



## Chronology of events relating to the administration of Indigenous affairs: 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007

Date	Event/summary of issue
<p><b>July 2006</b> <i>Bilateral Agreement on Service Delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Western Australia signed.</i></p>	<p>A Bilateral Agreement on Indigenous Affairs was signed by the State of Western Australia and the Australian Government.</p> <p>The Agreement establishes an agreed framework and priorities for intergovernmental cooperation and enhanced effort in Indigenous affairs.<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>1 July 2006</b> <i>Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) programme for 2006-07</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, today officially launched a guide for Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) organisations to improve their capacity to lead, govern and manage their business to deliver outcomes for Indigenous people.</p> <p>The Minister also announced that there would be two hundred and twelve organisations providing the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) for 2006-07.<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>2 July 2006</b> <i>NAIDOC week 2006 commences</i></p>	<p>NAIDOC week commenced today with the theme of <i>Respect the past – Believe in the future.</i></p>

1 The full text of the Bilateral Agreement is available online at: [http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/Publications/Files/Bilateral\\_Agreement.pdf](http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/Publications/Files/Bilateral_Agreement.pdf), accessed 24 January 2008.

2 Andrews, K., (Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations), *CDEP 2006-07 To Build On Success*, Media Release, 1 July 2006.



<p><b>7 July 2006</b> <i>Early childhood focus for Indigenous education</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training has been joined by her state and territory counterparts in agreeing to make early childhood education a priority for young Indigenous Australians.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>At the meeting of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) today, education ministers from across the country endorsed a draft paper titled <i>Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008</i>.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>This paper will be provided to inform the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) of the critical importance of early childhood education in improving the 'school readiness' and successful participation in primary school education.</p>
<p><b>12 July 2006</b> <i>Funding to protect the Indigenous past for future generations</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage today announced that the 2006-2007 Indigenous Heritage Programme will provide \$2.96 million for 50 projects throughout the nation.<sup>5</sup></p>
<p><b>14 July 2006</b> <i>The Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) meet in Canberra</i></p>	<p>COAG have agreed to adopt a collaborative approach to addressing the issues of policing, justice, support and governance in Indigenous communities. The bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories will be the key to ensuring that this proceeds.</p> <p>The Commonwealth has agreed to make available funds of \$103 million over four years to support the bilateral actions.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>A communiqué from COAG states that the law's response to family and community violence and sexual abuse must reflect the seriousness of such crimes.</p> <p>COAG agreed that 'no customary law or cultural practice excuses, justifies, authorises, requires, or lessens the seriousness of violence or sexual abuse. All jurisdictions agree that their laws will reflect this, if necessary by future amendment'.<sup>7</sup></p>

3 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training), *Early childhood focus for Indigenous education*, Media Release, 7 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2006/07/B001070706.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

4 The full text of the report *Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005-2008* can be found online at: [http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/Australian\\_Directions\\_in\\_Indigenous\\_Education\\_2005-2008.pdf](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/Australian_Directions_in_Indigenous_Education_2005-2008.pdf), accessed 24 January 2008.

5 Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage, *Funding protects Indigenous past for future generations*, Media Release C158/06, 12 July 2006.

6 Council of Australian Governments (COAG), *Council of Australian Governments Meeting*, 14 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/index.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.

7 Council of Australian Governments (COAG), *Council of Australian Governments Meeting*, 14 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/index.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.



	<p>COAG also asked the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) to report to the next COAG meeting on the extent to which bail provisions and enforcement take particular account of potential impacts on victims and witnesses in remote communities and to recommend any changes required.</p> <p>The COAG meeting followed the recommendations of the <i>Intergovernmental Summit on Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities</i> held on 26 June 2006.<sup>8</sup></p>
<p><b>14 July 2006</b> <i>National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force established</i></p>	<p>The Australian Crime Commission (ACC) will lead a joint agency intelligence task force to address violence and child abuse in Indigenous communities.</p> <p>The National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force will be resourced by the Commonwealth, States and Territories Governments and will comprise personnel from the ACC, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), every State and Territory Police Force, and the Australian Institute of Criminology.</p> <p>The objectives of the National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the national understanding of the nature and extent of violence and child abuse in remote and urban Indigenous communities.</li> <li>• Providing intelligence and other advice to relevant Commonwealth, state and territory organisations on violence and child abuse in remote and urban Indigenous communities, including organised criminal involvement in drugs, alcohol, pornography and fraud.</li> <li>• Conducting research into the impact of improved intelligence and information coordination and into the identification of good practice in the prevention, detection and responses to violence and child abuse in Indigenous communities.<sup>9</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>18 July 2006</b> <i>The Australian Government responds to the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council Policy Paper</i></p>	<p>The Australian Government's response to a report by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) includes the implementation of initiatives aimed at building partnerships between education sectors to work for the advancement of Indigenous students in higher education.</p>

8 *Crimes Amendment (Bail and Sentencing) Bill 2006 (Cth)*. Explanatory Memorandum, p1.

9 Brough, M., (Minister for Indigenous Affairs) and Ellison, C., (Minister for Justice and Customs), Joint Media Release, *National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Intelligence Task Force*, 14 July 2006, available online at: [http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/indigenous\\_violence\\_and\\_child\\_abuse\\_intelligence\\_14jul06.htm](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/indigenous_violence_and_child_abuse_intelligence_14jul06.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.



	The Minister for Education, Science and Training launched the Council's policy paper <i>Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education</i> , <sup>10</sup> and announced an immediate \$1.73 million investment to support several key priorities in the Council's paper. <sup>11</sup>
<b>18 July 2006</b> <i>The Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations appoints an Administrator to Mutitjulu</i>	The Australian Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has confirmed that the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations has appointed an administrator to run the Mutitjulu community at Uluru. <sup>12</sup>
<b>19 July 2006</b> <i>ACT Health Minister releases the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Family Wellbeing Plan 2006-2011</i> <sup>13</sup>	The ACT Minister for Health today released the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Family Wellbeing Plan 2006-2011</i> . <sup>14</sup> The ACT <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Family Wellbeing Plan 2006-2011</i> is the ACT's response to the Australian Government's <i>National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (NSFATSIH)</i> (July 2003) requirement that each state and territory jurisdiction develop a local implementation plan. <sup>15</sup>
<b>20 July 2006</b> <i>The Native Title Amendment (Technical Amendments) Act 2007 receives Royal Assent</i>	The <i>Native Title Amendment (Technical Amendments) Act 2007</i> received Royal Assent today. The <i>Technical Amendments Act</i> includes measures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve the workability of the Native Title Act by making a series of minor and technical amendments</li> <li>• make minor amendments to provisions applying to Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) to complement measures in the <i>Native Title Amendment Act 2007</i>, and</li> <li>• partially implement two of the recommendations from the Report on the Structures and Processes of Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PCBs).</li> </ul>

10 The full text of the policy paper *Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education* is available online at: [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/improving\\_indig\\_outcomes.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/publications_resources/profiles/improving_indig_outcomes.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

11 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training), *Supporting Indigenous Higher Education*, Media Release, 18 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2006/07/b002180706.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

12 ABC News Online, *Administrator appointed to 'dysfunctional' Mutitjulu*, 18 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200607/s1689735.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.

