodwill gesture Queensland State Government should fund this Committee for three years working capital.

Thank you.

Cecil Fisher

APPENDIX G

Workshop Summary Sheet

- G.1 Workshop A – Women’s Business Group (Northern Areas)**
- G.2 Workshop B – Women’s Business Group (Other Areas)**
- G.3 Workshop C – Torres Strait Islander Elders Group**
- G.4 Workshop D – Men’s Business Group**
- G.5 Workshop E – Woorabinda Elders Group**

APPENDIX G.1**Workshop A – Women’s Business Group (Northern Area)**Chaired by: **Mrs Rose Colless (ATSIAB)**Co-Facilitated by: **Di Andrews and Stacey Gooda**

Issues Discussed	Proposed Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Houses bought with Aboriginal money. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Paying rent e.g. Murrie money. b. Payment of rent from homes – insurance, rates. c. No insurance on homes in the early days. 2. How much money was transferred from the Welfare Fund to the Department Local Housing? 3. 1970: – Houses built on Mornington Island, white people living in those homes that were built from the Welfare Fund. 4. Explanation about this money to Elders for past 20 years. 5. Compensation for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with interest to be paid. 6. Non-payment of wages to those who worked. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Moneys went to Native Affairs. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify the wages people should have paid. <input type="checkbox"/> Endowments – not paid to the Mothers. 7. Compensation for work related injuries 8. Education – ASSPA Committees 9. Health Programs – Lack of knowledge on diseases, not enough visits. 10. No representation of elders for the departments to give advice, wisdom. 11. Prison – Liaising. 12. Department makes decisions without ATSI input. 13. Sick of hearing half of the story from Government. 14. Teach stories to the children in education systems. 15. Future Generation. 16. Over representation of young people in detention centres. 17. Lack of housing in community for young people. 18. Separate community issues from the Welfare Fund. 19. Intestates – people who died without a will. 20. We name the price for the people. 21. Reps on the Negotiating Team – should not be on the team – did not live as black. 22. Develop strategies to locate all people who were paid below the award wage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation on Negotiation Teams – Elders must be represented: Geographical Representation. • Houses bought out of the Aboriginal Welfare Fund should be handed back to the families & People & Elders. • Compensation with interest for unpaid wages and Under Award Wages. • Compensation for work-related injuries. • Should be a ‘Body of Elders’ that advise Government on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues which should be involved in decision-making. The body must be geographically representative and properly resourced. • The AWF money must go back to those people who earned it. (or their families if they are deceased). • The people name their price for compensation. • Government needs to tell the truth. • \$7.9 million used for Economic & Community Development for the benefit of future Generations – education, employment, training, health, housing etc. • The 10 acres at Aitkenvale – government calculate compensation at today’s market place. • Each Geographical region needs to be consulted individually, eg. Cape York, Mapoon, etc. • Stories of the ATSI people needs to be recorded and incorporated into the education system. • Compensation of wages should come from consolidated revenue fund, not out of the A.W.F. • Representatives on negotiation team should be people who know and live black. • Wages of all these people who worked and were underpaid or not paid should be identified, located and compensated.

APPENDIX G.2**Workshop B – Women's Business Group (Other Areas)**

Chaired by: Mrs Ruth Hegarty (ATSIAB)

Co-Facilitated by: Ms Rhonda Thompson

Issues Discussed

1. Different Regions and different issues
 - Bringing the money back into the regions, what process is in place for this.
2. Welfare Fund – Individual Wages.
3. We need to have a say, as this is our lives.
4. Need consent on the resolutions formed at this forum.
5. As the SWQ Delegate I (Ada Branfield) cannot accept any resolutions or recommendations until such time as these recommendations and resolutions are taken back to our people in our communities and an Elder Meeting be convened for our area.
6. The Welfare Fund is not to be processed as the Wages (Under Award) \$7, 000. If people take this money, how will the application with QAILSS for Under Award Wages be effected?
7. Representation on Negotiation Team (QAILSS and Government Team – How do we do this? What are the processes?)

Proposed Recommendations

1. We the members of Group B reject the progression of the Aborigines Welfare Fund until further meetings are held and we are given the opportunity to take back to our own Communities information gathered from this Forum from Monday 26th – Wednesday 28th March 2001.
2. We also require representation on the Welfare Fund Negotiation Team.

