

Communique - Meeting No. 32/2024

28 and 29 August 2024

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No. 32 on 28-29 August 2024 at Hale House in West Perth.

The nine newly appointed members Ms Bec Blurton, Ms Irene Stainton, Mr Michael Ogilvie, Ms Rani Randall, Ms Jenny Bedford, Mr Damien Parriman, Mr Tony Hansen, Ms Joslyn Eades-Tass and Ms Maureen (MK) Kelly were welcomed to the Council and joined by two reappointed members Ms Gail Beck and Mr Martin Sibasado and two current members Ms Rowena Leslie and Mr Preston Thomas.

An induction day on the 27 August provided members with an introduction to the structure of State Government, the Councils purpose and role, and key strategic documents and policies which underpin Aboriginal Affairs in Western Australia. Presentations were made by the Public Sector Commission, the Aboriginal Engagement Team, the Council of Aboriginal Services Western Australia, the Aboriginal Health Council Western Australia and the Department of Treasury.

The meeting was led by interim Co-Chairs, Ms Gail Beck and Mr Martin Sibasado and included engagements with Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, Hon Sabine Winton MLA, Hon John Carey MLA, Hon Sue Ellery MLC, Hon Don Punch, MLC and Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) Director General Emily Roper.

Members voted in the Co-Chairs, Jenny Bedford and Martin Sibasado.

Members reflected the work led by the previous Council members.

The key items discussed and considered by the Council included:

Ministerial Engagement

The Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA: Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

The Council welcomed back the Hon Tony Buti, Minister for Education, Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. Minister Buti welcomed the new members to Council and provided an update on the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio and priorities, including Native Title and the Productivity Commission Review of National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The Hon. Sabine Winton MLA; Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Community Services

The Council welcomed the Hon Sabine Winton, Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and Community Services. Minister Winton provided an update on Early Childhood Education programs and the over representation of Aboriginal children in out of home care and the important role of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation's in the provision of services.

The Hon. John Carey MLA; Minister for Planning; Lands; Housing; Homelessness

The Council welcomed the Hon John Carey, Minister for Planning; Lands; Housing and Homelessness. Minister Carey provided an update on priorities and programs in his portfolio including the Remote Communities Fund, Social Housing, Aboriginal Housing Employment Strategy and support for housing Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations employees, and Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation programs.

The Council and Minister also discussed growing Aboriginal Community Housing organisations, maintenance of health hardware in remote housing, homelessness and the provision of municipal services in remote communities.

The Hon. Sue Ellery MLC; Minister for Finance; Commerce; Women's Interests

The Council welcomed the Hon Sue Ellery, Minister for Finance; Commerce and Women's Interests. Minister Ellery provided an update to the Council on priorities and programs within her portfolio areas including the Aboriginal Procurement Policy, Remote Aboriginal Communities Plumbing Scheme, Consumer Protection program in Aboriginal communities, grant program for Women's interests and supporting development of the Aboriginal workforce. The Council highlighted their interest in the Aboriginal Procurement Policy.

The Council highlighted for the Minister the positive impact of the Fitzroy Crossing workforce program and suggested that undertaking an impact assessment of the program would be beneficial, particularly if using this approach in other communities.

The Hon. Don Punch MLC; Minister for Regional Development; Disability Services; Fisheries; Seniors and Ageing; Volunteering

The Council welcomed the Hon Don Punch, Minister for Regional Development; Disability Services; Fisheries, Seniors and Ageing and Volunteering. Minister Punch discussed the establishment of the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Body. The Council provided guidance regarding the new Committee highlighting the importance of sharing and including cultural perspectives and two-way learning.

The Council and the Minister also discussed the impacts of over-fishing and the protection of stock, the potential use of Sea and Fresh Water Rangers, economic and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in this sector.

Internal Presentations

Director General, Department of Premier & Cabinet and Deputy Director General, Aboriginal Engagement and Community Policy

Director General Emily Roper welcomed new Council members and acknowledged the work of the previous Council members and discussed the important role of Council in partnering with Government to build on the strengths of Aboriginal people and communities across Western Australia.

AACWA - Strategic Priorities & Culture at the Heart Forum

Members agreed on the priority action to develop and endorse a strategic plan for 2025. A Strategic Planning workshop has been scheduled post the November Council meeting on 21 November 2024.

Council committed to hosting the next Culture at the Heart Forum in the first half of 2025. The Forum will bring together representatives from WA Government Aboriginal advisory groups to support whole-of-government approaches to the Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy and Aboriginal Affairs more broadly.



Ms Jenny Bedford
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA



Mr Martin (Marty) Sibosado
Co-Chairperson
Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA

* Confidential agenda items were not included in this Communique.