



STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION
MICHAEL PETERSSON 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 Co-design Network

In hearings, Ms Wood stated that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-design Network began with a consultation regarding adoption or possibly some earlier consultation. In which year did the network have its genesis, and what was the content of its first consultation?

- a. Currently how many members of the network are there?
- b. What is the age range of current members of the network?
- c. In hearings, Ms Wood stated that the government is currently discussing how to bring additional people into the network. Can the minister please provide a summary of these discussions?
- d. In hearings, Ms Wood stated that participants receive small remunerations according to policy. Which policy governs this remuneration, and what are the specific guidelines?
- e. In hearings, Ms Wood stated that the network discusses matters that are both self-generated and raised by the government. Can the minister please provide a summary of both a) self-generated topics that the network has chosen to address and b) topics the government has raised with it?
- f. In hearings, I asked about the network's evaluation of Family Group Conferencing, Ms Wood stated that the network had not engaged in a 'formal evaluation' of FGC. According to the annual report, however, 'the Network has provided input that helped shaped a broad range of policy and practice working including an evaluation of Family Group Conferencing for Child and Youth Protection Services' (p. 224). Can the minister please provide the evaluation of FGC referenced in this passage?

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

1. The Network first met in May 2019. It arose from consultations with members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, as part of the *Early Support* initiative in 2017-18, who identified that Government needed to establish diverse mechanisms to allow people who were not typically involved or engaged in traditional consultations to bring lived experience, service



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user and client perspectives into the design and delivery of human services. The group has continued to inform the *Early Support* initiative. The reference to consultation regarding adoption and permanency related to a specific piece of work in which the network has been engaged. However, it is not accurate that the network emerged from this work. I apologise that this was not clarified earlier.

- a. This question was also answered in QTON-21/26. There are currently nine members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-design Network.
- b. This Question was also answered within QTON-21/28. The ages of people in the Network range from late 20s through to Elders.
- c. Bringing new members into the Network over time is important to ensure diversity of experiences, ages and perspectives. The Network is exploring ways to broaden membership to include young people and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Identification of new members will consider their lived experience, their commitment to work within the agreed ways of working developed by the Network, and their willingness to contribute to co-producing solutions in partnership with key stakeholders, including government.
- d. Network members are remunerated under CSD's Co-production Payment Policy (the Policy). The Policy outlines remuneration for participants in co-production activities. The Policy recognises people's lived experience as expertise and values people's time, effort, and unique contributions in shaping policy and service design.
- e. In 2019-20, the Network prioritised a range of work items aimed at improving operational processes which guide how Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. This has included a focus on improving how CYPS communicates with families. Members worked with the Directorate to rewrite a range of factsheets, guidelines and material to ensure they are user-friendly and provide relevant and easily understood information, such as the *Working Together for Kids* documents. Members also provided advice on internal procedure, such as input to the Cultural Development Training for CYPS staff to ensure it reflects the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members involved with CYPS. Members have also provided specific advice on how data about families in contact with CYPS can be shared sensitively, accessibly, and meaningfully with community members.

The Government brought forward work on a range of items which are aligned with the Network's objective to drive positive change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. All items identified by Government are agreed with the Network prior to discussion. Examples include: participation in community deliberations about the Non-Adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children policy position; advice to inform development of the draft *Best Start for Canberra's Children: First 1000 days*



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strategy; and advice about new and emerging need in in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to inform Government's COVID-19 response.

- f. Network members were consulted by an independent external consultant to provide their perspectives and input into the scope and focus of an evaluation framework for Family Group Conferencing. The Network did not undertake an evaluation of Family Group Conferencing. An evaluation framework was developed by the independent consultant.

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,