



Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendation

318. Devolving responsibility for aspects of the CDEP Scheme

That in view of the considerable demands placed on staff of ATSIC by the expansion of the CDEP Scheme, consideration be given to developing a mechanism for devolving to appropriate consenting Aboriginal organisations, in particular resource agencies, responsibility for some aspects of the administrative support of CDEP, including in particular:

- a. Advising communities on the types of work which the community may wish to consider undertaking;*
- b. Advising communities on the potential for incorporating other types of funding for employment and enterprise development into a CDEP project;*
- c. Dissemination of information (collected by ATSIC) on successful schemes;*
- d. Financial and administrative support for management of a scheme; and*
- e. Assisting in the provision or co-ordination of training for participants and managers of CDEP.*

Those Aboriginal organisations should be adequately resourced to carry out the tasks which are devolved to them.¹

Background²	<p>The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) heard criticisms that the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) Scheme lacked adequate support for community managers to make informed decisions about administrative functions and operation of projects in their local community.</p> <p>The RCIADIC noted that in most of the communities it reviewed ‘non-Aboriginal people held the key administrative positions and community members did not possess the skills to administer their CDEP grants themselves.’³ Devolving responsibility for administrative functions from governments to Aboriginal organisations was intended to create a community-centred framework and improve self-determination within the scheme.</p>
Intent	Consider devolving responsibility for administrative support aspects of CDEP to Aboriginal organisations.
Responsibility	The Commonwealth Government.
Key action taken	
2005 Review⁴	The Victorian Government considered Recommendation 318 a Commonwealth Government responsibility.

¹ *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (Final Report, 1991) vol 4, 423 ('RCIADIC').

² *Ibid* vol 4, 433-434.

³ *Ibid* vol 4, 434.

⁴ 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, 154-5 ('2005 Review').

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2018 Review⁵	<p>Deloitte considered Recommendation 318 the sole responsibility of the Commonwealth Government as the CDEP Scheme, and rural and regional policy more broadly, fell under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Deloitte concluded that Recommendation 318 was fully implemented as CDEP scheme responsibilities were delegated to Regional Councils in 1995, ensuring Aboriginal people could be further involved in its implementation and planning.</p> <p>In 2015, the successor of the CDEP, the Community Development Program (CDP) operated with the aim of delivering better opportunities for remote job-seekers and stronger economic and social outcomes in remote Australia. It supported job seekers to build skills, address barriers and contribute to their community through participation in a range of flexible activities. Of the 40 providers delivering services, 26 were Aboriginal organisations.</p>
Since then	<p>A new Remote Jobs and Economic Development Program (RJED) was planned to begin in the second half of 2024, as part of replacing the CDP.⁶ The CDP does not operate in Victoria.</p>

Evidence of impact

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

Related recommendations

2005 Review⁷	<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>That the Department for Victorian Communities:</p> <p>(j) work with the Commonwealth Government on the effective delivery of the Community Development Employment Program across all Aboriginal communities (Recommendations 317- 319), noting the concerns raised by the Koori Business Network; and</p> <p>(o) provide a report to the Aboriginal Justice Forum on (a)-(n).</p> <p>That the Victorian Government continue to implement and monitor Recommendations 317- 319 through any monitoring process established as a consequence of this Review.</p>
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⁵ 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) 645 ('2018 Review').

⁶ Commonwealth of Australia, *Closing the Gap: Commonwealth 2023 Annual Report, Commonwealth 2024 Implementation Plan* (Annual Report, February 2024) ('Closing the Gap: Commonwealth 2023 Annual Report, Commonwealth 2024 Implementation Plan').

⁷ 2005 Review, vol 1, 31-2.

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Assessment summary

The Aboriginal Justice Caucus confirmed that Recommendation 318 was the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government and outside the scope of this project.

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)
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Closing the Gap: Commonwealth 2023 Annual Report, Commonwealth 2024 Implementation Plan* (Annual Report, February 2024)
- 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)