Spending on Aboriginal Purposes Not Achieving Results

The Territory Government spends 49.7% of its annual budget on delivering services to Aboriginal recipients according to Budget Papers.¹

The Government spends $19,069 per year per Aboriginal person whereas the rest of the population receives $7,873 worth of Government Services annually.² For every dollar spent on non-indigenous Territorians $2.42 is spent on indigenous Territorians, a ratio of 2.42:1.

“The question that needs to be asked is, 'Where are the results?','” Jodeen Carney said today.

“In the current climate it is now worthwhile to review how the Government spends its money in the area of Aboriginal Service delivery when it can spend so much on a section of the population and see such poor outcomes.

“It is important to remember that these statistics do not include Commonwealth expenditure but I would dare say that the spending practices would be similar from a Commonwealth perspective.

“The Territory Government has used its GST windfall to increase spending in the areas of Health and Education substantially since they came to office but it is clear from the past few weeks in the Territory that those spending practices haven’t made inroads into the endemic problems in the bush.

“Clearly the answer is not more money because it does not change the way that people behave. The extra money for indigenous people has done nothing to protect the women and children that are the victims of these horrendous sexual and physical assaults.

“It is time to revisit the way in which this money is spent and put a wrecking ball through those programs that aren’t working. Surely we can expect more from our tax dollars than we’re getting. I know that services are critically important for the people who live in the bush. At the moment we’re spending the money and we’re not seeing the services improve. This cannot continue.

“We cannot allow cultural sensitivities to diminish the basic human rights of the people in these communities. It is well past time to ensure that the money that’s spent delivers outcomes.”

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¹ Budget Paper No 2 pp 50-51 2006-07 Budget
² Based on the ABS statistic that Aboriginal People are 29% of the Territory Population

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