

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Public Accounts Committee LA](#)
Subject: RE: Call for Submissions - Inquiry into Local Decision Making
Date: Tuesday, 27 July 2021 11:50:47 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image001.png](#)

Hi

Please find below Central Desert Regional Council's submission to the Public Accounts Committee that is conducting an Inquiry into Local Decision Making (LDM). Our feedback is as follows:

Overall summary

Approach to LDM exacerbates miscommunication of roles of Govt. Representation of "whatever you want to do" confuses roles of Different tiers of Government. Approach needs more honesty up front in terms of options as not doing this leads to disengagement due to differing expectations.

Be clear who consultation is with and when different groups are appropriate, often TO does not represent all people living in a place. Elders are family based and may not include all families. Culture is not fixed. Need different approaches for different groups and more training / qualified people for whole of community. Too often has become a negotiation with a power group - yes this is easier, but is it the intent?

Feedback areas focused on by the Committee:

- 1) the progress, achievements, challenges and future potential of LDM implementation across the Northern Territory

Comments - Challenges

- Absence of genuine engagement of indigenous people usually hurried without any feedback loops – most regional communities experience consultation fatigue as a result of this
- Lack of understanding of historical, cultural & social dynamics including the diversity of indigenous communities throughout Central Australia particularly within a regional context – one size fits all approach
- Ineffective training and support given
- Lack of legitimate governance arrangement and inconsistent definition of expected levels of governance
- Lack of sufficient capacity building within indigenous community organisations
- Power dynamics – lack of equity in power distribution
- Unrealistic goals/outcomes within an under-resourced structure – that is top-down solutions designed outside of the community
- Ignoring lessons learnt from other jurisdictions and countries e.g. New Zealand and Canada
- Siloed approach by government agencies which transfers the risk/burden to indigenous organisations
- Differing government priorities and conflicting policies with legislation e.g. LDM Policy and Local Government Act – future potential of LDM relies on ironing out inconsistencies within policy and ensuring that it is not purely a desktop exercise but

one that genuinely takes into consideration community outcomes.

- Don't call a project LDM when it is really conceived and driven by NTG and all input is centralised (Office of Chief Minister) e.g. Willowra Plan

Comments - progress and achievements

- Pooled funding with increased flexibility in funding arrangements e.g. NIAA
- Whole of government awareness – COAG framework
- Increased participation of indigenous peak bodies

2) how to foster community and leadership interest in and commitment to new LDM agreements

Comments

- Build trust and integrity in the engagement process and ensure shared goals exist
- Leveraging cultural skills and knowledge of indigenous people and community organisations in program delivery
- Clear decision making processes and transparency in conflict resolution within all levels of both government and indigenous communities
- Leverage strong leadership from community elders
- build on existing community organisations e.g. WYDAC & STKIC and governance structures such as Local Authorities, Council and Land Council boards

3) the impact of technology, Treaty, Truth-Telling and Voice on LDM development

Comments

- use of technology and social media can be used to reach/engage all generations if used appropriately in the consultation space
- Treaty, Truth-telling and voice – to be successful requires acknowledgement of what transpired, a jointly agreed negotiation/consultation process, community ownership and genuine clarity about roles and responsibilities

Please let me know if this will suffice and feel free to contact the undersigned if you need to clarify any points raised – thanks

Kind Regards

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Our Vision: Two ways, One Outcome – Indigenous and Non-indigenous people working together

Our Values: Strong and Good Leadership | Teamwork | Accountability | Integrity | Respect

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