

CONFIDENTIAL

CABINET DECISION

NO. 532

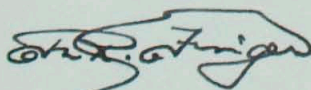
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Submission No.: 457

Title: EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKERS

Cabinet approved the provision of 20 positions of Aboriginal Community Workers within the Department of Community Development on the basis that they are outside the N.T. Public Service and on a contract basis of no longer than three years.

Cabinet asked the Department of Community Development to monitor the programme as being implemented by these positions and to report back to Cabinet on the need for the introduction of a Grants-in-Aid Scheme in the future.



(M.R. FINGER),  
Secretary to Cabinet.  
2 January 1979

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CONFIDENTIALFOR CABINETSUBMISSION NO. 457

Title:	EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKERS
Cabinet Member:	MR JIM ROBERTSON MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Purpose:	Approve:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ creation of a pool of 20 positions of Aboriginal community worker.</li> <li>◦ introduction of Grants-in-Aid scheme to enable Aboriginal communities to employ their own community workers.</li> </ul>
Relation to existing policy:	In line with policy for extension of Community Government to remote communities and the general responsibility of the Northern Territory Government for Aboriginals.
Timing/ legislative priority:	An early decision is required as some funds are already appropriated for 1978/79. No legislation required.
Announcement of decision, tabling, etc.:	Announcement through media release.
Action required before announcement:	NIL
Staffing implications, numbers and costs, etc.:	Twenty (20) positions specifically for Aboriginals are proposed to be funded in the first instance under the NEAT and NESA schemes through the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations and supported by funds already appropriated for the delivery of welfare services to remote areas.
Total cost:	1978/79 - \$100,000; 1979/80 - \$440,000; 1980/81 - \$440,000.

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EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKERS

Comment by  
Director of  
Finance:

The financial impact of this proposal on Part 4  
of the Government's obligations are contained in the  
cost-benefit analysis in Departmental Memorandum  
12/19/70.

The estimates on indicators that the \$10,000,000  
expenditure in 1981-72 will be funded under  
the Part 4 of the schedule supported by funds  
provided for the delivery of welfare services  
to the public. It does not include costs  
of the full level of the in future years will be

The impact on the budget of the  
proposal is contained in the Memorandum  
12/19/70. It is noted by the Commission that  
the proposal is for Aboriginal workers.

Approved/Not Approved

Signed:

Date:

Comment by  
Public Service  
Commissioner:

No objection in principle. The following areas will,  
however, require clarification in determining final  
arrangements.

- Level of positions proposed will require some significant support before recommendation can be made by this office.
- NEAT is a funding arrangement for training at basic levels, would not be expected to cover work at the A5 level. If funding under NEAT establishment action may be unnecessary.
- NESAs is a strategy to encourage employment of Aboriginals, rather than a funding scheme.
- Additional administration requirements may result in additional staff requirements in excess of the pool positions.

~~Approved/Not Approved~~

Cabinet should indicate whether any establishment variations should proceed without compensatory savings.

*G. Gaskill*

(G. GASKILL)

for Public Service Commissioner.

Signed:

Date:

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EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKERS

Comment by  
Under Treasurer:

The central aspect of this proposal as far as its financial implications are concerned is the four fold increase in Expenditure anticipated in 1979/80.

The submission indicates that the \$100,000.00 expenditure in 1978/79 will be funded under the NEAT and NESAs schemes supported by funds provided for the delivery of welfare services to remote areas. It does not indicate where the additional funds in future years will come from.

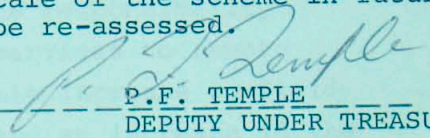
Since the scheme is for the benefit of the Aboriginal population the expansion in future years should be funded by the Commonwealth through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Approved/Not Approved

Signed:

If funds are not forthcoming from this source then the proposed scale of the scheme in future years will need to be re-assessed.

