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This report outlines the consultation process we undertook to prepare the final report and summarises what we heard from stakeholders.

Effective consultation is important, given the wide range of people who are interested in this inquiry and the potential differences in their views. Consultation for this inquiry provided interested parties with a range of ways to contribute.

Consultation enabled stakeholders to put forward their views and experiences and comment on our approach, findings and recommendations. These insights helped us to identify and explore key issues, and strengthen our analysis and advice.

Background

In late 2016, the Queensland Treasurer directed the Commission to undertake an inquiry into service delivery in discrete and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities and appointed Professor Bronwyn Fredericks as a Commissioner.

Our inquiry team was asked to examine government investments in services delivered to remote and discrete communities to identify what works well, and why. The team has looked at:

- what the Queensland Government currently spends on services and what is delivered
- better ways to deliver existing government services and manage, coordinate and target services
- the best ways to evaluate services delivered in communities.

There are more than 40 discrete communities in Queensland. Aboriginal communities are mainly on Cape York Peninsula, and the Torres Strait Islands.

We developed a consultation strategy to guide the way we would work with stakeholders in this inquiry, and in particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This was due to the wide range of people we knew would be interested in the inquiry, the remoteness of many of the communities, and sensitivities around Indigenous disadvantage.

There are over 40 discrete communities in Queensland, ranging from around 50 people to just over 2,700.
Engagement best practice

Community members know their needs best

Communities have often raised concerns that engagement has been limited to government and researchers informing them, rather than real engagement that empowers communities to find their own solutions. The spectrum of engagement is illustrated below.

Indigenous communities are relationship driven, and their governance is networked and dispersed. Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is most effective where consultation uses existing community leadership. In many communities, established organisations have the authority to consult with government. Real engagement with community leaders ensures that local views are heard, and decisions are made by the people most directly affected by them.

Effective engagement requires ongoing consultation. It needs to provide people with the opportunity to actively participate—from the earliest stage through to evaluation.

Successfully engaging with Indigenous communities requires:

- knowledge and appreciation of Indigenous history, cultures, social dynamics, and the diversity of Indigenous communities
- understanding Indigenous concepts of wellbeing
- clarity by all stakeholders about the purpose and the relevant scale for engagement. This may require multi-layered processes
- long-term relationships of trust, respect and honesty as well as ongoing communication
- effective governance and capacity within the Indigenous community and government
- appropriate timeframes.

Source: Chappell n.d. in Thorpe et al. 2016, pp. 7-8
How did we consult?

The aims of consultation were to:

• support the inquiry process by identifying the full range of policy issues, evidence and views
• allow all interested stakeholders to effectively participate in the inquiry
• ensure the inquiry is appropriately accountable and transparent.

We wanted to hear from a wide variety of people involved in service delivery, including those that are impacted and using services, delivering services and funding services.

The success of this inquiry depended heavily on community residents, leaders and those working in service delivery sharing their experience with us. There were three phases of consultation:

• **Phase 1**—December 2016 to March 2017: inform stakeholders about the inquiry and how to get involved, and include them in determining inquiry scope.
• **Phase 2**—April to June 2017: identify issues and inform the findings and recommendations of the draft report.
• **Phase 3**—October 2017: test the findings and recommendations of the draft report and gather further views and evidence from stakeholders.

Some of the stakeholder groups we identified included:

• community bodies and service providers in communities
• regional bodies representing the collective interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and service providers
• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders
• universities and research organisations
• government agencies, government champions¹, agencies that fund major service delivery programs, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies.

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¹ The Queensland Government champions program brings together CEOs of departments and Ministers to partner with individual communities.
We provided a range of ways for stakeholders to participate

Given the differences across stakeholder groups, we adopted a multi-layered approach to consultation, that included:

- meetings with key stakeholders
- community visits
- written submissions
- roundtables on specific issues
- meeting government champions and briefing government agencies.

We provided regular updates about the inquiry through Indigenous and regional print and radio media outlets, as well as through social media. Regular email updates were sent to the individuals and organisations that registered through our website or that had been identified as service providers and peak bodies.

We also used multiple forms of communication to target content and provide accessibility for all stakeholders, including face-to-face visits, fact sheets, circulars, summary reports, and media information.
How did we receive feedback?

During the inquiry we consulted with more than 500 stakeholders, remote and discrete communities and Indigenous Councils, service providers and government agencies involved in service delivery.

Consultation sessions included:

- visits to and meetings with communities (Aurukun, Cherbourg, Doomadgee, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mornington Island, Mossman Gorge, Palm Island, Torres Strait, Woorabinda and Yarrabah)
- roundtable discussions in Brisbane, Cairns, Cherbourg, Mt Isa, Palm Island and Torres Strait (attended by service providers, peak bodies, land councils, local government and community representatives)
- discussions with Indigenous councils (including meetings with individual councils, mayors, CEOs and the LGAQ Indigenous Leaders Forum)
- meetings with Indigenous leaders from Cape York, Torres Strait and the Gulf
- phone conferencing with the Coen community, Burke Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, and the Australian Government, Yarrabah PBC, Murdi Paaki and regional service providers
- discussions with academic experts in the field of Indigenous affairs
- meetings with service providers including community groups (for example, community justice groups, Family Responsibilities Commission, Aboriginal community controlled organisations, and external government and non-government service providers)
- meetings with key government agencies (including Queensland Treasury, Public Service Commission, and departments of Premier and Cabinet; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; Health; Education and Training; Police; Communities; Child Safety and Disability Services; Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; Housing and Public Works; Queensland Family and Child Commission)
- meetings with advocacy groups and peak bodies (such as Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Inc. and Queensland Council of Social Service, Cape York Land Councils, Cape York Institute, Carpentaria Land Council, Local Government Association of Queensland) meetings and feedback from government champions.

We also received 50 written submissions—29 in response to our initial consultation paper and 21 in response to our draft report.
What we heard

Stakeholders provided evidence and discussed their views on service delivery across many areas and issues. However, much of the feedback centred on key themes related to governance, funding, effectiveness of service delivery and reporting.

Funding

Stakeholders in communities are frustrated that expenditure information is not made available to them:

There appears to be an inherent inability or unwillingness by State and Commonwealth government agencies to provide a breakdown on their investment into each remote Indigenous community in Queensland. If this breakdown can’t be provided, then how can the effectiveness of government-funded programs be measured ... Further, Indigenous councils are concerned about the amount of ‘leakage’ that occurs between the time funding is allocated to the time the service is delivered in community. (Local Government Association of Queensland, sub. 14, p. 5)

Funding is often insufficient to effectively deliver against service agreements:

What can one coordinator seriously do in his/her quest in addressing the over-representation of Indigenous offenders in prison? ... It became impossible to attend court as per service agreement; build community networks; attend all meetings; write pre-sentence and cultural reports for the courts; organise meetings and manage the day to day administrative requirements of the CJG ... What government fails to realise is that in 11 years, cost goes up, price of equipment goes up to fix or replace, insurance goes up. Everything has increased except our funding. (Barambah Local Justice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation sub. 2, p. 5)

Funding is fragmented and inflexible:

... the current processes which require different sources of funding from different state and federal departments, often for the same clients, creates major issues associated with service provision, achievement of the best outcomes, administration and accountability. (Woorabinda Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Health sub. 5, p. 3)

Short-term funding undermines service effectiveness:

Funding opportunities are often designed to be short-term and/or non-recurrent, causing uncertainty about longevity ... (in Palm Island) most services are fly-in fly-out, and are not able to build relationships with or gain a deep understanding of community needs, even though there are community members who are qualified or could be trained to fill those roles. (Amnesty International Australia sub. 13, p. 2)
**Efficiency**

Stakeholders said there is significant waste, with expenditures consumed by excessive administrative and compliance costs, inefficiencies, and sometimes duplication.

We are overburdened with bureaucracy but still suffer poor levels of essential services. (Cloncurry Shire Council sub. DR9, p. 5)

Where dual funding occurs across state and federal programs, it would produce far better outcomes on the ground if the state and federal governments invested up-front in working together to develop and streamline reporting requirements. The failure to do so has significant impacts on productivity and service delivery on the ground. (Torres Strait Island Regional Council sub. 12, p. 39)

... instead of alleviating Indigenous disadvantage, the shared responsibility has led to confusion, cost-shifting and waste in Indigenous program and service delivery. (The Centre for Independent Studies sub. 9, p. 4)

Service delivery in small Indigenous communities is now a very crowded space, and there is over-servicing, duplication, waste and useless service provision in some areas. Even then, often services are so poorly targeted that there remains a high level of unmet need. (Cape York Institute sub. 26, p. 8)

