

7 Reports from Ministerial Councils and Cabinet Committees

701 DECISIONS FROM MINISTERIAL COUNCILS' MEETINGS: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS; HOUSING; ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS/HOUSING - 16 JUNE 2006 (Jay Weatherill) - **NOTED**

Not relevant



701

CABINET NOTE

TO: THE PREMIER FOR CABINET TO NOTE

RE: DECISIONS FROM THE NATIONAL MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE MEETINGS - 16 JUNE 2006

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 For Cabinet to note the outcomes and decisions reached at the three ministerial conference meetings held in Sydney on 16 June 2006:

- Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA)
- Housing Ministers' Conference (HMC)
- Joint Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) / Housing Ministers' Conference (HMC)

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 12 June 2006 Cabinet noted the Agendas of three national Ministerial Council meetings that were scheduled to be held on 16 June 2006. Decisions of these meetings are now provided for Cabinet's information.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 MCATSIA Meeting

3.1.1 Item 1 – Review of Resolutions and Actions from Previous Meeting

Ministers noted action taken with respect to Resolutions and Actions of the 16 September 2005 meeting.

3.1.2 Item 2 – Indigenous Housing Investment and its Impact on Community Wellbeing

Ministers held a preliminary discussion on housing issues as preparation for the Joint Meeting with the HMC. The key observations of this discussion, for example the interaction of housing infrastructure and community safety, the need for a coordinated national approach to Indigenous housing and the concept of 'sustainable communities', were reported to the Joint Meeting.

3.1.3 Item 3 – Indigenous Demographic Project

The meeting endorsed the findings of the Indigenous Demographics Issues Discussion Paper. A decision was taken to refer the matter to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), suggesting that the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and Standing Committee for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (SCATSIA) examine the policy implications of the various demographic trends and that COAG address identified data gaps as a national priority. MCATSIA also supported the continuation of work on improving Indigenous data collection and access, which will be undertaken across government and in conjunction with the ABS.

3.1.4 Item 4 – Bringing Them Home Reporting Framework

Ministers noted the findings of a Secretariat-produced baseline report measuring disadvantage suffered by members of the 'stolen generation'; confirmed their ongoing commitment to addressing the needs of Indigenous people who were forcibly removed; agreed to future reporting being integrated with Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) framework reporting; and agreed to inform COAG and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of these decisions and to negotiate the integration of future reporting with OID framework reporting.

3.2 Joint HMC/MCATSIA Meeting

3.2.1 Item 1 – Indigenous Housing Reform and Investment Strategy

Ministers agreed that the Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee would prepare a detailed proposal for an Indigenous Housing Management Improvement System, to be applied by the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments and considered by HMC in September 2006. The proposal will incorporate:

- A management Information Framework
- Standards for delivery of Indigenous housing by all housing bodies, regardless of funding source
- An independent performance monitoring and reporting arrangement, linking funding to achievement of standards
- An Indigenous housing sector adjustment policy

Discussion on the quantum of any new funds will also be held at the September meeting.

3.3 Housing Ministers Conference

3.3.1 Item 3 – National Action on Affordable Housing

Two key items were discussed. Ministers noted that there has been progressive action on affordable housing and agreed to take responsibility for the development of the not-for-profit sector and shared equity models. State and Territory Ministers also agreed to develop options for improving outcomes from Commonwealth Rental Assistance. Ministers agreed that the next HMC meeting will give consideration on scoping for wider Government action, including possible progression to COAG.

3.3.2 Item 4 – Commonwealth State Housing Agreement - Evaluations

As per the requirements of the current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, Ministers agreed to Terms of Reference for an Evaluation of the Agreement to be completed by December 2006. Ministers also agreed to discuss the renegotiation of the next national agreement and the ongoing role of Ministers in negotiations at the next HMC meeting.

3.4 Additional Information to note

The Intergovernmental Summit on Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities, convened by the Australian Government in June 2006, also highlighted affordable and appropriate housing as an important pre-condition to overcoming disadvantage. The outcomes of the Summit are being progressed through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and as such were reported to Cabinet as part of a recent Cabinet Note on the 14 July COAG meeting.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 For Cabinet to note the outcomes and decisions reached from the following Ministerial Council meetings held on 16 June 2006:

- Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.
- Joint Meeting of the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Housing Ministers' Conference.
- Housing Ministers' Conference.