13 Gallagher, K., (Minister for Health), *Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Health and Wellbeing*, Media Release, 21 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.asp?section=53&media=1481&id=1481&title=>, accessed 24 January 2008.

14 The full text of the report is available online at: <http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=da&did=10107160>, accessed 24 January 2008.

15 The full text of the report is available online at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-oatsih-pubs-healthstrategy.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.



	<p>Some of the amendments, including those relating to PBC's and NTRBs, came into force the day after Royal Assent. Most of the technical amendments to the <i>Native Title Act</i> will come into effect on 1 September 2007. The delayed commencement of these provisions will ensure all parties are aware of, and take into account, the relevant changes.<sup>16</sup></p>
<p><b>23 July 2006</b>  <i>The New South Wales Government releases its Indigenous child sex abuse report "Breaking The Silence: Creating The Future"</i></p>	<p>The New South Wales Government report into child sexual abuse in Indigenous communities: <i>Breaking the Silence: Creating the Future. Addressing child sexual assault in Aboriginal communities in New South Wales</i> is released.<sup>17</sup></p> <p>The report reaffirms that the problem of child sexual abuse is not limited to remote communities in the Northern Territory and is a problem that exists in urban and rural locations in New South Wales.</p>
<p><b>25 July 2006</b>  <i>Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme (IYMP) launched in Perth</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Education, Science and Training launches the Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme (IYMP)<sup>18</sup> for Western Australia.</p> <p>The programme is one element of the Australian Government's Indigenous Australians Opportunity and Responsibility commitment, and will provide \$23.1 million over 4 years to enable 600 young people from remote Australia to accept training and employment opportunities that are available in major centres around the country.<sup>19</sup></p>
<p><b>25 July 2006</b>  <i>Australian Prime Minister urges local action on reconciliation</i></p>	<p>The Prime Minister has launched a national program of Reconciliation Action Plans at a function in Melbourne today. Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) are an initiative of Reconciliation Australia that are intended to assist organizations (both governmental, non-government and from the corporate sector) to turn good intentions into actions.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>The overarching objective of all Reconciliation Action Plans is to close the 17-year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. Individual RAPs are a tool for organisations to demonstrate actions they will take to pursue this goal and reconciliation generally.</p>

16 Australian Government, Attorney-Generals Department Website, *Native Title Reform*, available online at: <http://www.ag.gov.au/nativetitlesystemreform>, accessed 24 January 2008.

17 The full text of the report is available online at: <http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/acsat>, accessed 24 January 2008.

18 The full text of the Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme can be found online at: [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous\\_education/programmes\\_funding/programme\\_categories/iymp/default.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/iymp/default.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

19 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training), *Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme (IYMP) launched in Perth*, Media release, 24 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/media/bishop/2006/07/b012240706.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

20 More information on Reconciliation Actions Plans is available online at: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.isp?page=256>, accessed 24 January 2008.



<p><b>25 July 2006</b>  <i>ABSTUDY report released by the Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Education Science and Training last week released the final report of the <i>Review into the impact of ABSTUDY policy changes that came into effect in 2000</i>.<sup>21</sup></p> <p>The report finds that almost the entire decline in Indigenous higher education enrolments in 2000 is accounted for by the decline in numbers commencing study, and that three quarters of this is due to reductions in numbers in enabling (pre degree courses) and diploma courses.<sup>22</sup></p>
<p><b>27 July 2006</b>  <i>The Australian Government announces three new initiatives to improve the health of Indigenous people in the Torres Strait and far North Queensland</i></p>	<p>The Australian Government today announces three new initiatives to improve the health of Indigenous peoples in the Torres Strait and far North Queensland.</p> <p>The initiatives are: The Torres Strait Health Partnership Framework Agreement,<sup>23</sup> signed today by Australian and State health ministers and representatives of the Torres Strait community; a new chronic disease centre on Thursday Island; and an asthma spacer program to improve treatment for Indigenous children.<sup>24</sup></p> <p>The Australian Government has also contributed \$1.25 million to help build the new Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Centre on Thursday Island, which Queensland Health will operate.</p>
<p><b>4 August 2006</b>  <i>Australian Government directs additional funding to early childhood education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</i></p>	<p>Today the Minister for Education, Science and Training, announced that the Australian Government has directed an additional \$5 million in early childhood education to expand initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.<sup>25</sup></p> <p>The extra \$5million funding is available over three years through the Parent School Partnerships Initiative programme.<sup>26</sup></p>

21 The full text of the report, *Review into the impact of ABSTUDY policy changes that came into effect in 2000*, can be found online at: [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research\\_sector/publications\\_resources/profiles/abstudy\\_changes.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/publications_resources/profiles/abstudy_changes.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

22 Department of Education, Science and Training, *Review into the impact of ABSTUDY policy changes that came into effect in 2000*, Abstract, available online at: [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research\\_sector/publications\\_resources/profiles/abstudy\\_changes.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/publications_resources/profiles/abstudy_changes.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

23 Agreements, Treaties and Negotiated Settlements Project, *Torres Strait Health Partnership Framework Agreement*, 25 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.atns.net.au/agreement.asp?EntityID=39>, accessed 24 January 2008.

24 Abbot, T., (Minister for Health and Ageing), *New steps to improve Indigenous health in far north Queensland*, Media Release, 26 July 2006, available online at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/content/health-mediarel-yr2006-ta-abb111.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2006&mt=7>, accessed 24 January 2008.

25 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training), *Strengthen early childhood education for Indigenous students*, Media release, 4 August 2006, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Bishop/2006/08/B001040806.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

26 For more information on the Parent School Partnerships Initiative programme see: [http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/Abled/parent\\_school\\_partnerships.html](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/Abled/parent_school_partnerships.html), accessed 24 January 2008.