There is a high level of bureaucracy and red tape within the Queensland Government that has brought key community driven initiatives, programs, funding and service deliveries to a grinding halt due to the bureaucracy built within the State structures. ... The Queensland Government needs to seriously consider the removal of the bureaucracy within government that ultimately become blockages to service delivery. (Torres Shire Council sub. DR7, p. 2)
CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Service duplication

Stakeholders said the lack of engagement with communities and coordination of services leads to duplication at all levels of service provision:

Often the first time remote communities are aware a new service has been funded is when the service provider contacts council looking for an office to rent, or when the service provider places an advertisement for personnel in the local paper. This lack of engagement with the council/community at the front end of the funding allocation process creates the ideal setting in which duplication can, and does, occur. For example, Mornington Shire Council has documented 10 separate organisations that have been funded to deliver the same four programs. (Local Government Association of Queensland sub. 14, p. 5)

... programs are delivered in silos and this creates wastes and reduces the investment that could be put into frontline services ... this approach doesn’t allow the adaption of services to meet our needs and directing how and where the funding is spent. (Yarrabah Leaders Forum, sub. DR14, p. 5)

A range of local and visiting agencies funded to deliver different levels of family support, mental health support and youth programs in one discrete community is not efficient and leads to duplication of effort and funding. (Woorabinda Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Health sub. 5, p. 3)

... without whole-of-stakeholder coordination, there is a real risk of funding duplication across government agencies and community project duplications amongst locally based organisations (Torres Strait Regional Authority sub. 22, p. 2)

In Coen, for example, a small community of only around 400 people, there are two primary health care facilities less than 100 metres apart ... That is, there are two separate buildings, each separately staffed, delivering primary health services and using separate patient records in one small community. (Cape York Institute sub. 26, p. 9)
Evaluation

Stakeholders said evaluation is an essential component of service delivery— but the current approach is not working as well as it should.

Inadequate reporting

While issues with evaluation make it difficult to measure outcomes, stakeholders said reporting focuses on the wrong things.

Many program or project evaluations only look at the output level and do not assess the level of benefit to the community, organisation or region.

There is little evidence of either measurement or evaluation of activities being undertaken by stakeholders in the region to determine whether these are having a real impact on the level of disadvantage being experienced or demonstrating a return on investment for funding bodies. (Torres Strait Regional Authority sub. 22, p.3)

Limited transparency

Many stakeholders said they see very little regular compliance reporting from service providers. Stakeholders thought governments were required to ask communities how they perceive service delivery.

What is required is 360 degrees’ evaluation. However, the reality is, government doesn’t want to be evaluated. (Stakeholder meeting, Cherbourg)

While there are some good examples of program evaluation in Queensland, much evaluation work remains secretive.

There is very little evidence available around program evaluation and reporting. When asked, service providers say that “the council or community are not entitled to access this information”—that it is “confidential” and that they are only required to provide this to their funding agency. Government agencies have also been reluctant in the past to provide information about funding levels or real-time data on program progress. (Local Government Association of Queensland sub. 14, p. 40)

Limits of evaluation/risk of misuse

Stakeholders expressed concerns that evaluations can be misused, even when they are rigorously conducted.

The answer to the problems that afflict our children, families and places will not be found even through the most conscientious application of the rhetoric about the need for more rigorous evaluation, application and adoption of ‘what works’ evidence or ‘best practice’ approaches. Indigenous communities are not laboratory environments, and the science of evaluation in such complex settings is not as precise as much of the rhetoric might suggest in such cases, even impact evaluations using the best quasi-experimental design leave themselves open to still be used on the basis of opinion, philosophy or politics. (Cape York Institute sub. 26, p. 23)

There needs to be more independent assessment of reporting and outcomes.

A central independent body to coordinate and oversee evaluation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities... may reduce the evaluation burden on communities (by identifying and avoiding duplication), build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Evaluation capacity, and deliver on promises to co-design evaluations with community and provide feedback about findings. It could also be a mechanism to continuously collect outcome data common to many services and programs, and minimise the data required for individual evaluations. (Anon.)

