

Not relevant



6 Cabinet Notes

Not relevant



602 ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION DIVISION - DPC (Jay Weatherill)
- NOTED

Not relevant



602

CABINET NOTE

TO: THE PREMIER FOR CABINET TO NOTE

RE: ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION DIVISION - DPC

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the structure and role of the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (AARD) within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2004, the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio was transferred from the Department of Families and Communities to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The then Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAARE) was incorporated into a new division within DPC called the Indigenous Affairs and Special Projects Division (IASP).
- 2.2 Upon my appointment as the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, I commissioned a report to ascertain the appropriate administrative 'place' for the portfolio and future structural arrangements.
- 2.3 On consideration of this report and recognising the significant lead role the Division takes in whole of government policy coordination and implementation monitoring it was clear these functions required the authority of a central agency. To this end I elected for the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio to remain within DPC. The division has been renamed the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (AARD) and encompasses all staff from the former IASP and DAARE.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 When I assumed the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio, it seemed an anomaly that the 'Department' of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation was within a Division (Indigenous Affairs and Special Projects) of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
- 3.2 While given a title of 'department' the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio had not administratively been established as a department. In the past it had indeed operated as a division of numerous administrative units such as the departments of Transport and Urban Planning, Administrative and Information Service and Families and Communities. The head of the 'department' also carried the title of chief executive in name only, and had reported through the Chief Executive of the department within which, to all intents and purposes, it was a division.


- 3.3 I commissioned a report to ascertain the appropriate administrative 'place' for the Aboriginal affairs portfolio and future structural arrangements of the Division of Indigenous Affairs and Special Projects. On considering the report, which emphasised the important whole of government coordination and implementation monitoring role of the Division, I elected to retain Aboriginal Affairs in the DPC. In addition, I requested that the structure change to create one division which more fully integrated the former DAARE within IASP, forming the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (AARD).
- 3.4 I also proposed that Target 6.2 (Aboriginal representation in the Public Sector) be transferred to AARD from the Office of Public Employment and that Aboriginal leadership become a focussed initiative of the new Division.
- 3.5 The structural changes included new executive positions of Director, Culture and Heritage and Director, Strategic Policy.
- 3.6 These identified areas of operation will place AARD in a position to pursue this Government's responsibility to Aboriginal South Australians in ensuring agencies meet targets under the South Australian Strategic Plan (SASP) and that agencies deliver coordinated and culturally appropriate service responses to Aboriginal South Australians.
- 3.7 AARD, as the Government's leader in Aboriginal affairs policy and across government coordination and monitoring of progress against key Government targets, is now well placed to coordinate and monitor our progress on SASP Targets.
- 3.8 While AARD still retains, and has a new Director position to lead the important role of the development of Indigenous policy, the new structure also places greater emphasis on the coordination of whole of government service delivery and implementation monitoring and developing meaningful and productive partnerships with Aboriginal communities. This is most vividly demonstrated by the development, for the first time in this State's history, of a South Australian Aboriginal Strategic Plan.
- 3.9 The Strategic Plan is being lead by AARD and involves both State and Australian Government agencies in its development. The Plan will clearly articulate strategies, measures and indicators that will be reported on half yearly.
- 3.10 To further reinforce AARD's role in coordinating and monitoring across government, the Chief Executive of DPC chairs a new Chief Executives Group on Aboriginal Affairs. This Group has a significant role to drive accountability and will be responsible for the following;
 - 3.10.1 Leading a coordinated approach to Aboriginal affairs in South Australia, in collaboration with the efforts of the whole-of-government Aboriginal Task Force.

- 3.10.2 Improving service delivery to Aboriginal people by:
- promoting across-agency collaboration on policy, program implementation and service delivery;
 - removing systemic impediments to improve outcomes;
 - increasing agency understanding of the needs of Aboriginal people;
 - increasing efficiencies in service delivery to Aboriginal people; and
 - identifying and responding to service delivery gaps.
- 3.10.3 Overseeing the relevance of South Australia's Strategic Plan targets and reporting regularly on progress.
- 3.10.4 Ensuring appropriate engagement of the Aboriginal community by member agencies at a strategic and local level.
- 3.10.5 Recommending key strategy documents, including the Aboriginal Strategic Plan, to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation for his approval.
- 3.10.6 Identifying opportunities for South Australian Government-industry partnerships that will generate private sector employment opportunities for Aboriginal South Australians.
- 3.10.7 Overseeing the Reconciliation work of the South Australian Government Reconciliation Reference Committee.
- 3.11 Another important reason for my decision to keep Aboriginal Affairs within the central agency was to reinforce across government and to the community the importance of Aboriginal issues by placing the portfolio within the peak of Government.
- 3.12 As a Division within DPC, AARD is provided with a clear imprimatur and authority for staff to work with, and across, all agencies and all levels of government. Such authority is not always afforded to a line agency, impacting on its ability to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 3.13 AARD's placement within DPC also ensures it is ideally located to negotiate with the Commonwealth with a whole of government view to influence how and where Commonwealth funds are utilised.
- 3.14 The restructure was cost neutral to the agency.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet notes:

- 4.1 The role of the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.



Hon Jay Weatherill MP

MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION

6/14/2006

In Cabinet

11 DEC 2006