APPENDIX G.3

Workshop C – Torres Strait Islander Elders Group

Chaired by: Mr Henry Garnier (ATSIAB)

Co-Facilitated by: Mr Victor Jose

Issues Discussed

1. Is there or was there a Torres Strait Islander Fund?
 - What was/is this account being used for? In what ways was this fund established?
2. What other accounts did the Government set up for Torres Strait Islanders?
 - How were these accounts established? What was the source of these funds?
3. Where were the funds expended?
 - Did the Government spend these funds in the same or similar way to our Aboriginal brothers and sisters? For whose benefit did the Government send these funds and how?
4. If assets were purchased such as housing, hospitals, schools,
 - Who owns these assets and why?
5. In the sale of the produce through our stores, where did the profits go to?
6. What has happened to the monies from the sale of the boats, such as the "Melbadir" and others?
7. What was the situation for Torres Strait Islanders workers?
 - Was it the same as that of the Aboriginal people, if not why not and how did it happen?
8. What happened to the Superannuation contributions of Torres Strait Islander workers?
 - What happened to the wages and savings of Torres Strait Islander workers and families?

Proposed Recommendations

SPECIAL NOTES: These issues and recommendations within the Torres Strait Islander Group need to be considered for all Torres Strait Islanders both on the Mainland and the Homelands. Consideration also needs to be made in respect of the Community within the Northern Peninsular Area.

- A. That the Government holds a TSI Elder's Meeting Forum to discuss the wages and savings accounts of Torres Strait Islander Workers.
- B. The Government undertakes research into the Torres Strait wages and savings and other funds.
- C. That a Torres Strait Islander Researcher be employed/engaged to undertake the research.
- D. That the Government investigate the rights of workers of Agencies such as Islander Industry Board, which were established under this legislation to the under award wages payments.
- E. That the Government investigate and report to the TSI Elders Forum the following:-
 - (a) Torres Strait Fund
 - (b) Post War Reconstruction
 - (c) Rehabilitation Fund
 - (d) Cape York Peninsula Fund
 - (e) Injured Workers Compensation Funds
 - (f) The sale of the 'boats' funds (ie. 'Melbider, DogAI).
- F. That the Government includes in its research and investigations consideration of the affects of the relationship between these issues and recommendations and the migration of Torres Strait Islanders to the Mainland.
- G. That the Government provide quarterly reporting of the research undertaken to the TBRA, NSTSIOL, OTSIA, TSIAB and Torres Strait Islander Community organisations and their networks.

TSRA = Torres Strait Regional Authority

NSTSIOL = National Secretariat of TSI Organisation

OTSIA = Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs

TSIAB = Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board

APPENDIX G.4

Workshop D - Discussion about progressing the Aborigines Welfare Fund

Men's Business Workshop Group

Chaired By: Mr Cecil Fisher

Co-Facilitator: Mr Max Parsons

ISSUE DISCUSSED	COMMENT	PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION
No agreement be reached	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railroaded • \$7.9 million only • Deserve compensation • Is there a further commitment by government after \$7.9 million • Conversation from pound, shilling and pence to current dollars • Money government has taken out plus interest earned • Property, buildings etc • Individual pay-outs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek ministerial clarification of additional funds (\$180 million) • Government pays compensation and interest.
Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer to housing companies set up by ATSIC and Welfare Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elders provide advice to government on housing matters. • Compensation for houses bought with Aboriginal money
Elders Council Governing Body	<p>Number one priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on ATSIC regional boundaries • Peak Body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate with Government re \$7.9million • Negotiate with Mining Bodies • Negotiate on behalf of all Elders • That we have access to the \$7.9 million to fund a working account to further develop the workings of a Elders Council State-wide to conduct further forums/conferences etc for a peak body to overview policy with veto powers etc. • Put to Minister to put up \$'s to conduct further meetings and to cover all costs.
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget young • Young people still have in put into council and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Peoples Forum with endorsement of Elders
What money is Government going to input into this program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax • Deceased Persons • Compensation • What happened to the above monies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money be given back to the people plus compound interest
Equity for all people (Award Wages Payments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people on Church Missions and other areas should not be discriminated against. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$7,000-00 should be given to these people as well.

My Henry Collins (Participating Elder) wanted it noted that "I am finished and refuse to continue to take part, the whole thing is just a sham."

APPENDIX G.5**Workshop E - Discussion about progressing the Aborigines Welfare Fund
Woorabinda Workshop Group**

ISSUES DISCUSSED	PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference on Welfare Funds<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Length of days• Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 days is too short to resolve AWF• Woorabinda to have four standing members at any Forum – 2 women, 2 men (John Munns, Bill Thaiday, Margaret Lawton, Elizabeth Talbot)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is \$7.9 million a true figure• More information on the \$7.9 million is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support recommendations provided by QAILSS• Monies to be paid direct to each family• Monies NOT to be placed into a trust fund• Descendants to receive deceased welfare fund portion• Money to be paid directly to Elders now• Timeframe – 6 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on the \$200,000 monies be sought
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rockhampton and Woorabinda homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compensation for rent (backdated since construction)• Compensation for timber and labour