... an Indigenous Ombudsman Office in Queensland [will] ensure there is an independent umpire to make sure targets and outcomes are met by all stakeholders delivering services in the region. (Torres Strait Regional Authority sub. 22, p. 3)
Specific areas of service delivery

Beyond the broader framework for service delivery, stakeholders raised key issues about land tenure and housing, as well as specific concerns on the delivery of human services.

Land

Stakeholders said land tenure is important.

... appropriate land tenure underpins and enables regional economic growth and community advancement. (LGAQ sub. DR12, p. 14)

A lack of property rights (or the resolution of tenure) causes issues for remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

... land issues are at the root of many social and economic problems in Cape York communities (Cape York Land Council sub. DR13, p. 2).

We already have complex land tenure arrangements in the Torres Strait, and history has shown (as with the unresolved ‘Katter’ Land Holding Act leases) that insufficient processes leave a divisive legacy that can have significant impacts on community wellbeing. (Torres Strait Island Regional Council sub. 12, p. 30)

Ultimately, without a certain and secure land administration framework, Queensland’s discrete Indigenous communities will continue to be reliant on grant funding and external service delivery. (Local Government Association of Queensland sub. 14, p. 35)

The administration of land in communities could be improved and requires reform.

It is clear that the LAS is dysfunctional in Cape York ILGAs and other remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and it lags far behind the standard of LAS services that the rest of Queensland enjoys and depends on to successfully enable social and economic participation. (Cape York Land Council sub. 20, p. 3)

The issue in this instance is not the tenure of the land, but the planning system that governs development of Aboriginal Land Trust owned lands … the Inquiry has identified that statutory plans constrain land. This is an understatement. (HVCAC sub. DR17, p. 2)

... intelligent, targeted and relatively simple actions could achieve significant and effective reforms to make the LAS fit for the purpose of enabling economic and community development and improving service delivery. These reform actions would make processes for securing tenure and using land easier to navigate and free from unnecessary and, in some cases, indigenous (land) specific constraints. (Cape York Land Council sub. DR13, p. 3)

Housing

Stakeholders said significant unmet demand for housing is a concern.

... housing is a basic right, and failure to access safe, accessible and affordable housing risks a range of wellbeing indicators. (QCOS sub. DR11, p. 3)

Homelessness and overcrowding in Yarrabah is at a catastrophic level. Council are only able to house 365 families, while a further 700 families remain homeless. (Yarrabah Council sub. 11, p. 23)

Government was not well positioned to manage tenancies in remote communities.

Call centre staff frequently lack awareness of the existence, location and culture of the Torres Strait. When this lack of cultural awareness is combined with the fact that English is the 2nd or 3rd language of many callers, it makes the system very difficult for community members to navigate.

Tenants frequently report having made multiple reports of maintenance requirements with no feedback or work completed. This in turn impacts on rental collection rates, as tenants cease paying rent with the belief that they are not required to pay rent until maintenance is completed. (Torres Strait Island Regional Council sub. 12, p. 29)
Education and training

NAPLAN results, attendance rates and Year 12 attainment are lower for Indigenous students in remote areas.

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of getting education right.

*Education provides a key pathway to economic opportunities, health and wellbeing and reduced crime.* (CQUniversity sub. 9, p. 3)

*Children in remote and discrete Indigenous communities suffer extreme educational disadvantage ... If a child’s education is poor, their likelihood of achieving an enormous range of positive life outcomes is limited. Conversely, a good education provides a very powerful response to closing the gap.* (Cape York Institute sub. 26, p. 8)

Attracting and retaining the best teachers for remote schools can be challenging. Stakeholders said they:

... desire strong consideration to ensure cultural competency; improve staff broad knowledge around Aboriginal community functionality; need to improve working relationship with all tiers of education to support relevant educational structures that provide intense support to local community teachers and staff ... prepare staff about expectations, values, local trends and/or essential needs including the effect of the environmental disparity that has strong association with a systemic cycle of mental health problems associated with the Doomadgee Aboriginal community. (North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services sub. 23, p. 6)

Unmet special needs make learning difficult.

... there is a large area of service delivery neglect in responding to disabilities and special needs of First Nations people in remote and discrete communities. This neglect has a direct impact on learning opportunities and outcomes, and it is a significant contributor to persistent and exceedingly poor outcomes in terms of crime, incarceration, suicide and education. (Cape York Institute sub. 26, p. 8)

Some of these kids are too stressed to learn. ... It’s like they are cognitively overloaded just dealing with what’s going on at home and in the community. Yet the system doesn’t want to know about that. ... you might get support for Intellectual Impairment, but we don’t even try and grapple with things like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ... the system doesn’t want to hear about it (Nelson et al., 2016, p. 16)

Some noted successes, such as an industry-led VET partnership achieving almost full completion rates.

