



Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendation

233. Aboriginal police aides in Western Australia

*That the question of Aboriginal police aides in Western Australia be given urgent consideration in light of recent developments, including the Police Aides Review (1987), the development of programs for police aides in other jurisdictions and the investigations into the work of police aides reported in the report of Commissioner Dodson and in this National Report and the recommendations of this report. In the consideration of Aboriginal police aides special attention should be given to the wisdom of police aides being engaged to work in communities other than those from which they were recruited.*¹

Background ²	At the time of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) Western Australia had had Aboriginal police aides for years. The scheme was criticised for being ineffective in improving community relations and poorly regarded by the Aboriginal community, partly because aides were often placed outside their own communities and performed traditional policing roles rather than liaison work.
Intent	Urgently consider the roles and status of police aides in Western Australia and the placement of aides within their own communities to improve effectiveness and acceptance.
Responsibility	Western Australian Government.
Key action taken	
2005 Review ³	Victoria Police advised a feasibility study conducted in 2003 indicated that the police aides program in Western Australia was not suitable for use in Victoria, a much smaller state with remoteness less of an issue. Victoria Police commenced their Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Program during the period of the 2005 Review.
2018 Review ⁴	Deloitte concluded that the Western Australian Government had fully implemented Recommendation 233 through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy. The Western Australia Police Force actively recruited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as police officers, Community Relations Officers and Police Cadets. There was no provision that Aboriginal people be used only in their own communities.
Since then	Recommendation 233 is solely the responsibility of the Western Australian Government.

¹ Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Final Report, 1991) vol 4, 161 ('RCIADIC').
² Ibid vol 4, [29.7.18]-[29.7.25].
³ Aboriginal Justice Forum (Vic), Department of Justice (Vic), *Victorian Implementation Review of the Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Review Report, October 2005) vol 1, 396 ('2005 Review').
⁴ Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Review of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Report, August 2018) 467-8 ('2018 Review').

233. Aboriginal police aides in Western Australia

Evidence of impact

Authorising documents	None identified.
Outputs	None identified.
Outcomes	None identified.
Community views	None identified.

Related recommendations

	None identified.
--	------------------

Assessment summary

The Aboriginal Justice Caucus confirmed that Recommendation 233 is not relevant to Victoria.

Bibliography

Aboriginal Justice Forum (Vic), Department of Justice (Vic), *Victorian Implementation Review of the Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Review Report, October 2005)

Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Review of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Report, August 2018)

Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Final Report, 1991)