

OUR REF: #5421769

22 May 2017

Service Delivery in Indigenous Communities  
Queensland Productivity Commission  
P O Box 12112  
George St QLD 4003

Dear Professor ~~Fredericks,~~ *Fredericks,*

**Cairns Regional Council submission**

On behalf of Council I take this opportunity to thank you for fulfilling the role of Commissioner for this inquiry into what is a very complex matter which is impacting on many far north Queensland communities and Councils.

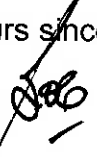
It is important to recognise the flow on effect on surrounding local government areas when activities and services within indigenous communities are underperforming or suffering from lack of appropriate resources. In the case of the Cairns community, this results in persons from Cape communities being forced to relocate either temporarily or permanently to Cairns because of lack of sustainable lifestyle and services in their community. This disconnection from country can cause hardship and result in inappropriate behaviour and lifestyle in Cairns. I would strongly encourage your Inquiry to consider more sustainable frameworks for delivery of administrative, clinical and health services in the community.

I note that Council officers have been working with a variety of State Government agencies to also ensure that state government services that are provided in Cairns are fully developed, such that those persons travelling to Cairns for services are fully assisted with return travel arrangements. Where services have failed to provide robust return to country programs, community members have become dislocated and substandard living arrangements have been adopted including rough sleeping and overcrowding. Particular focus needs to be placed on arrangements in relation to medical procedures and justice court matters.

As you are aware Councils the size of Cairns are significant service providers in the fields of infrastructure including water, sewage, waste and roads. There may therefore be some opportunities for the larger regional Councils to provide guidance and assistance in the fields of hard engineering or indeed in governance services such as Finance and HR for the Indigenous Councils. This may assist in enabling those Councils to operate more effectively and efficiently insitu, by leveraging off assistance from surrounding larger Councils. The presence of a robust highly functional Council "on country" would, I am sure, assist to provide leadership and role modelling to the members of those communities.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Cr/Bob Manning  
Mayor