<p><b>5 August 2006</b> <i>Indigenous education and training theme for Garma Festival</i></p>	<p>More than 2,000 people have gathered at Gulkula in East Arnhem Land for the eighth annual Garma Festival organised by the Yothu Yindi Foundation. This year's theme is Indigenous education and training.<sup>27</sup></p>
<p><b>8 August 2006</b> <i>International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples</i></p>	<p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner said that today's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, the second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and the impending vote for adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples shows there is growing international recognition of indigenous peoples' human rights.<sup>28</sup></p>
<p><b>9 August 2006</b> <i>Outback Stores formed</i></p>	<p>A new entity – Outback Stores is created. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Indigenous Business Australia (IBA). Outback Stores has been formed to accommodate the Australian Government's recent Budget commitment to spend \$48 million over four years to address ongoing concerns regarding the running of outback stores.</p> <p>The Chairman of IBA will head a Board that includes some of the country's leading former CEOs from the retail and wholesale sectors in a bid to improve and expand the number of remote community stores in Indigenous areas.</p> <p>Community stores have the ability to improve health standards of remote area Indigenous communities by providing good food at affordable prices.<sup>29</sup></p>
<p><b>11 August 2006</b> <i>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner voices concerns about amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976</i></p>	<p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner has expressed concerns about the amendments to the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976</i>, which are currently being debated in the Senate.</p> <p>The Commissioner has urged the government to postpone the passage of the Bill until there is more detail available on the impact of the implementation of the legislation and to allow more time for consultation with landowners in the Northern Territory.<sup>30</sup></p>

27 ABC News Online, *Indigenous education and training theme for Garma Festival*, 5 August 2006, available online at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200608/s1707059.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.

28 Calma, T., (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner), *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples*, Media release, 8 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2006/60\\_06.htm](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2006/60_06.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

29 Australian Government, Indigenous Business Australia, *Outback Stores to unveil high-level board*, Media release, 9 August 2006.

30 Calma, T., (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner), *Postpone the passage of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act Bill*, Media release, 11 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2006/62\\_06.htm](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2006/62_06.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.



	<p>Some of the major amendments being proposed involve: the provision for 99 year leases over land owned by traditional owners;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amendments which break up Land Councils, remove their financial independence (through removal of a statutory funding guarantee), and require them to publicly disclose confidential minutes;</li> <li>• the termination of non-contiguous land claims to the intertidal zone; and</li> <li>• enabling the NT Government to meet its rental and administration costs for community leasing from the Aboriginal Benefits Account.<sup>31</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>15 August 2006</b> <i>Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Indigenous visual arts and craft sector</i></p>	<p>The Minister for the Arts and Sport today announced an Australian Parliamentary inquiry into the Indigenous visual arts and craft sector. The Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee will run the inquiry. The committee will report to Parliament in June 2007.<sup>32</sup></p>
<p><b>17 August 2006</b> <i>The Australian Government passes the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment Bill 2006</i></p>	<p>The <i>Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment Bill 2006</i> was passed today.</p> <p>The Bill will introduce new streamlined procedure for exploration and mining on Aboriginal land contained in the Amendments. The Bill includes a provision that Land Councils will be funded only on their performance and outcomes.</p>
<p><b>21 August 2006</b> <i>Native Title Claims Resolution Review Report Released</i></p>	<p>The Australian Attorney-General today announced details of the Government's reforms to the process of the resolution of native title claims.</p> <p>The move arises from the Government's response to the Native Title Claims Resolution Review, an independent review into the process of resolving native title claims. The independent review was established as part of the Australian Government's package of six inter-related reforms to the native title system announced in September 2005.</p> <p>The Attorney-General today released the report of the review along with the Government's response. The reforms include giving the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) additional powers to more effectively mediate native title matters.</p>

31 Northern Land Council, *NLC calls for ALRA postponement*, Media Release, 4 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.nlc.org.au/html/wht\\_media.html](http://www.nlc.org.au/html/wht_media.html), accessed 29 January 2008.

32 Kemp, R., (Minister for the Arts and Sport), *Inquiry into the Indigenous visual arts sector*, Media Release, 15 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.minister.dcita.gov.au/kemp/media/media\\_releases/inquiry\\_into\\_the\\_indigenous\\_visual\\_arts\\_sector](http://www.minister.dcita.gov.au/kemp/media/media_releases/inquiry_into_the_indigenous_visual_arts_sector), accessed 24 January 2008. Full terms of reference for the inquiry are available online at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ecita\\_ctte/indigenous\\_arts/tor.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ecita_ctte/indigenous_arts/tor.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.





	<p>Amendments to the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> arising from the Review are likely to be introduced later this year, along with legislation which will give effect to other elements of the reforms.<sup>33</sup></p>
<p><b>30 August 2006</b> <i>Australian Government ratifies two Optional Protocols to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</i></p>	<p>The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) has welcomed the announcement that the Australian Government has ratified the two Optional Protocols to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p> <p>Australia's ratification of the Protocols sends a clear signal to the international community about the importance of these principles and the role of international law in protecting children around the world.<sup>34</sup></p> <p>In 2004, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) made a submission on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties.<sup>35</sup></p>
<p><b>19 October 2006</b> <i>Passage of the Australian Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i></p>	<p>The <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i> (CATSI Act) was passed today. When it commences on 1 July 2007, it will replace the <i>Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976</i> (ACA Act).</p> <p>Corporations will have up to two years – the 'transitional period' – to make the necessary changes to comply with the new law.<sup>36</sup></p>
<p><b>27 October 2006</b> <i>The Western Australian Law Reform Commission Report on Aboriginal Customary Laws is launched</i></p>	<p>From December 2000 to October 2006 the Western Australian Law Reform Commission undertook a detailed inquiry into the recognition of Aboriginal law and culture in Western Australia.</p>

- 33 Ruddock, P., (Attorney-General), Media Release 158/2006, *Improving resolution of native title claims*, 21 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Media\\_Releases\\_2006\\_Third\\_Quarter\\_1582006\\_-\\_21\\_August\\_2006\\_-\\_Improving\\_Resolution\\_of\\_Native\\_Title\\_Claims](http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Media_Releases_2006_Third_Quarter_1582006_-_21_August_2006_-_Improving_Resolution_of_Native_Title_Claims), accessed 24 January 2008. Information about other elements of the reforms is available at: <http://www.ag.gov.au/nativetitlesystemreform>. The report and the Government's response are available at: <http://www.ag.gov.au/claimsresolutionreview>, accessed 24 January 2008.
- 34 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *HREOC congratulates government for ratifying children's rights protocols*, Media Release, 30 August 2006, available online at: [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2007/5\\_07.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2007/5_07.html), accessed 24 January 2008.
- 35 A copy of the Commission's submission can be found at: [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/legal/submissions/jskot\\_submission\\_croc\\_optional\\_protocol.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/legal/submissions/jskot_submission_croc_optional_protocol.html), accessed 24 January 2008.
- 36 Australian Government, Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations website, *The Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*, available online at: [http://www.orac.gov.au/about\\_orac/legislation/reform\\_act.aspx](http://www.orac.gov.au/about_orac/legislation/reform_act.aspx), accessed 15 October 2007.