Date:

  
P.F. TEMPLE

DEPUTY UNDER TREASURER

15 December, 1978

Comment by  
Public Service  
Commissioner:

Approved/Not Approved

Signed:

Date:

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THE ISSUES

1. To seek Cabinet approval to the engagement of :-
  - (a) a pool of 20 positions of Aboriginal Community Worker to be engaged in certain aspects of the Department's work;
  - (b) to approve a scheme of Grants-in-Aid to enable Aboriginal communities to employ their own community workers.

BACKGROUND

2. The decision on Cabinet Submission No 307 gives the Department of Community Development the responsibility of developing and delivering welfare services to remote areas. This will involve a considerable increase in field activities by departmental employees and an increase in the number and range of consultations with Aboriginal communities and other Government departments.
3. The Chief Minister, in his letter to Aboriginal communities, has advised them that Aboriginals will be trained and employed to help fulfill the Department's responsibilities in this area.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

4. There have been a number of decisions taken by the Government on other services which are relevant.
5. The total Departmental role in Aboriginal communities covers a variety of functions:-
  - (a) the provision of essential services;
  - (b) the development and delivery of an appropriate range of Child, Family and Community Welfare Services;

- (c) the procurement of responses to and preventative initiatives related to juvenile offenders and the law;
- (d) the development and fostering of Youth, Sport and Recreation programmes;
- (e) the introduction of Community Government scheme;
- (f) the employment and training of Aborigines;
- (g) supporting the establishment of village courts

and constitutes a broad front of community development in the communities.

6. The approach of training and employing local people is an integral part of the provision of welfare services as well as of economic, industrial and social development.
7. At present the Department is gathering profile-information about Aboriginal communities. Consultations have begun with some communities about particular issues. Because of the wide variety of cultural, social and geographic features of these communities, their different developmental levels and the differing approaches and tasks to be undertaken, maximum flexibility is required in the involvement of Aborigines and their relationship with the total Departmental approach.
8. It is proposed that two schemes should be introduced :-
  - (a) a pool of positions for Aboriginal employment;
  - (b) a system of Grants-in-Aid to enable Aboriginal communities to employ their own community workers.
9. Details of the schemes, together with details of the inherent training, supervision and evaluation commitment are shown at Attachment A.



OPTIONS

10. It would be possible to utilise one scheme or the other. However, in either case an imbalance may be created and the aims of stimulating opportunities for Aboriginal appointment on one hand, or self-management on the other, will be stultified.
11. A lesser number than the 20 positions proposed in the Department could be approved. However, this is not favoured as the Department's plans for regionalising employment will not be carried into effect.

PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

12. The implementation of the proposals should be received favourably, particularly having regard to the Northern Territory Government's stated objectives of pursuing employment opportunities for Aboriginals and the principles of involvement of all members of the Northern Territory community in the delivery of welfare services.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

13. \$100,000 has been provided in the financial estimates for 1978/79 for the delivery of welfare services to remote areas. These funds will be adequate together with the use of NEAT and NESA funds for this financial year. The cost of implementation of the full scheme in 1979/80 is estimated at \$440,000.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

14. There will substantial opportunity to increase Aboriginal employment within and outside the Department.

COMMONWEALTH OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

15. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs has indicated that it supports programmes which involves Aboriginals in the delivery of their own welfare services. The initiative will be welcomed by that Department. Close links can be forged with Aboriginal teaching aids and Aboriginal community health workers employed in the Commonwealth Departments of Health and Education respectively.

CO-ORDINATION

16. The submission has the endorsement of the Aboriginal Liaison Unit of the Department of the Chief Minister. The Departments of Health and Education have been informed of the content of the submission and the scheme was discussed with representatives of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner prior to preparation.

LEGISLATION

17. No legislation is required.

PUBLICITY

18. A statement will be prepared for release by the Minister for Community Development.

TIMING

19. An early decision is favoured so that recruitment action can commence.

RECOMMENDATION

20. It is recommended that Cabinet :-

- (a) approve creation of a pool of 20 positions of Aboriginal Community Worker within the Department of Community Development



- (b) approve the introduction of a Grants-in-Aid Scheme to enable Aboriginal communities to employ their own community workers;
- (c) note the proposal for training, supervision and evaluation within the Department and the recurrent staffing commitment.