*This program is an example of what can be achieved when all parties work collaboratively to lift the capacity of the workforce within remote Indigenous communities, and where locals on the ground in each community are at the heart of the decision-making process.* (Local Government Association of Queensland sub. 14, p. 14)
Health and wellbeing

Stakeholders want more information about current health statuses, and the factors that influence them, to improve the health of communities.

Cross-sectoral communication, collaboration and planning is key to ensuring discrete Aboriginal communities have access to adequate levels of service, the most appropriate models of care and that efforts are not unnecessarily duplicated, nor result in a fragmented approach, which can hinder quality patient care pathways. (CheckUP sub. 10, p. 7)

They also indicated that services are not always meeting community need.

... suicide prevention funding which employed staff in Yarrabah was reallocated to Lifeline, and is now absorbed into their overarching funding. Previous local support has been replaced by the 1800 phone number which is insufficient and unacceptable for Yarrabah’s specific and highly acute needs. (Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council sub. 11, p. 10)

In rural areas there is often only one community care provider or residential care facility to choose from and these services are not always culturally appropriate. Many Elders do not want to travel off Country to access aged care supports and in some instances, will forgo care when appropriate options are not available on Country. It is therefore essential that all aged care services practice cultural sensitivity, follow cultural protocol and adopt a collaborative and coordinated community approach to delivering services. (Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia sub. DR6, p. 3)

Frequency of visits by agencies are haphazard at best, which results in residents not understanding what services are available, when they are planned to be in the region to be accessed and where they can find them. There is minimal understanding of what roles these agencies play, including which agency holds accountability for specific issues such as youth crime, homelessness, child welfare etc. ... residents stop engaging with these agencies as they are not considered to be local, reliable or focussed on delivering specific outcomes. (Cloncurry Shire Council sub. DR9, p. 5)

Community safety

Stakeholders indicated community safety efforts could be more preventive and better targeted.

The council, Mayor, Elders and Directors of the Justice Group have all told whoever will listen to please consider extra policing or police support officers from the community who know their own people to assist policing at night when most of the offending occurs and young people walk the streets petrol sniffing, smoking pot or vandalising properties.

When there was community policing in Cherbourg, the crime was low as noted by community elders and majority of the community. (Barambah Local Justice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation sub. 2, p. 4)

And highlighted unmet needs.

Child safety, family violence and women’s support services are consistently mentioned as areas of underservicing in the TSIRC region.

The low levels of service experienced on the ground by our communities indicate a discrepancy between what organisations are funded to provide and what is delivered. (Torres Strait Island Regional Council sub. 12, p. 26).
Decision-making and accountability

Many stakeholders indicated a strong desire for a major shift towards community decision-making and accountability.

Communities seek greater control over their lives.

A key aspiration of the region and its leadership is to work towards achieving regional governance to enable local/regional control and management of all government and non-government services and programmes being delivered in the region. (Torres Strait Regional Authority sub. 22, p. 2)

The aspiration of Yarrabah is to enable the community and individuals to choose and coordinate their own path to empowerment and development. (CQUniversity sub. 7, p. 3)

Woorabinda community members need to be considered best-placed to drive change in their community. This requires a bottom-up approach to accommodate not only meaningful engagement but more importantly, community ownership. Local decision-making, program design, the ability of community to participate in problem-solving, and respect and understanding for local cultural constraints are critical aspects of the process. (The Woorabinda Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Health sub. 5, p. 2)

... any initiative must be owned, managed and controlled by the community – as well as being based in Culture ... too many cultures have been dispossessed ... any initiative must involve a means of ‘reinvesting’ and ‘reconnecting’ communities to their cultural identity. (Gladys Willis, sub. DR2, p. 3)

This will require changes to accountability mechanisms and decision-making powers.

Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage requires a paradigm shift in the approach of government to service delivery in remote Indigenous communities ... For too long, Indigenous communities have been told what is best for them. This disempowers and alienates communities. It is not the basis for a mutually respectful relationship. (Local Government Association of Queensland sub. 14, p. 19)

Consultation in the past has been tokenistic and negotiations need to occur for equal relationships to develop. (Barambah Local Justice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation sub. 2, p. 4)

Governments persist with fly-in, fly-out models of service delivery and centralised decision-making. It is time for this entrenched model to shift ... TSIRC recommends that the Queensland Government establish a whole-of-government approach that gives back decision-making, funds management, service planning and delivery, to the greatest degree possible, the local TSIRC region. (Torres Strait Island Regional Council sub. 12, p. 8 and p. 11)

... the way that services for remote communities are designed and delivered has become too removed from the recipients of those services and has fundamentally disempowered Indigenous community residents by denying their sense of agency in the key decisions that affect them ... Structural and service-delivery reform that prioritises more devolved, community-driven, co-designed service delivery, complemented by economic development [is needed]. (Limerick sub. DR5, p. 1)

... transfer of decision making closer to communities [is] a positive step towards improving service delivery in remote and discrete communities (Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia sub. DR6, p.2)

A place-based approach ... places decision making and accountability in community, ensuring communities develop a shared vision, work together to achieve community and individual outcomes and are collectively responsible for those outcomes. It will be important that this approach works from the strengths of the community, and seeks to build on these to address the challenges. (QCOSS sub. DR11, p.2)

Of particular importance is the provision of a funding pool that can be accessed to support the agreed community vision and plan. ... If communities are truly to have say over their outcomes, they must have a say as to how money is spent. (QCOSS sub. DR11, p. 2)
A focus on implementation

The proposed reforms will fundamentally shift the way communities and government engage and do business. Effective implementation is required to achieve long lasting and sustainable change.

Implementation

Implementing reforms of this scale and importance cannot be undertaken lightly.

The flipping of the agenda to be driven by communities is good in principle. Implementation however, always tends to be the stumbling block. (Turnour sub. DR10, p. 1)

... effective implementation will be a formidable challenge. Indigenous affairs historically been characterised by a lot of public investment and effort in the front end on the design of policy reforms ... there has rarely been an adequate focus on implementation, or ensuring that we have an intelligent system in place for the long term that learns from past mistakes and successes. (Cape York Institute sub. DR15, p. 3)

... to fully consider the recommendations it will be important to ensure that decision makers have a similar depth of knowledge and cultural proficiency. This will also be critical to successful implementation of the proposed reform. (Uniting Care sub. DR4, p. 1)

A commitment to reform

Effective implementation will require real commitment, cooperation and collaboration.

... communities have seen reform come and go, to achieve the buy in, a public and permanent commitment must be made and is required. (QCOSS sub. DR11, p. 2)

There is sure to be significant uncertainty and disruption during the change process and this would only be justified if the new arrangements are sustainable and are maintained over the long term. This would require broad stakeholder support including bi-partisan political support and strong community support. (Yarrabah Leaders Forum, sub. DR14, p. 5)

The Queensland Government therefore must not only commit to achieving these outcomes, but must also commit to recruiting the Commonwealth Government, Local Governments and other relevant parties to also fulfil their role in achieving these outcomes. (Cape York Land Council sub. DR13, p. 5)

Building capacity and capability

Successful reform will require capacity and capability building—as communities, service providers and governments take on new roles and responsibilities.

... assistance to build strong Indigenous governance capacity at the community level is crucial to success ... A targeted government effort to support local governance capacity is required ... (Limerick sub. DR5, p. 3)

... the Queensland Government will need a strong transition plan to ensure skills, knowledge and experience are effectively transferred when decision-making and accountability is placed with communities. ... communities will need continued and sustained support from government during and post transition processes. (Churches of Christ sub. DR8, p. 2).

Many community based organisations and businesses just don’t have the capabilities or capacity to tender and are locked out of what is supposed to be a competitive process. (Turnour sub. DR10, p. 1)

A State-wide skills audit for Indigenous communities including the likes of local indigenous councils, government departments, NGO’s and the business sector for each community should be completed. The data collated from the State-wide skills audit will form the baseline for the training needs over the next 5 years. (Torres Shire Council sub. DR7, p. 5)

Conclusion

The consultation program canvassed a wide range of issues but found many common themes. We heard that service delivery system is not meeting expectations and there is an opportunity to improve. The focus was on how to better design and deliver services and empower communities to achieve better outcomes—and how to implement the necessary structural and policy reform to establish and embed a new approach.