	<p>Over this period the Commission consulted with Aboriginal people, communities and organisations in all regions of the state. The Commission's inquiry culminated in a comprehensive Final Report setting out 131 recommendations for reform of laws and policies and the practices of government agencies, police and courts.<sup>37</sup></p>
<p><b>8 November 2006</b>  <i>Passage of the Australian Crimes Amendment (Bail and Sentencing) Bill 2006</i></p>	<p>The <i>Australian Crimes Amendment (Bail and Sentencing) Bill 2006</i> amends the sentencing and bail provisions in the <i>Crimes Act 1914</i> in accordance with the decisions made by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on 14 July 2006.<sup>38</sup></p> <p>COAG asked the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) to report to the next COAG meeting on the extent to which bail provisions and enforcement take particular account of potential impacts on victims and witnesses in remote communities and to recommend any changes required. The COAG meeting followed the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Summit on Violence and Child Abuse in Indigenous Communities on 26 June 2006.</p> <p>This bill passed through the Senate with two Government amendments.<sup>39</sup></p>
<p><b>14 November 2006</b>  <i>National Indigenous Youth Leadership Group merged with the National Youth Roundtable</i></p>	<p>The National Indigenous Youth Leadership Group, which was formed in July 2005, has been merged with the National Youth Roundtable (Roundtable). The original focus of the National Indigenous Youth Leadership Group was the promotion of issues of relevance to young Indigenous Australians.<sup>40</sup></p> <p>The Roundtable replaced the Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition, which started with 50 people and decreased to 30 in 2005 when the National Indigenous Youth Leadership Group was formed.</p> <p>The Roundtable is the Australian Government's youth consultation mechanism. It brings together young people aged 15 to 24 years from all areas around Australia and various cultural backgrounds. The Roundtable provides young Australians with the opportunity to meet with the Australian Government to discuss and explore issues that impact on young people.<sup>41</sup></p>

37 Law Reform Commission of Western Australia website, *Aboriginal Customary Laws*, available online at: <http://www.lrc.justice.wa.gov.au/094g.html> accessed 16 October 2007.

38 Council of Australian Governments, *Council of Australian Governments – Communiqué – 14 July 2006*, 14 July 2006, p13.

39 Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Library website, *Bills Digest no. 56 2006–07, Crimes Amendment (Bail and Sentencing) Bill 2006*, available online at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/bd/2006-07/07bd056.htm#Passage> accessed 16 October 2007.

40 Cob, J., (Minister for Community Services), *Labor out of touch on youth leadership*, Media Release, 14 November 2006, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister4.nsf/content/youth\\_leadership\\_14nov06.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister4.nsf/content/youth_leadership_14nov06.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

41 The Australian National Youth Roundtable website, *National Youth Roundtable*, available online at: <http://www.thesource.gov.au/involve/NYR/default.asp> accessed 16 October 2007.



<p><b>28 November 2006</b> <i>Tasmanian Parliament passes the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act 2006</i></p>	<p>All members of both Houses of Parliament in Tasmania pass the <i>Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children Act 2006</i>. The legislation creates a \$5 million fund to provide payments to eligible members of the Stolen Generations of Aboriginals and their children.</p> <p>The Act will become operational on January 15, 2007. An Office of the Stolen Generations Assessor has been established and claims for compensation will be determined by January 2008.<sup>42</sup></p>
<p><b>10 January 2007</b> <i>New Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Unit announced</i></p>	<p>Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service has been appointed as the newest service provider in the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program. It is anticipated that the new service will be in its early operational stages in the coming months.<sup>43</sup></p> <p>The family violence units are established to focus on adults, children and young people who live in regional and remote areas and who are survivor-victims of family violence and sexual abuse or who are at immediate risk of such violence.<sup>44</sup></p> <p>The appointment is part of the Australian Government's commitment to add five units to the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program, which will take the total number of units to 31.</p>
<p><b>23 January 2007</b> <i>Minister signs funding agreement for Australian Training College – Pilbara</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Vocational and Technical Education today signed a \$23.5 million funding agreement to establish the Australian Technical College - Pilbara in Western Australia.</p> <p>This agreement is the 21st Funding Agreement to be signed, providing opportunities for young people to attend Australian Technical Colleges across the nation. It is hoped that 2000 students will study and train in Australian Technical Colleges through 2007.</p> <p>This Australian Technical College is strategically placed in Western Australia's mining heartland and economic engine room to ensure that future skill needs for iconic mining giants such as BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd, Chevron Australia Pty Ltd, Pilbara Iron (Rio Tinto Group) and Woodside Energy Pty Ltd can be met.</p>

42 Tasmanian Government, Office of the Stolen Generations Assessor website, *Tasmania says sorry - Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children*, available online at: <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/stolengeneration/index.html> accessed 15 October 2007.

43 Ruddock, P., (Australian Attorney-General), *New Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Unit announced*, Media Release 004/2007, 10 January 2007, available online at: [http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Media\\_Releases\\_2007\\_First\\_Quarter\\_0042007\\_-\\_10\\_January\\_2007\\_-\\_New\\_family\\_violence\\_prevention\\_legal\\_services\\_unit](http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Media_Releases_2007_First_Quarter_0042007_-_10_January_2007_-_New_family_violence_prevention_legal_services_unit), accessed 24 January 2008.

44 Calma, T. (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner), *Social Justice Commissioner welcomes new Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program announced for Port Lincoln*, Media Release, 12 January 2007, available online at: [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2007/3\\_07.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2007/3_07.html), accessed 24 January 2008.



	<p>These corporations have been instrumental in working with the Australian Government and the local community in establishing the Australian Technical College - Pilbara, which is also uniquely placed to expand the opportunities of many young Indigenous students in this geographically isolated region.</p> <p>Five Australian Technical Colleges opened in 2006, and a further 16, including the Australian Technical College – Pilbara, are expected to open this year.<sup>45</sup></p>
<p><b>25 January 2007</b> <i>Australian of the Year Awards</i></p>	<p>A record number of Indigenous Australians have been recognised for their contributions to the nation in this year's <i>Australian of the Year Awards</i>.</p> <p>High achieving Aboriginal Australians were represented for the first time as finalists in each of the three main categories: <i>Australian of the Year</i> (Raymattja Marika), <i>Senior Australian of the Year</i> (Patricia Anderson), <i>Young Australian of the Year</i> (Tania Major and John Van den Dungen).</p> <p>Queensland's Indigenous youth advocate, Tania Major, was named Young Australian of the Year 2007 for her efforts in addressing the issues involved in the welfare of young Indigenous people.<sup>46</sup></p>
<p><b>25 January 2007</b> <i>New Family Violence Prevention Legal Service for Broken Hill</i></p>	<p>The Australian Government has selected the Far West Community Legal Centre to provide extra legal and support services to Indigenous Australians in the Broken Hill area who are victims of family violence and sexual assault.</p> <p>The new service is expected to start operating in the coming months, after its detailed funding arrangements are finalised.<sup>47</sup></p>
<p><b>13 February 2007</b> <i>New South Wales Police recruits have largest number of Indigenous graduates</i></p>	<p>The largest ever class of NSW Police recruits including 12 of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent will graduate in Goulburn today, boosting the organisation's strength to approximately 15,300 officers.</p>