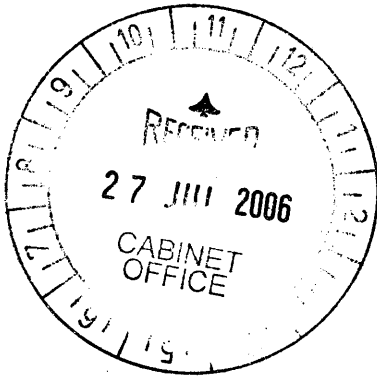
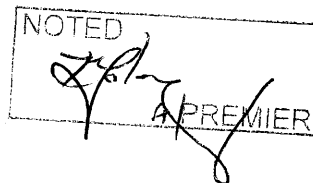


Hon Jay Weatherill MP
MINISTER FOR HOUSING
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND RECONCILIATION

25171 2006

In Cabinet

31 JUL 2006



**MINISTERIAL COUNCIL FOR
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS**

Friday 16th June 2006
Parramatta

RESOLUTIONS

<i>Jurisdiction:</i>	<i>Names:</i>
In attendance	
South Australia	Hon Jay Weatherill (Chair) Peter Buckskin Gaby Hummel
ALGA	Cr. Bill Mitchell John Pritchard
Australian Capital Territory	Hon Jon Stanhope Penelope Layland Sandra Lambert Martin Hehir
Commonwealth	Hon Mal Brough Wayne Gibbons Russell Patterson David Moore Jeff Harmer
New South Wales	Hon Milton Orkopoulos Lindon Coombes Melanie Stewart Peter Swain
New Zealand	Leith Comer
Northern Territory	Hon Eliot McAdam Neil Westbury Mike Dillon Chips Mackinolty
Queensland	Hon John Mickel Dr Warren Hoey Anne Syvret
Tasmania	Hon Lara Giddings Greg Brown Dr Becky Shelley
TSRA	John Kris Wayne See Kee
Victoria	Hon Gavin Jennings Prue Stewart Angela Jurjevic
Western Australia	Hon Sheila McHale Amanda Cattermole Veronica Jeffery
Secretariat	Darren Corr Melanie Smith
Apologies	Premier Paul Lennon (Tasmania) Hon Parekura Horomia (New Zealand)

AGENDA ITEM No: 1

ORIGINATOR: Chair

TITLE: Review of resolutions and actions from the September 16 2005 meeting

RESOLUTION:

That MCATSIA:

1. **Notes** the actions against the resolutions and actions arising from the 16th September 2005 MCATSIA meeting.

AGENDA ITEM No: 2

ORIGINATOR: Chair

TITLE: Indigenous housing investment and its impact on community wellbeing

RESOLUTION:

1. That the MCATSIA Chair would report to the joint Ministerial session regarding a number of observations made during the discussion of this item.

AGENDA ITEM No: 3

ORIGINATOR: Northern Territory

TITLE: Indigenous Demographic Project

RESOLUTIONS:

That MCATSIA:

1. **Notes** that 2007 will be the 40th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum that resulted for the first time in Indigenous Australians securing the right to be counted in the National Census
2. **Endorses** the findings of the Indigenous Demographics Issues Discussion Paper and requests SCATSIA continue to work on the Indigenous-specific implications findings of the policy paper on emerging demographic trends
3. **Recommends** to COAG that SOM, in close collaboration with SCATSIA, be tasked to examine and report back on the whole of government implications of Dr Taylor's report findings, including:
 - (a) The policy and program issues arising from the identified demographic trends of the several spatial categories of the Indigenous population;
 - (b) The specific multilateral policy measures that might be adopted to address these; and
 - (c) The implications of adopting these measures for census, survey and administrative data collections and analysis with a view to ensuring evidence based policy and program interventions and accurate measurement of outcomes in addressing the spatial underpinnings of Indigenous disadvantage.
4. **Requests** COAG to address key data gaps (children with dental caries, school attendance, and hearing impediments in children) as a national priority and endorse the development of multilateral administrative data sharing protocols and mechanisms by MCATSIA.

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5. **Writes** to relevant Ministerial Councils reinforcing the continued importance and relevance of applying the Indigenous identifier and to the ABS requesting amendment of CHINS categories to align with the ASGC to classify settlements with populations over 1500 as urban centres to more accurately reflect the emergence of significant Aboriginal towns in remote Australia.
 6. **Supports:**
 - (a) the continuation and enhancement of social surveys and reporting such as NATSISS, CHINS, NATSIHS by agencies such as ABS, AIHW, AIC, SCRGSP and NCVET, recognising their critical importance in complementing the national Census and ensuring the availability of data at the regional and local levels;
 - (b) the development of new and existing initiatives to enhance the engagement of Indigenous people in data collection and application;
 - (c) that the greatest possible access be made available to current and future data sets;
 - (d) the importance of program and policy evaluation data and building on existing Commonwealth activity to share such data and make it available amongst governments; and
 - (e) the application of an Indigenous identifier for all existing and new administrative data sets.