It is desirable that Aboriginals can be employed on a task-oriented, limited tenure basis in those areas in which they possess, or can readily obtain skills and in which their cultural and linguistic background is relevant.

To allow this kind of employment, a pool of twenty (20) positions of Community Worker will be sought, and appropriately attached to the Community Welfare Division, in which Aboriginals can be employed on various tasks in whichever Division requires them. Many of the staff will be physically located in Regional Offices.

When a Division defines a task for which an Aboriginal is required a position is made available from the pool, the job is defined and the person recruited for the period needed for its completion. When the task is completed, the position returns to the pool for allocation.

This approach has the added benefits of

- (a) employing a greater number of Aboriginals than the normal public service conditions would allow;
- (b) promoting the development of skills among a greater number of Aboriginals, thereby contributing to the overall development process;
- (c) providing the Department and the Northern Territory Government with valuable information on the range of skills and talent available in the community;
- (d) providing Aboriginals with greater knowledge and experience of public sector employment.

POOL OF POSITIONS FOR ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT

At these initial stages, the developmental process in remote communities is readily broken down to a collection of tasks and projects whose overall goals are defined in consultation and aided by information flowing both to and from the communities.

To achieve these tasks it is desirable that Aborigines can be employed on a task-oriented, limited tenure basis in those areas in which they possess, or can readily obtain skills and in which their cultural and linguistic background is relevant.

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As a Division defines a task for which an Aborigine is required a position is made available from the pool, the job is defined and the person recruited for the period needed for its completion. When the task is completed, the position returns to the pool for allocation.

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- (d) providing Aborigines with greater knowledge and experience of public sector employment.



GRANTS-IN-AID SCHEME

In order to achieve the employment of local people and the localisation of responsibility for services and programme development, it is desirable to contract out tasks, projects and programmes to local community organisations.

By the use of a broadened grants-in-aid scheme, community councils and community government organisations could be paid to employ local people for particular purposes. Such grants could become part of community government packages as they are introduced. This sort of scheme is already in limited use for social workers and has been approved in principle for youth workers.

The advantages of this scheme are :-

- (a) the employment of local people in the community;
- (b) it encourages flexibility and the use of appropriate people under local control and selection;
- (c) it encourages development in the community through education and employment opportunities.

The types of tasks envisaged might include anything from surveys of physical or social features, establishment of facilities, ongoing tasks or service delivery to particular community work tasks relating to the community's attitudes, values and decision making process. It is envisaged that as in the case of departmental staff, remuneration would be about the level of A5 in the Administrative structure.

TRAINING, SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Both groups of Aboriginal employees (viz in the limited tenure and the community positions) will require training and orientation to the Department's activities and structure, on-going field supervision and support, whilst departmental staff will require orientation to and familiarisation of Aboriginal cultures.



At the same time oversight of the use of these employees, definition of tasks, conditions of employment etc will need continuing work. At present, structures are being defined in the Department to provide this support and evaluation.

It might be expected that training will be provided through community as well as departmental resources. To this end the NEAT Scheme and the National Employment Strategy for Aboriginals will be used.

At present the Darwin Community College is designing a Certificate in General Studies for Aborigines to bring them to a level suitable for entry to other courses and the Public Service. Discussions with the DCC have commenced and will continue centred around the needs of Aboriginals in community development work and of other departmental employees in dealing with Aboriginal cultures.

It is expected that Aboriginals employed either in the Department on limited tenure or in the community on a long or short term basis will develop interest and skills in particular areas. Arrangements for further education of some of these people will be appropriate.

As the arrangements with Aboriginal communities are consolidated it is possible that particular positions may be best filled by Aboriginals. At the same time it is hoped the above employment strategies will encourage greater entry by Aboriginals to the normal employment opportunities in the Northern Territory Public Service.

The 1978/79 Northern Territory budget for \$100,000 to be spent on welfare services to remote areas. Some of this money would be most appropriately spent on staffing and contracted services geared to either continuing programmes or short term tasks. NEAT and NESAs funds will be used where possible.

There will be a requirement to create two positions in the Community Welfare Division to co-ordinate and supervise training.