45 Hardgrave, G., (Australian Minister for Vocational and Technical Education, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister), *Minister signs funding agreement for Australian Training College – Pilbara*, Media Release, 18 January 2007, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Hardgrave/2007/01/H001180107.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

46 Australian of the Year Awards, *Climate Change Crusader named Australian of the Year*, Media Release, 25 January 2007, available online at: <http://www.australianoftheyear.gov.au/pages/page307.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

47 Vaile, M., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Transport and Regional Services, Leader of Nationals) and Cobb, J., (Minister for Community Services), *Australian Government Takes on Family Violence in Broken Hill*, Joint Media Statement, 24 January 2007, available online at: [http://www.ministers.dotars.gov.au/mv/releases/2007/January/008MV\\_2007.htm](http://www.ministers.dotars.gov.au/mv/releases/2007/January/008MV_2007.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.



<p><b>21 February 2007</b> <i>Petrol sniffing campaign expanded</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Health and Ageing and the Minister Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs have announced that the Australian Government have expanded efforts to help Indigenous communities address petrol sniffing and other substance abuse problems.</p> <p>The Government's Central Australian anti-petrol sniffing strategy will be expanded to north of Alice Springs above Ti Tree as well as into Indigenous communities in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia.<sup>48</sup></p>
<p><b>22 February 2007</b> <i>Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Indigenous Trials</i></p>	<p>The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) trials operating in eight Indigenous communities across Australia will be further developed as part of the Governments Blueprint for Action in Indigenous Affairs, the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, announced today.<sup>49</sup></p> <p>'The trials, administered jointly by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, began in 2002 and explored new ways of working to reduce Indigenous disadvantage,' the Minister said.</p> <p>The Minister stressed that commitments made during the trials would be honoured.</p> <p>In the APY Lands, the Department of Health and Ageing will continue to take a lead role in seeing through its commitments and the Department of Education, Science and Training will remain a key player in the Murdi Paaki region.</p> <p>Agreements were made with state and territory governments in 2006 for more place-based approaches in Galiwinku (NT), Alice Springs, Mornington Island (QLD) and Kalumburu (WA). Other sites are being negotiated with state and territory Governments.<sup>50</sup></p>
<p><b>23 February 2007</b> <i>\$36.6 million to improve Indigenous telecommunications</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts today invited remote Indigenous communities to apply for funding under the new \$36.6 million Backing Indigenous Ability telecommunications program.</p>

48 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs) and Abbot, T., (Minister for Health and Ageing), *Petrol-sniffing Campaign Expanded*, Joint Media Release, 20 February 2007, available online at: [http://facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/20feb\\_petrolsniffing.htm](http://facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/20feb_petrolsniffing.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

49 The COAG synopsis report is available online at: [http://www.atsia.gov.au/media/media07/220207\\_coag\\_trials.aspx](http://www.atsia.gov.au/media/media07/220207_coag_trials.aspx) and the individual evaluation of the COAG trials are available online at: <http://www.oipc.gov.au/publications/default.asp> accessed 17 October 2007.

50 More information on the COAG trials is available online at: <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/coag/default.html>, accessed 24 January 2008.



	<p>The Backing Indigenous Ability (BIA) telecommunications program aims to improve access to telecommunications services in regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>The program builds on the Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC) that saw the installation of 216 robust phones throughout 124 Indigenous communities. Remote Indigenous communities are eligible to apply for funding or services, although some funding will be reserved for allocation on a needs basis, for example as part of a Shared Responsibility Agreement.</p> <p>Applications from remote Indigenous communities of any size are invited now.<sup>51</sup></p>
<p><b>7 March 2007</b> <i>Leadership in Indigenous Education recognised</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Education, Science and Training recognises 18 schools for outstanding leadership in Indigenous Education.</p> <p>The Excellence in Leadership in Indigenous Education Awards were established in 2003 as part of the Australian Government's <i>Dare to Lead Project</i>.</p> <p>More than 1,100 Indigenous students across Australia will have benefited from the actions of the 18 award winning schools.</p> <p>An 18-member selection panel consisting of school leaders and Aboriginal educators from different states and territories plus representatives of the four peak principals associations evaluated the applications received from schools nationally.<sup>52</sup></p>
<p><b>13 March 2007</b> <i>New Family Violence Prevention Units in Western Australia</i></p>	<p>Kullarri Indigenous Women's Aboriginal Corporation in Broome and Southern Aboriginal Corporation in Albany were named as the newest service providers for the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Legal Services program.</p> <p>The new units will service communities in the Broome Local Government Area and in the lower great southern region of Western Australia, including Albany, Mt Barker, Katanning, Kojonup, Gnowangerup, Tambellup and Jerramungup.<sup>53</sup></p>

51 Abbot, T., (Minister for Health and Ageing), *\$36.6 million to improve Indigenous telecommunications*, Media Release, 23 February 2007, <http://www.tonyabbott.com.au/news/article.aspx?ID=1509>, accessed 24 January 2008.

52 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women's Issues), *Making a difference for Indigenous students*, Media Release, 8 March 2007, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/media/bishop/2007/03/b0002080307.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

53 Ruddock, P., (Attorney-General), *New Family Violence Prevention Units in WA*, Media Release, 13 March 2007.



<p><b>13 March 2007</b> <i>New Sports Academies for Indigenous Students</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Education, Science and Training today announced that new school-based sports academies for Indigenous students will aim to engage, motivate and lead them into lifelong learning.</p> <p>Thirteen academies drawing students from secondary schools, including remote areas will begin operating in five States and Territories over the next few months. The Programme will deliver 20 academies to 2009.<sup>54</sup></p>
<p><b>13 March 2007</b> <i>Financial commitment from Australian Government to upgrade Alice Springs Town Camps</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs said the original Australian Government commitment of \$20 million announced last year would be increased by up to a further \$50 million to provide for an upgrade of town camps.</p> <p>The funding announced last year included \$10 million to be used to establish two short-term visitor accommodation centres, following approval by the Northern Territory Government of two sites. The bulk of the funding would be used to upgrade existing town camps.<sup>55</sup></p>
<p><b>20 March 2007</b> <i>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance Indigenous employment in the forestry industry</i></p>	<p>A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed today to focus on Indigenous employment and skills shortages in the forest industry, and on opportunities to encourage Indigenous business in regional Australia.<sup>56</sup></p> <p>The MOU aims to advance the implementation of the National Indigenous Forest Strategy.<sup>57</sup></p>
<p><b>21 March 2007</b> <i>Australian Football League (AFL) joins Australian Government to help Indigenous kids participate in sports</i></p>	<p>The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the AFL Chief Executive Officer announced details of a three-year partnership between the Australian Government and the Australian Football League.</p> <p>Through the <i>AFL Club Fostership Program</i>, the AFL will partner with Indigenous communities and, in conjunction with local schools and community organisations, encourage young people into sporting activities.</p>

54 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Women's Issues), *New Sports Academies for Indigenous Students*, Media Release, 13 March 2007, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/media/bishop/2007/03/b001130307.asp>, available 24 January 2008.

