



STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (CHAIR), JONATHAN DAVIS MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), PETER CAIN MLA

**Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Elizabeth Kikkert MLA:

In relation to: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing and Reconciliation Fund.

In hearings, Ms Charles stated that the \$144,000 set aside for the Healing and Restoration Fund in 2020-21 is all for 'establishment' or 'governance' of the fund. The Chief Minister's request for Costing an Election Commitment for this initiative (5 Oct. 2020), however, responds no to the question, 'Has an allowance been made for expenses necessary to support the implementation of this proposal?' Can the minister please explain in detail what this \$144,000 is being used for?

- a. Why was this \$144,000 not included in costings as 'expenses necessary to support the implementation of this proposal'?
- b. The government has committed to \$20 million over ten years in the Healing and Reconciliation Fund. Will any portion of this \$20 million be used for either establishment of the fund or its ongoing governance, and if so, what proportion?
- c. The costing proposal states that determining the best way to administer this fund will be 'a co-design process with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community'. Which organisations and/or individuals are currently involved, and how are they helping to design the governance structure for this fund?

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The \$144,000 is being used to fund a non-ongoing SOG C position in 2021 to assist in establishing the governance and developing the administration of the proposed Healing and Reconciliation Fund.

- a. Election Commitments are costed by the ACT Government (often ACT Treasury) based on any assumptions provided in the election costing template. Following the election, the relevant Directorates work with the Government to review the full scope and intention of the proposal, develop a budget submission and provide advice as to any resources required to deliver the policy. The Directorate-informed proposal is then considered by the Expenditure Review Committee and Cabinet to determine if the requested amount of resourcing is appropriate to deliver the policy.

The ACT Labor costings request stated that "A co-design process with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community will determine the best way to administer the funds" but did not identify a specific allowance for implementation.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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Treasury costings therefore assumed that any administrative expenses associated with administering the Fund would be absorbed by the Community Services Directorate. However, Government subsequently agreed that the Community Services Directorate required a relatively minor amount of resourcing to help to establish the fund.

- b. The proportion of the \$20 million commitment to be used for administration and governance (if any) will be determined as part of the co-design process and development of the appropriate level of administration of a fund of this size.
- c. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body will be involved in scoping the co-design process with the intent that a broad cross-section, of the community will be engaged in the co-design process. As this process has not yet commenced, no organisations are currently involved.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

Date:

2/4/21

By the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA