

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Fyles to the Minister for Land Resource Management

Water Allocations Plan

1. Would you please advise:
- a. Who decided that water allocation plans should not provide for Strategic Indigenous Reserves?

The decision to not implement a Strategic Indigenous Reserve was made by Cabinet.

- b. When was the decision above made?

The final decision by Cabinet was made in March 2013.

- c. Was there any consultation with the community at Ngukurr prior to the decision being made?

There was no formal consultation with the Ngukurr community. It is important to note that the original Draft Water Allocation Plan (that is prior to August 2012) for the Mataranka Tindal Limestone aquifer did not consider the impact of water extraction on the Ngukurr Community Water supply.

The current Draft Water Allocation Plan for the Mataranka Tindal Limestone Aquifer (that is, post March 2013) will consider the impact of water extraction for agriculture and mining purposes on the Ngukurr Community Water supply as well as consider the impacts of mining.

- d. Was there any consultation with the Members for Arnhem, Daly, Namatjira, and Stuart prior to the decision being made?

The Minister for Land Resource Management consulted with the Members for Arnhem, Daly, Arafura and Stuart on the matter of Strategic Indigenous Reserves prior to the decision being made. At the time of the decision the Member for Namatjira was a member of Cabinet and therefore involved in the decision making process.

- e. Was there any consultation with any other Indigenous organisations, communities, representative groups or individuals prior to the decision being made? If yes, who was consulted?

North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) has been undertaking an advocacy role along with other Indigenous groups around the country in that water allocation plans should provide for a Strategic Indigenous Reserve. Government was aware of the position of NAILSMA at the time of making its decision.

2. Would you please advise:

- a. Who decided that the policy above should be reviewed in three years time?

The decision to review the Strategic Indigenous Reserves policy was made by the Minister for Land Resource Management, in consultation with Cabinet and the Members for Arnhem, Daly, Arafura and Stuart.

- b. Why has a review period of three years been determined?

This review period would satisfy the need for further consultation and to meet water planning deadlines.

- c. When was the decision above made?

During February and March 2013.

- d. Was there any consultation with the community at Ngukurr prior to the decision being made?

There was no formal consultation with the Ngukurr community; however the Member for Arnhem, on behalf of the Ngukurr community, represented their views to the Minister.

- e. Was there any consultation with the Members for Arnhem, Daly, Namatjira, and Stuart prior to the decision being made?

The decision to review the policy for Strategic Indigenous Reserves was made by the Minister, subject to approval by Cabinet, and discussed formally with the Members for Arnhem, Daly, Arafura and Stuart.

- f. Was there any consultation with any other Indigenous organisations, communities, representative groups or individuals prior to the decision being made? If yes, who was consulted?

Refer to the answer to 1 e, above.