55 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Major Howard Government investment in Alice Springs Indigenous Accommodation*, Media Release, 13 March 2007, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/alice\\_springs\\_13mar07.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/alice_springs_13mar07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

56 Abetz, E., (Senator for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation) Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training), Scullion, N., (Minister for Community Services) and Hockey, J., (Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations), *MOU to advance Indigenous employment in the forest industry*, Joint Media Release, 20 March 2007.

57 More information on the National Indigenous Forestry Strategy can be found online at: <http://www.daff.gov.au/forestry/policies/nifs>, accessed 17 October 2007.



	The AFL All Stars Ambassador Program aims to encourage adolescents to complete secondary school or secure a job. <sup>58</sup>
<b>13 April 2007</b> <i>Indigenous Family Income Management (FIM) program opens in Cooktown</i> <sup>59</sup>	<p>The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs today opened a new Family Income Management site in Cooktown, which he said would help Indigenous families better manage their income and create more opportunities for their kids.</p> <p>The Australian Government had committed \$16.6million over four years to support the continuation of the first five sites on Cape York and to fund two new sites, the first of which is Cooktown and to support other family and financial management programmes in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.<sup>60</sup></p>
<b>4 April 2007</b> <i>Launch of 'Close The Gap' campaign for Indigenous health equality within 25 years</i>	<p>Forty of Australia's leading Indigenous and non-Indigenous health peak bodies and human rights organisations joined forces to launch the 'Close the Gap' campaign on Indigenous health inequality.</p> <p>The campaign comes in response to a call from the Social Justice Commissioner to achieve health equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within 25 years.</p>
	'Close the Gap' calls on all levels of Australian government to put in place firm targets, funding and timeframes to address health inequalities, including providing equal access to primary health care for Indigenous Australians within 10 years. <sup>61</sup>

58 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs) and Demetriou, A., (Australian Football League Chief Executive Officer), *AFL stars join Australian Government to help Indigenous kids*, Joint Media Release, 21 March 2007, available online at: [http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/afl\\_partnership\\_21mar07.htm](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/afl_partnership_21mar07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

59 More information on the Indigenous Family Income Management (FIM) Program can be found online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/indigenous/programs-money\\_management.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/indigenous/programs-money_management.htm), accessed 19 October 2007.

60 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Indigenous Family Income Management (FIM) program opens in Cooktown*, Media Release, 13 April 2007, available online at: [http://facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/cooktown\\_13apr07.htm](http://facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/cooktown_13apr07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

61 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Website, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice, *Indigenous Health Campaign*, further information available online at: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social\\_justice/health/index.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/health/index.html), accessed 29 January 2008.





<p><b>30 April 2007</b>  <i>Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse is presented to the Northern Territory Government</i></p>	<p>The Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (<i>Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle</i> “Little Children are Sacred”) is presented to the Northern Territory Government.</p> <p>The report found that child sexual abuse is serious, widespread and often unreported in Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory. It makes 97 recommendations across a variety of areas to address this situation.</p> <p>The first recommendation calls for Aboriginal child sexual abuse in the Northern Territory to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">be designated as an issue of urgent national significance by both the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, and both governments immediately establish a collaborative partnership with a Memorandum of Understanding to specifically address the protection of Aboriginal children from sexual abuse. It is critical that both governments commit to genuine consultation with Aboriginal people in designing initiatives for Aboriginal communities.</p>
<p><b>2 May 2007</b>  <i>Australian Government grants \$83,000 for Indigenous youth leadership in Victoria</i></p>	<p>Indigenous young people from rural and regional Victoria will benefit from an \$83,000 Australian Government initiative, which will see 10 youth leaders hold various activities in their own communities to assist access to mainstream services.<sup>62</sup></p>
<p><b>8 May 2007</b>  <i>Australian Government Budget 2007-2008</i></p>	<p>Funding to Indigenous affairs in the 2007-08 Australian Government Budget will total \$3.5 billion. This includes \$815.7 million in new and extended funding over five years.<sup>63</sup></p> <p>Key measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abolishing the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) and replacing it with the Australian Remote Indigenous Accommodation Programme (ARIA). An additional \$293.6 million will focus on land tenure reform, mainstream public housing and private home ownership.</li> </ul>

62 Australian Government, *\$83,000 in funding for Indigenous youth leadership*, Media Release, 2 May 2007, available online at: [http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/minister5.nsf/content/nyc\\_2may07.htm](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/minister5.nsf/content/nyc_2may07.htm), accessed 29 January 2008.

63 Brough, M. (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), *Budget backs a better future for Indigenous Australians*, Media Release, 8 May 2007, available online at [http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/VIA/budget2007-08/\\$File/07\\_indigenous\\_complete.pdf](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/VIA/budget2007-08/$File/07_indigenous_complete.pdf), accessed 23 January 2008.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of the Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme that offers boarding school places and scholarships to Indigenous young people from remote communities. An additional \$218 million in new funds has been committed over four years.</li> <li>• Additional funding for early childhood development, including home health visits for children aged 0-8 years and better access to child care and playgroups.</li> <li>• Welfare reform measures including more than 800 CDEP positions will be converted into paid employment at a cost of \$97.2 million over four years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9 May 2007</b> <i>First ninety-nine year lease agreed to on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory</i></p>	<p>The first ninety-nine year lease over a township on Aboriginal land was signed today. A historic agreement has been reached with the Mantiyupwi people for the lease of the town of Nguuiu on the Tiwi Islands in the Northern Territory.</p> <p>A package of benefit for Tiwi people includes the construction of 25 additional houses at Nguuiu together with a programme of homes repairs and maintenance, and an additional \$1 million to be invested in health initiatives.</p> <p>The formal grant of the ninety-nine year lease will proceed once the Tiwi Land Council completes the steps set out in the <i>Land Rights Act</i> to confirm the agreement of traditional owners, consult with other community residents and ensure the lease is appropriate.</p> <p>The ninety-nine year lease will be held by a new Commonwealth statutory officer – the Executive Director of Township Leasing which will issue sub leases, collect rent and administer the head lease.<sup>64</sup></p>
<p><b>11 May 2007</b> <i>Tri-party Agreement signed in Hope Vale</i></p>	<p>A tri-party agreement was signed by the Minister for Families, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership. The agreement is based on welfare reform and family income management, housing reform and economic development.</p> <p>A business precinct would be established in Hope Vale and the Australian Government would support local people to establish businesses. Home ownership would now be possible, as Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council have decided to purchase freehold land adjacent to the town.<sup>65</sup></p>

64 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Breakthrough agreement on Aboriginal Land in the NT*, Media Release, 9 May 2007, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/emergency\\_21june07.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/Minister3.nsf/content/emergency_21june07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

65 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Brighter Future for Hope Vale*, Media Release, 11 May 2007, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/hopevale\\_11may07.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/hopevale_11may07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.



<p><b>15 May 2007</b> <i>Reform package announced for Indigenous communities in Western Australia.</i></p>	<p>The West Australian and Australian Governments have announced funding of more than \$112 million for a range of service initiatives for Indigenous people living in Western Australia.</p> <p>The State and Federal funding would address new land tenure options to facilitate individual home ownership; upgrades to community infrastructure and housing to address overcrowding in priority communities; and help provide essential services to remote communities.</p> <p>In the East Kimberley, the initiative package will focus on Kalumburu and add to the State Government's already announced reforms at Halls Creek including additional services for drug and alcohol rehabilitation.<sup>66</sup></p>
<p><b>16 May 2007</b> <i>Australian Government Increase funding to Indigenous Northern Territory Housing</i></p>	<p>The Australian and Northern Territory Governments have agreed on a package of housing and infrastructure initiatives to increase spending on housing for Indigenous people in remote communities in the Northern Territory.</p> <p>The package represents an investment by the Australian Government of \$163.5 million, and includes the \$70 million previously announced by the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for the Alice Springs town camp redevelopment.<sup>67</sup></p>
<p><b>25 May 2007</b> <i>10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bringing them home Report</i></p>	<p>The 1997 <i>Bringing them home</i> report has reunited many Indigenous peoples with their families and created a groundswell of compassion and support but the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the report is a bittersweet one, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner said today.</p> <p>The Commissioner said government services should be expanded to support localised activities tailored to the needs of stolen generation members themselves. He said social and emotional wellbeing remained a great-unmet need in the Indigenous community generally and represented an urgent challenge for all governments to ensure appropriate services were provided.<sup>68</sup></p>

66 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs) and Roberts, M., (Minister for Employment Protection), *\$112 million reforms package announced for Indigenous communities in WA*, Joint Media Release, 15 May 2007, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/reforms\\_package\\_15may07.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/reforms_package_15may07.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

67 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Massive Boost for Indigenous NT Housing by Federal Government*, Media Release, 16 May 2007, available online at: <http://ofw.facsia.gov.au/Internet/Minister3.nsf/print/nt-housing-16may07.htm>, accessed 24 January 2008.

68 Calma, T., (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner), *10th anniversary is 'bittersweet'*, Media Release, 25 May 2007, available online at: [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2007/34\\_07.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2007/34_07.html), accessed 24 January 2008.



<p><b>25 May 2008</b>  <i>Second Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council appointed</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training today appointed the new Chair and 15 members of the second Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC). The inaugural IHEAC commenced in 2005 and retired on 15 March 2007.</p> <p>The new Council will make recommendations for awards under the Indigenous Staff Scholarships programme; develop strategies for increasing the number of, and enhancing the career paths of Indigenous staff employed in higher education institutions; convene an annual Indigenous Higher Education Conference to discuss research and policy directions, sector/institutional achievements, successful innovations and best practice measures; and present the annual Neville Bonner Scholarship and Indigenous Staff Scholarships.<sup>69</sup></p>
<p><b>25 May 2007</b>  <i>Radioactive Waste Facility Site Nomination</i></p>	<p>The Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training has welcomed the decision by the Northern Land Council (NLC) to nominate land on Muckaty Station, 120 kilometres north of Tennant Creek, as a potential site for the Commonwealth radioactive waste management facility.</p> <p>A \$12 million package of benefits will accrue to the traditional owners in the event that the volunteer site proves to be the most suitable site for the facility.<sup>70</sup></p>
<p><b>27 May 2007</b>  <i>40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum</i></p>	<p>27 May 2007 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum in which more than 90 per cent of Australians voted to remove clauses from the Australian Constitution that discriminated against Indigenous Australians.<sup>71</sup></p> <p>The referendum also gave the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws on behalf of Aboriginal people.<sup>72</sup></p> <p>A function at Old Parliament House, hosted by the Australian Prime Minister, to commemorate the Referendum will take the theme of National Reconciliation Week 2007 – <i>Their Spirit Still Shines</i>.<sup>73</sup></p>

69 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women's Issues), *Second Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council*, Media Release, 25 May 2007, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/media/bishop/2007/05/b001250507.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

70 Bishop, J., (Minister for Education, Science and Training, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women's Issues), *Radioactive Waste Facility Site Nomination*, Media Release, 25 May 2007, available online at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/media/bishop/2007/05/b002250507.asp>, accessed 24 January 2008.

71 More information on the 1967 Referendum can be found at: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.isp?page=345>, accessed 22 October 2007.

72 Reconciliation Australia, *National Reconciliation Week 27 May 2007 – 3 June 2007*, available online at: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.isp?page=97>, accessed 22 October 2007.

73 The full text of the address given by Howard, J., (Australian Prime Minister) to the *Their Spirit Still Shines*' function at Old Parliament House on 27 May 2007 is available online at: <http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2007/Speech24341.cfm>, last accessed 22 October 2007.



<p><b>26 May 2007</b> <i>Inaugural Australia wide ceremonies to honour Indigenous war veterans</i></p>	<p>This year the Australian Government will support the first ever Australia-wide ceremonies recognising the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have made, and continue to make, in defence of Australia.</p> <p>The Minister for Veterans' Affairs will lay a wreath at the National Commemoration Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on Sunday 27 May with the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs honouring Indigenous war veterans for the first time.<sup>74</sup></p>
<p><b>1 June 2007</b> <i>Third Report on Indigenous Disadvantage Released</i></p>	<p>The third in the series of reports <i>Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators</i> has been released today. Commissioned by the Council of Australian Governments, the Report's strategic framework helps track over time the extent to which government policies and other actions are making a difference to overcoming Indigenous disadvantage.</p> <p>The results in the third edition show that many Indigenous people have shared in Australia's recent economic prosperity, with improved employment outcomes and higher incomes. There have also been improvements in some education and health outcomes for Indigenous children. However, even where improvements have occurred, Indigenous people continue to do worse than other Australians and many indicators show little or no movement. In some key areas, particularly criminal justice, outcomes for Indigenous people have been deteriorating.</p> <p>The Report is a product of the Review of Government Service Provision. It is overseen by a Steering Committee comprising senior officials from the Australian, State and Territory governments and supported by a secretariat drawn from the Productivity Commission.<sup>75</sup></p>
<p><b>3 June 2007</b> <i>Fifteen-year anniversary of the High Court of Australia's Mabo decision</i></p>	<p>Today marks the fifteen-year anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgment in the Mabo case. The decision, in 1992, recognised the Native Title rights of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>76</sup></p>

74 Billson, B., (Minister for Veterans' Affairs) and Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *Australia wide ceremonies to honour Indigenous veterans*, Joint Media Release, 26 May 2007, available online at: [http://minister.dva.gov.au/media\\_releases/2007/05\\_may/va064.htm](http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2007/05_may/va064.htm), accessed 24 January 2008.