AGENDA ITEM No: 4

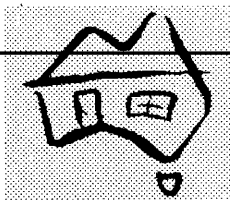
ORIGINATOR: Chair

TITLE: Bringing Them Home reporting framework

RESOLUTIONS:

That MCATSIA:

1. **Notes** the findings of the baseline report based on the OID framework and selected NATSISS and NATSIHS data.
2. **Confirms** its ongoing commitment to address the needs of Indigenous people who were forcibly removed.
3. **Agrees** that future reporting against the social and economic status of Indigenous people forcibly removed be integrated within reporting on the OID framework.
4. **Notes** that jurisdictions will report on the implementation of the recommendations of the *Bringing Them Home* report through their established reporting processes as appropriate.
5. **Agrees** to inform COAG and HREOC of the above recommendations and negotiate the integration of future reporting within the OID indicator framework with the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services.



Housing Ministers' Conference

Housing Ministers' Conference

Joint Session with

Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Friday, 16 June 2006 - Parramatta

FINAL DECISIONS

Attendance

HOUSING MINISTERS

The Hon Jay Weatherill (<i>Chair</i>)	South Australia	Minister for Housing
The Hon Mal Brough	Australian Government	Minister for Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs
The Hon Cherie Burton	New South Wales	Minister for Housing
The Hon Candy Broad	Victoria	Minister for Housing & Local Government
The Hon Robert Swarten	Queensland	Minister for Public Works & Housing
The Hon Sheila McHale	Western Australia	For Minister for Housing & Works
The Hon Lara Giddings	Tasmania	Minister for Health & Human Services
Mr Jon Stanhope	Australian Capital Territory	Chief Minister
The Hon Elliot McAdam	Northern Territory	Minister for Housing
Observers and Visitors The Hon Dover Samuels Cr Ann Bennison Dr Ian Winter Dr Penny Allbon	New Zealand	A/ Minister of Housing Australia Local Government Association Australian Housing Urban Research Institute Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Apologies: The Hon Michelle Roberts (*Western Australia*)
Ms Katy Gallagher (*Australian Capital Territory*)

Attendance

MINISTERS OF MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS (For Joint Session – Agenda Items 1 and 2):

The Hon Jay Weatherill (<i>Chair</i>)	South Australia	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs & Reconciliation
The Hon Mal Brough	Australian Government	Minister for Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs
The Hon Milton Orkopoulos	New South Wales	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The Hon Gavin Jennings	Victoria	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The Hon John Mickel	Queensland	Minister for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Policy
The Hon Sheila McHale	Western Australia	Minister for Indigenous Affairs
The Hon Lara Giddings	Tasmania	For Premier of Tasmania
Mr. Jon Stanhope	Australian Capital Territory	Minister for Arts, Heritage & Indigenous Affairs
The Hon Elliot McAdam	Northern Territory	Minister for Housing
Observers and Non-Voting Members		
Mr. Bill Mitchell Mr. Toshie Kris Mr. Leith Comer	Queensland New Zealand	Australia Local Government Association Torres Strait Regional Authority Chief Executive Te Puni Kokiri

JOINT HMC – MCATSIA MEETING SESSION

Ministers acknowledged the traditional owners of the Parramatta region, the *Darug People*.

Item 1. Indigenous Housing Investment and Reform Strategy

Ministers:

1. Noted the case for urgent action to address Indigenous housing need.
2. Noted the process of identifying commitment to ongoing Indigenous housing sector reform and achievements being undertaken by all jurisdictions.
3. Agreed that the Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee prepare for consideration by HMC at its September 2006 meeting a detailed proposal for an Indigenous Housing Management Improvement System to be applied by the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments incorporating:
 - A. A Management Information Framework including detailed data on:
 - (i) The number, location, ownership and quality of current assets;
 - (ii) Rental settings and collections;
 - (iii) Repair and maintenance needs;
 - (iv) Construction costs per unit;
 - (v) Measures of viability, efficiency and compliance of housing delivery organisations;
 - (vi) Criteria for the measurement of needs; and
 - (vii) Housing allocation processes.
 - B. Standards for the delivery of Indigenous housing by all housing bodies regardless of funding source, which should cover:
 - (i) Corporate Governance;
 - (ii) Financial Performance;
 - (iii) Accountability (including the timely collection of performance data);
 - (iv) Transparency;
 - (v) Property and tenancy management (including expectations of tenants);
 - (vi) Service delivery;
 - (vii) Application of needs criteria; and
 - (viii) Indigenous employment opportunities.
 - C. An independent performance monitoring and reporting arrangement that directly links funding to achievement of the standards.
 - D. An Indigenous housing sector adjustment policy that:
 - (i) Enables orderly transition where Indigenous housing bodies are unable to meet the proposed standards;
 - (ii) Proposes alternative models of housing delivery to meet public housing standards including a shift from community managed Indigenous housing to other social housing models where appropriate; and
 - (iii) Encourages increased opportunities for home ownership by Indigenous Australians.

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4. Noted the need for significant investment in Indigenous housing to meet the estimated need gap of 18,000 social housing dwellings by 2009.
 5. Agreed that options be provided to the Housing Ministers' Conference in September 2006 to allow decisions to be progressed on the quantum of new funds required to address structural reform, unmet need and the allocation of new investment including the identification of appropriate funding distribution mechanisms to fulfil the previous Ministerial commitment for funding to commence in 2007/08.

Item 2. Building a Better Future – Indigenous Housing to 2010

Ministers noted the progress of the mid-term review of *Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010*.

Draft

HOUSING MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Item 3. National Action on Affordable Housing

1. Housing Ministers noted that a broad combination of policy levers is available to positively influence the market and address housing affordability.
2. Housing Ministers agreed that the following are priorities which Housing Ministers can take responsibility for:
 - The development of the not-for-profit housing sector; and
 - The development of shared equity models that can assist households who, because of the boom in house prices, have been excluded from home ownership.
3. State and Territory Ministers agreed to propose options for improving outcomes from Commonwealth Rental Assistance.
4. Housing Ministers agreed to the development of three start-up initiatives, for Ministerial consideration in September 2006, which will deliver increased home ownership and rental opportunities.
5. Housing Ministers agreed to meet in September 2006 to consider a paper scoping a program of wider government action including possible future consideration by COAG

**ACTION ARISING: PRWG – South Australia (2, 4 and 5)
All States and Territories (3)
Secretariat (4)**

Item 4. Commonwealth State Housing Agreement – Evaluation

- 4.1 Ministers endorsed the Terms of Reference of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement Evaluation as set out at Attachment 1 to these Decisions.

ACTION ARISING: Australian Government

- 4.2 Ministers agreed that at the next meeting of HMC in September 2006:
 - Ministers would discuss the scope of the next national agreement (taking account of the work being undertaken under the Framework for National Action on Affordable Housing and the Indigenous Housing Investment and Reform Strategy); and
 - Officials would present, for HMC consideration, a timetable that sets out an ongoing role for Ministers in the negotiation.

ACTION ARISING: PRWG – South Australia

Item 5. Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute – Progress Report

Ministers noted:

1. The relevance of recent AHURI research to the Housing Ministers' resolutions on Indigenous Housing;
2. The contribution to the Framework for National Action on Affordable Housing of the research and early reports of collaborative Research Venture 3 (CRV3) *Housing Affordability for Lower-income Australians*; and
3. That AHURI is working with housing officials by:
 - i. Drawing out the policy implications of four themes of research; - the social housing system, housing assistance and economic and social participation, affordable housing, and Indigenous access to social housing;
 - ii. Establishing a series of policy research roundtables to disseminate and discuss relevant research as it is completed through 2006; and
 - iii. Providing a policy relevant evidence base for the Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee.

ACTION: Nil Arising

Item 6. National Summit on Affordable Housing – Summary of Activities

Ministers noted the activities of the National Summit on Housing Affordability in the context of HMC's own agenda for national action on affordable housing.

ACTION: Nil Arising

Item 7 New Zealand Rural Housing Project

Ministers noted the presentation by Minister Dover Samuels on the New Zealand Rural Housing Program.

ACTION: Nil Arising

Item 8. Next Meeting of HMC

Ministers agreed that the next meeting of HMC would be in Canberra on Friday 29 September 2006 hosted by the Australian Capital Territory.

ACTION: Secretariat
