

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT; RACING AND GAMING; MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS AND CITIZENSHIP; GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES; MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE; GOLDFIELDS-ESPERANCE; YOUTH

Our Ref: 01-015098



Hon Tom Stephens MLA
Chairman
Education and Health Standing Committee
Legislative Committee
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Tom

Where From? Where to? A Discussion Paper on Remote Aboriginal Communities

I refer to the Education and Health Standing Committee's first report regarding its Inquiry into Successful Initiatives in Remote Aboriginal Communities.

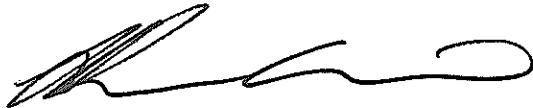
I note that the report concentrates on the basic amenities that are a prerequisite for attaining good health or education outcomes and that the report provides a detailed historical perspective in this regard. However, I do note that the report touches on communities reporting major health concerns of which substance abuse is identified. While substance abuse is not defined, it is reasonable to assume that liquor would be a contributing factor.

In this regard, the recent liquor reforms that came into operation on 7 May 2007 inserted a new provision into the *Liquor Control Act 1988* to enable the Governor to make regulations to restrict the supply, possession and consumption of liquor in communities, including aboriginal communities.

Furthermore, the Director of Liquor Licensing is committed to implementing harm minimisation policies relating to the supply of liquor in areas where harm or ill health is caused to people, or any group of people, due to the use of liquor. In this regard, a number of inquiries have been undertaken in northwest townships such as Port Hedland, Halls Creek and Derby. While these townships are not remote aboriginal communities, they do contain large aboriginal populations and restrictions on the availability of liquor have been implemented in an effort to reduce the incidents of harm caused by liquor consumption.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report before the Committee finalises its findings and recommendations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ljiljanna Ravlich', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich MLC

Minister for Local Government; Racing and Gaming;
Multicultural Interests and Citizenship; Government Enterprises;
Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure;
Goldfields-Esperance; Youth

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