75 Australian Government Productivity Commission, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007*, Media Release, 1 June 2007, available online at: [http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2007/media\\_release](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2007/media_release), accessed 24 January 2008.

76 Reconciliation Australia, *National Reconciliation Week 27 May 2007 – 3 June 2007*, available online at: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.isp?page=97>, accessed 22 October 2007.



<p><b>14 June 2007</b> <i>Social Justice and Native Title Reports 2006 tabled in Parliament</i></p>	<p>The Attorney-General tables the <i>Social Justice Report 2006</i> and the <i>Native Title Report 2006</i> in Parliament. The reports were prepared by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner.</p>
<p><b>19 June 2007</b> <i>From Hand Out to Hand Up: Welfare Reform Design Recommendations</i> launched by the Cape York Institute.</p>	<p>The Cape York Institute launch <i>From Hand Out to Hand Up: Welfare Reform Design Recommendations</i>.<sup>77</sup> The report is based on work with four Cape York communities – Coen, Aurukun, Hopevale and Mossman Gorge. Recommendations in the report are in four areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoring social norms by attaching reciprocity to welfare payments, so that for instance, parents will have to ensure 100% attendance of children at school to receive welfare payments.</li> <li>• Addressing the ‘welfare pedestal’ through changing the incentives so that people are encouraged to come off welfare, or not enter welfare.</li> <li>• Supporting individual engagement in the real economy through converting CDEP positions into real jobs, making communities more business friendly and introducing measures to support mobility for employment and education.</li> <li>• Moving from welfare housing to home ownership.</li> <li>• The report also called for the establishment of a Family Responsibility Commission in the Cape. This would be an administrative, statutory legal agency that would make rulings about whether obligations to children have been breached by carers and if necessary, enforce sanctions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>20 June 2007</b> <i>Report on Parliamentary Inquiry into Indigenous Arts Industry released</i></p>	<p>The Australian Senate released the report of its Inquiry into Australia’s Indigenous visual arts and craft sector which examined and made recommendations on strategies and mechanisms to strengthen the sector. The inquiry commenced in August 2006 and was conducted by the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee. The report contains twenty nine recommendations.<sup>78</sup></p>

77 More information on the *From Hand Out to Hand Up* Report can be accessed online at: <http://www.cyi.org.au/welfarereform.aspx>, accessed 23 January 2008.

78 Parliament of Australia Website: Senate: Indigenous Art – Securing the Future Australia’s Indigenous visual arts and craft sector. 20 June 2007. Full Inquiry Report can be accessed on line at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ecita\\_ctte/indigenous\\_arts/report/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ecita_ctte/indigenous_arts/report/index.htm), accessed 23 January 2008.



**21 June 2007**

*Australian Government launch a response following the release of the Little Children are Sacred Report in the Northern Territory*

The Australian Government today launched a response following the public release of the Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (*Little Children are Sacred*) in the Northern Territory.

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs today announced immediate, broad ranging measures that will be introduced into the Northern Territory. The Australian Government have referred to the situation in the Northern Territory as a crisis.

The emergency measures to protect children being announced today are a first step in communities that will be prescribed by the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

The measures include:

- Introducing widespread alcohol restrictions on Northern Territory Aboriginal land;
- Introducing welfare reforms to allow for quarantining of income;
- Enforcing school attendance by linking income support and family assistance payments to school attendance for all people living on Aboriginal land and providing meals for children at school at parents' cost;
- Introducing compulsory health checks for all Aboriginal children to identify and treat health problems and any effects of abuse;
- Acquiring townships prescribed by the Australian Government through five year leases;
- Increasing policing levels in prescribed communities, including requesting secondments from other jurisdictions to supplement NT resources, funded by the Australian Government;
- Requiring intensified on ground clean up and repair of communities;
- Improving housing and reforming community living arrangements in prescribed communities including the introduction of market based rents and normal tenancy arrangements;
- Banning the possession of X-rated pornography and introducing audits of all publicly funded computers to identify illegal material;
- Scrapping the permit system for common areas, road corridors and airstrips for prescribed communities on Aboriginal land;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving governance by appointing managers of all government business in prescribed communities; and</li> <li>• The Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program will be progressively replaced by jobs, training and mainstream employment programs.<sup>79</sup></li> </ul> <p>A Taskforce is appointed to oversee the national emergency response with Magistrate Sue Gordon as its chair.<sup>80</sup></p>
<p><b>26 June 2007</b>  <i>A human rights based approach is vital to address the challenges in Indigenous communities</i></p>	<p>The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) has welcomed the Australian Government's announcements to act to protect the rights of Indigenous women and children in the Northern Territory and urges it to adopt an approach that is consistent with Australia's international human rights obligations.</p> <p>The complex issues being tackled and the proposed measures to be taken to overcome them raise a host of fundamental human rights principles. It is of the utmost importance to Australia's international reputation, and for community respect for our system of government, that solutions to all aspects of these matters respect the human rights and freedoms of everyone involved.<sup>81</sup></p>

79 Australian Government, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *Northern Territory Emergency Response – Fact Sheet 16*, available online at: [http://www.facs.gov.au/nter/docs/factsheet\\_16.htm](http://www.facs.gov.au/nter/docs/factsheet_16.htm), accessed 29 January 2008.

80 Brough, M., (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs), *National emergency response to protect Aboriginal children in the NT*, Media Release, 21 June 2007, more information about the Emergency Intervention is available online at: <http://www.facs.gov.au/nter/>, accessed 24 January 2008.

81 von Doussa, J., (President and Acting Sex Discrimination Commissioner), Calma, T., (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner), and Innes, G., (Human Rights Commissioner and Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner), *A human rights based approach is vital to address the challenges in Indigenous communities*, Joint Media Release, 26 June 2007, available online at: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media\\_releases/2007/45\\_07.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2007/45_07.html).