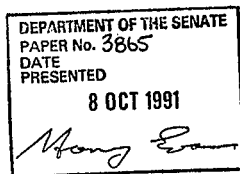


Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia



**ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE**



**Report from the Joint Standing Committee
on Electoral Matters**

September 1991

**Australian Government Publishing Service
Canberra**

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ISBN 0 644 14575 7

Cover: Cape York 1991 by Terry Platt. Completed while he was a student with the Art Department, Bamaga High School.

Printed for AGPS by Better Printing Service, 1 Foster Street, Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Members of the Committee

Chairman:	Hon L J Brereton MP
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Members:	Dr R Catley MP Mr M Cobb MP Mr D Melham MP Senator M Beahan Senator J Faulkner Senator B Harradine Senator R Kemp ¹ Senator C Kernot ²

Members of the Subcommittee

Chairman:	Senator M Beahan
Members:	Mr C Miles MP Senator C Kernot ³

Secretariat

Secretary:	Ms B Forbes
Subcommittee Secretary:	Ms P Tancred Ms F Coates Mrs J Jurek

-
1. Replaced Senator J Short, 24 August 1990
 2. Replaced Senator R Bell, 13 November 1990 who replaced Senator J Jenkins, 1 June 1990
 3. Replaced Senator B Harradine as a member of the Subcommittee, 21 February 1991

35th Parliament

Members of the Committee

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Members:	Mr M Cobb MP ¹ Mr M Lavarch MP ² Mr W Snowdon MP ³ Dr M Wooldridge MP ⁴ Senator M Beahan Senator B Harradine Senator J Jenkins ⁵ Senator C Schacht

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Chairman:	Senator M Beahan
Members:	Mr M Cobb MP Senator B Harradine Senator J Jenkins Senator J Short

Secretariat

Secretary:	Mr A Kelly
Subcommittee Secretary:	Mr M Fetter Mrs H Misa

1. Replaced Mr C Blunt MP, 11 May 1989
2. Replaced Mr G Punch MP, 16 February 1988
3. Replaced Mrs C Jakobsen MP, 21 November 1989
4. Replaced Mr P Shack MP, 25 May 1988
5. Replaced Senator J Coulter, 25 November 1988

Terms of Reference

35th Parliament

In March 1988 the Minister for Home Affairs, Senator the Hon Robert Ray referred *The Aboriginal Electoral Information Service Report of the Review 1987-1988* prepared by the Australian National University's North Australia Research Unit (NARU) to the Committee for inquiry and report. In so doing the Minister noted that 'before proceeding any further with the review of the program the Government would wish to have the benefit of the views of the Committee on the NARU Report and the matters raised in or by it'.

36th Parliament

The inquiry was re-referred in September 1990 with the following revised terms of reference for the Committee to inquire into and report on:

- (i) *The Aboriginal Electoral Information Service Report of the Review 1987-1988* (NARU Report) and issues raised in it or by it;
- (ii) Australian Electoral Commission changes to the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service (AIEIS) program since the NARU Report;
- (iii) the AIEIS program in relation to the conduct of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission regional council elections; and
- (iv) other issues relevant to the effective functioning of the AIEIS.

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Recommendations

Principal Recommendations

The Committee recommends that:

- the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service (AIEIS) be continued as a national special needs program (3.11)
- the name of the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service be changed to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service to reflect more accurately the service's intended target clientele (3.2)
- the Australian Electoral Commission take immediate steps to present policy proposals to relevant state governments for the extension of AIEIS to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in New South Wales, Victoria and those parts of Queensland not already served (3.17)
- the Australian Electoral Commission formulate a policy for the extension of the AIEIS program into more settled areas, including major metropolitan regions, and develop a special urban strategy for the implementation of the program in those areas (3.17)
- the Commonwealth Government fund, as a matter of high priority, the extension of the AIEIS program to those areas not already served (3.17)
- the Australian Electoral Commission formulate an unambiguous policy giving priority to education and information work relative to enrolment work in the AIEIS program and provide a clear statement to both divisional and field staff concerning the priority of each function (3.8)
- the AIEIS program include more information and materials, developed in conjunction with the relevant bodies, on the workings of state and local government and on state and local government elections (3.22)
- basic facts and procedural information on the role of political parties be included in the AIEIS program (3.26)
- there be greater emphasis placed on fostering wider community interest and developing stronger community participation in disseminating electoral education and information via the AIEIS program (6.7)
- senior management of the Australian Electoral Commission develop and disseminate an appropriately informed, active and supportive attitude with regard to the AIEIS program (5.6)

the existing National Coordinator become the coordinator for the Remote Area Strategy and continue being responsible for the coordination of that strategy in all states, except Tasmania, where the program currently operates (5.27)

a new coordinator position be created at the Senior Officer Grade C level, and its responsibilities encompass the AIEIS program in the eastern states, focusing on the new Urban Area Strategy in New South Wales, southern Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria (5.27)

the Australian Electoral Commission take immediate steps to fill all vacant field officer positions in their current locations and undertake to maintain AIEIS staffing at an optimum level (4.4)

Community Electoral Assistant selection occur only as a result of consultation between field officers and the community concerned (4.27)

the Assistant Commissioner, Information and Education report regularly to the Australian Electoral Commissioner on the way in which the AIEIS program is operating on a nationally coordinated basis (5.27)

field officers' monthly reports and any additional relevant management information be forwarded simultaneously from Australian Electoral Officers to the Australian Electoral Commissioner and the relevant program coordinator (5.27)

in its annual report the Australian Electoral Commission report more fully on the AIEIS program with specific reference to staffing, funding and the achievement of objectives (5.27)

Other Recommendations

Funding

The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission explore the possibility of securing funding from state and local government bodies for the development of state and local government components in the AIEIS program (3.22)

the Australian Electoral Commission investigate funding options open to AIEIS and develop a strategy for the exploitation of alternative funding sources, especially the further use of the Community Development Employment Project scheme where appropriate (4.41)

the Australian Electoral Commission make all information concerning AIEIS funding publicly available both within and outside the Commission (4.39)

Staffing

The Committee recommends that:

- the Australian Electoral Commission undertake immediate recruitment action to fill the Western Australia field officer position in the Kimberleys (4.10)
- in the selection of field officers, greater emphasis be placed on the desirability of applicants:
 - having a background or training in, or aptitude for, education; and
 - being willing and capable of spending most of their time in the field (4.18)
- field officers be provided with adequate, suitable and properly equipped office accommodation (4.21)
- the Australian Electoral Commission specify that field officers' resources and facilities are for the AIEIS program and not to be appropriated for other Australian Electoral Commission activities (4.23)
- the Australian Electoral Commission immediately institute policies which ensure fair and consistent treatment for all Community Electoral Assistants and that their value to the Australian Electoral Commission be recognised and promoted throughout the Commission, especially at divisional level (4.31)
- the recruiting of AIEIS officers for urban areas be carried out only after the development of a separate urban strategy which includes selection criteria relevant to urban areas (4.36)

Management

The Committee recommends that:

- in performing their respective roles, especially with regard to the conduct of elections, AIEIS and other Australian Electoral Commission officers develop strategies for benefiting from each other's skills and experience (5.9)
- the new coordinator position be funded using the additional resources sought in the current budget (5.27)
- both coordinators report directly to the Director of Education, Australian Electoral Commission (5.27)

- both coordinators be used as a source of advice for state managers on the best methods of implementing the program in their state including advice on dealing with any problems that may arise (5.27)
- the Australian Electoral Commission recognise the importance of the Education Officer to the AIEIS program and that it ensure the provision of well-planned and high-quality resource material by maintaining in the Education Officer position a permanent officer with appropriate training and skills (4.13)
- the Education Officer report to the Director of Education and provide curriculum materials and support for both the Remote and Urban Area Strategies (5.27)
- the Australian Electoral Commission apply existing performance indicators to the assessment of the AIEIS program and report on them in its Portfolio Performance Statements (5.32)
- twelve months after the tabling of this report, the management of the AIEIS program be subject to an internal evaluation by the Australian Electoral Commission and that the report of that evaluation be referred to the Minister (5.29)
- all policies for the future of AIEIS include an achievable timetable and provide for the program's reduction to a care and maintenance level within a timeframe which allows for the satisfactory realisation of all goals (3.28)
- experience and information gained in the field be used as a basis for reorienting the AIEIS program toward greater emphasis on local priorities thereby making it more relevant to the electoral education and information needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (6.3)

The AIEIS Program at Work

The Committee recommends that:

- the Australian Electoral Commission explore the possibility of developing formal working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups (6.14)
- that AIEIS field officers work with schools and other secondary educational institutions with a view to introducing the AIEIS program to older high school students (6.14)
- in the production of AIEIS curriculum and motivational materials, greater emphasis should be given to the use of local material and content and local input should be solicited (6.18)

audio-visual aids, particularly videos, become a major method of delivery for AIEIS curriculum and motivational materials (6.21)

the Australian Electoral Commission explore all options for the exploitation of the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) as a means of conveying AIEIS material (6.21)

the Australian Electoral Commission immediately institute a thorough review of the AIEIS program's content, its methods of delivery and the materials it uses with a view to making the program accessible to and effective for the widest possible client base (6.24)

information and materials for a parliamentary education component of the AIEIS program be planned and developed in cooperation with the Parliamentary Education Office (3.26)

ATSIC Elections

The Committee recommends that:

before the next ATSIC regional council elections, the Australian Electoral Commission design and conduct pre-election information briefings on the management of elections for all ATSIC regional officers likely to be involved in the elections (7.12)

1 Introduction

Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

1.1 Changes to federal electoral legislation in 1962 gave all enrolled Aborigines the right to vote in national elections. Being able to vote, though, does not necessarily mean that Aboriginal people have been effectively enfranchised. To cast an informed vote, an elector needs a reasonable knowledge of government, elections and the voting system. The Aboriginal Electoral Information Service (AEIS) was set up in 1986 to help Aboriginal people develop those basic electoral skills.

1.2 Several other electoral information and education programs for Aboriginal people have operated since 1962, gradually extending from Western Australia to South Australia and the Northern Territory (NARU Report pp. 8-17). AEIS, run by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), has been operating in all of these areas as well as in Tasmania. In June 1988 the program was introduced to parts of Queensland and its name was changed to the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service (AIEIS) to reflect the fact that it now serviced Torres Strait Islanders as well as Aborigines.

1.3 AIEIS is different from the earlier programs because it aims for Aboriginal and Islander self-management in local electoral matters by giving responsibility for the delivery of electoral information and education to Aboriginal and Islander people themselves. The initial part of the program involves field officers working with Aboriginal and Islander communities in a particular region, introducing the program and negotiating with community councils about the way it will run in the community. The council then selects people from the community to

work on the program. These people, called Community Electoral Assistants (CEAs), are then trained by the field officer as electoral resource people for the rest of the community.

1.4 Accurate estimates of the target audience for the AIEIS program are difficult to make as many Aboriginal and Islander people are reluctant or unable to participate in the national census. However, based on the 1986 census there are at least 227,645 Aboriginal and Islander people in Australia of which 52% (118,962) are 18 years of age and over and therefore eligible to vote. It is not possible to calculate Aboriginal enrolment levels because enrolment data do not include information on ethnicity.

Scope of the Inquiry

1.5 The AEIS program was reviewed by Dr Peter Loveday and a team from the Australian National University's North Australia Research Unit (NARU) in 1987-88. The report of the review, the NARU Report, was referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters of the 35th Parliament by the Minister for Home Affairs, Senator the Hon Robert Ray.

1.6 This first part of the inquiry lapsed as a result of the 1989 pilots dispute and the 1990 federal election.

1.7 The matter was re-referred, with expanded terms of reference, to the Committee of the 36th Parliament by the Minister for Administrative Services, Senator the Hon Nick Bolkus, in September 1990. The terms of reference are provided at page v.

1.8 Between the first referral and the resumption of the inquiry several of the NARU Report's main recommendations were partially implemented by the AEC. Rather than concentrating only on the

recommendations of the NARU Report, the Committee of the 36th Parliament has directed its inquiry at the overall operation of the program.

The NARU Report and the AEC Response to the Report

1.9 The NARU Report made sixteen principal and fourteen supplementary recommendations. The main recommendation was that AEIS should continue but with modifications. These were spelled out in the remaining recommendations which dealt with roll cleansing and maintenance, AEIS staffing, training and administrative arrangements, employing Aboriginal staff at polling places, the content of the program and the materials it uses, and the extension of the program to urban areas and to the states not covered.

1.10 The AEC's main responses to the recommendations of the NARU Report were: the appointment of a National Coordinator for the program; the extension of the program to parts of North Queensland and the Queensland Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) Communities; some effort to keep the program staffed at the suggested levels; and the provision of some updated curriculum materials (Evidence pp. S010-S025).

Early Outcomes of the Inquiry

1.11 The inquiry has been both instructive and productive and it became evident to the Committee very early in the inquiry process that AIEIS is a worthwhile program which should continue.

1.12 Another early impression made on the Committee was that Aboriginal and Islander people are particularly receptive to an electoral information and education program. They are interested in democratic

processes and many are enthusiastic about voting. This, combined with the quality and dedication of AIEIS staff, should have been sufficient to ensure that the program was well on the way to fulfilling its objectives. The Committee soon concluded that this is not the case.

1.13 The work of the Committee has prompted some preliminary effort to address some of the program's deficiencies. As the result of a submission to the inquiry by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the successful role that the AIEIS program played in the ATSIC elections, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon Robert Tickner MP, approached Senator Bolkus about the possible early implementation by the AEC of ATSIC's recommendation that the program be extended to those areas where it does not currently operate. This view was also supported by several other submissions made to the Committee (Evidence pp. S086, S088, S092).

1.14 The AEC, at Senator Bolkus' request, accordingly developed a new policy proposal for extension of the program and extra funding. The proposal received budgetary approval this year and will provide sufficient funding to employ at least two and possibly three more field officers. It is not known where these will operate but, given their high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, Queensland and New South Wales are priority areas and, once the situation in Tasmania has been reassessed, there is the possibility of a field officer being assigned to cover both Tasmania and Victoria.

Conduct of the Inquiry

1.15 In conducting this inquiry, it was particularly important to the Committee that it heard the views of as many Aboriginal and Islander people as possible. Accordingly, the inquiry was initially advertised in both metropolitan and provincial newspapers on 14 and 15 July 1989

and, in the 36th Parliament, on 22 and 23 February and 2 March 1991. The Committee also wrote to many Aboriginal and Islander individuals and organisations seeking submissions.

1.16 The Committee received 38 submissions; a list of these submissions and their authors is at Appendix A and exhibits received are listed at Appendix B. An initial public hearing was held in Canberra on 4 September 1989. Another public hearing, where the Committee heard nine witnesses from the AEC and ATSIC, was held in Canberra on 15 April 1991 (Appendix C). The submissions and public hearing transcripts have been incorporated into separate volumes which are available for inspection at the Committee Secretariat, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library and the National Library of Australia.

1.17 In keeping with its desire to base its findings on as much information from Aboriginal and Islander people as possible, the Committee undertook two site inspections to talk to the people served by AIEIS, as well as to AIEIS and AEC officers, and to see some of the places where AIEIS operates. Between 28 April and 3 May 1991 the Committee visited Aboriginal and Islander communities in North Queensland, and between 19 and 25 May it held discussions and carried out site inspections in Western Australia.

1.18 On 5 June 1991 representatives of Aboriginal organisations in New South Wales travelled to Canberra for informal discussions with the Committee. The individuals, communities and organisations with whom the Committee spoke during the inquiry are listed at Appendix D.

1.19 The Committee thanks all of those who made submissions to the inquiry, all who appeared at the public hearing and, especially, the many people who gave their time to speak to the Committee during site inspections and other discussions.

Structure of the Report

1.20 The remainder of the report deals in turn with those aspects of the role, management and operation of AIEIS where the Committee found particular problems, and addresses ways of dealing with those problems. Chapter 2 provides an outline of the program, its aim and objectives, and the degree to which these are being realised; chapter 3 deals with AIEIS policy; chapter 4 examines organisation and funding of the program; chapter 5 discusses management; chapter 6 looks at the way the program works; and chapter 7 covers the involvement of AIEIS in the ATSIC elections.

2 Outline of the AIEIS Program

Aim

2.1 The AIEIS program is designed to give Aboriginal and Islander communities greater responsibility for local electoral activities (NARU Report p. 174).

Objectives

2.2 The objectives of the AIEIS program are:

- (i) to encourage Aboriginal Communities to accept responsibility for local electoral affairs
- (ii) to ensure that Aboriginal and Islander communities and organisations are able to inform and educate their members on electoral rights and responsibilities and have the necessary resource materials
- (iii) to facilitate, directly or through Aboriginal and Islander communities and organisations, the enrolment of Aboriginal and Islander people and the maintenance of electoral rolls (Evidence p. S149).

How AIEIS Works

2.3 To date the AIEIS program has mainly served traditional communities in remote areas. It is a field-based program whose on-the-ground activities are conducted by field officers and CEAs according to

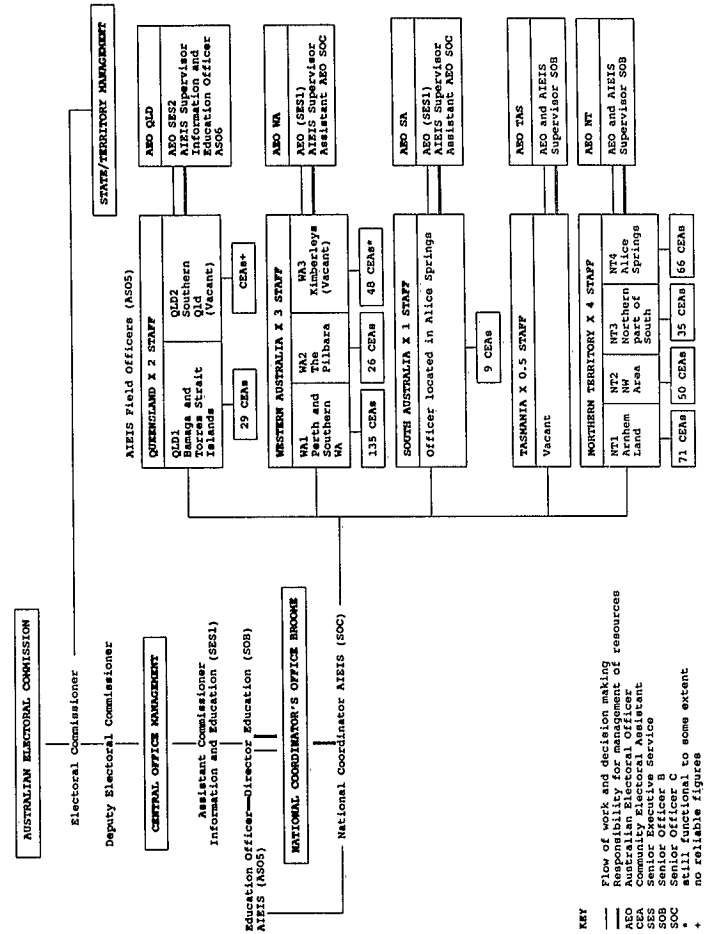
the Remote Area Strategy (Evidence pp. S149-S154). Resource materials, both curriculum and motivational, are provided for the program by an Education Officer based in Canberra. The operation and coordination of the AIEIS field program is the responsibility of the National Coordinator under the oversight of the AEC Director of Education. Details of these responsibilities are set out in Appendix E.

2.4 The management of AIEIS has been complicated, however, by the devolution of administrative arrangements for staffing, finances and some resource acquisition from the AEC Central Office in Canberra to the AEC's state Head Offices. AIEIS, as an education and information program, is now devolved to states in the same way as all other AEC information and education programs. This has greatly decreased Central Office's oversight and control of the program. In each state where the program now operates an AEC officer acts as state supervisor of the program and its officers in that state (Figure 1).

2.5 This split-management arrangement, diffusing authority and giving a significant degree of the control for an essentially field-based program to managers whose main focus is systems and structure, has inevitably had its difficulties. The matter was discussed in the NARU Report (pp. 99-102) and, despite a claim to the contrary by the AEC (Evidence p. S141), has not yet been satisfactorily resolved.

2.6 A major problem which was noted by the NARU Report (pp. 89-92) and which still exists is that there is, within the AEC, inadequate appreciation of the fact that the tasks and skills, or work and life-styles, required in a field-type operation cannot necessarily be subject to the same regulation as office work. Divisional staff expressed to the inquiry criticism of field officers' methods, time spent in travel and in the field and remuneration (Evidence pp. S122-S123). The Committee is satisfied that these concerns have been adequately countered by

FIGURE 1: AIEIS ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE (as at June 1991)



AIEIS (Evidence pp. S182-S183). The Committee believes that it is essential that both AEC and AIEIS staff recognise that flexibility in delivery is as important to the success of a field-based service as uniformity of standards and administrative regulation.

Functions of AIEIS Officers

2.7 The National Coordinator has overall responsibility for the coordination of the program, including policy direction, the selection and training of staff and program administration and evaluation. The National Coordinator travels to Canberra twice a year and also visits all field officers twice yearly.

2.8 The Education Officer is responsible for the creation and production of all resource materials. The Education Officer works closely with both the National Coordinator and field officers, accompanying the coordinator on an annual visit to field officers.

2.9 Field officers operate in a given region where they are responsible for the introduction of the AIEIS program, the training of CEAs and the maintenance of the CEA network through workshops. As well as the training, evaluation and motivation of CEAs, field officers provide electoral and enrolment advice; they enrol people and do habitation reviews; and they perform electoral duties as required.

2.10 The CEAs trained by field officers are the resource people whose task it is to teach the people in their communities about elections and voting. CEAs are usually selected by the community and then undergo ten training sessions, over a period of two and a half years, with the field officer. Once trained, and in addition to their education and information duties, CEAs also do enrolment, including habitation

reviews, and they provide advice and assistance as needed at election time.

Realisation of Aim and Objectives

2.11 The primary questions facing the Committee during this inquiry have been whether or not AIEIS is achieving what it sets out to do and whether it ought to continue. There were some submissions received by the inquiry which raised doubts about the program's value on a number of grounds: that it is not culturally appropriate or relevant to Aboriginal people (Evidence pp. S001-S004); that it makes distinctions between Aborigines and non-Aborigines and is therefore divisive; that it duplicates other services offered by the AEC; and that, in view of the increasing political sophistication of Aboriginal people, it is superfluous (Evidence pp. S029-S037). A view was also put forward that the program has been so successful that it ought to be discontinued (Evidence p. S103).

2.12 The Committee's inquiry indicated that many Aborigines are, for a number of reasons, electorally disadvantaged. These reasons include lack of general education, restricted access to electoral information and education and remoteness of location. In addition, it was not until 1983 that enrolment became compulsory for Aborigines. Aboriginal people though, are Australian electors whose right it is to be able to cast an informed vote. While the Committee has kept in mind throughout the inquiry all objections to the AIEIS program, it has nevertheless received ample evidence that the program is useful, valuable and relevant to Aboriginal and Islander people.

2.13 There is little doubt, however, that the aim and objectives of the AIEIS program have been only partially realised. There are certainly many Aboriginal and Islander communities with competent

CEAs who are doing a good job in keeping people informed about electoral affairs, and this is largely because of the efforts of the field officers concerned, to whom much credit is owed.

2.14 There are many more places, though, which do not have access to AIEIS and the services it offers and there are, as well, places where the program exists but does not operate effectively. The Committee believes that this report will show that the failure of AIEIS to realise its full potential as an education, information and enrolment service for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders is due to inadequate managerial support within the AEC and inconsistent and inefficient resourcing.

3 AIEIS Policy

Focus of the Program: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

3.1 AIEIS exists to provide electoral education and information and to facilitate enrolment for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Concern has been expressed to the Committee that the name of the program suggests a wider target clientele than that for which it is intended. The Committee agrees that the service should be more accurately named to reflect its actual target group.

3.2 The Committee recommends that:

the name of the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service be changed to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service to reflect more accurately the service's intended target clientele.

Focus of the Program: Education or Enrolment

3.3 Education and enrolment are both stated as objectives of the AIEIS program. While the situation is improving with time and a greater orientation within the AEC towards education, there is still, particularly at AEC state and divisional levels, some debate concerning the relative priority of education and enrolment for AIEIS officers. Some divisional staff and others in the state hierarchy of the AEC consider that enrolment for Aboriginal and Islander people must precede education (Evidence pp. S098-S099, S121-S122), while AIEIS staff believe that in an information and education program electoral education is the first priority (Evidence p. S181).

3.4 This uncertainty about what the AIEIS program's priorities really are places conflicting demands on field officers and their effectiveness in either area is reduced.

3.5 It is certainly the case that the implementation of enrolment and the maintenance of electoral rolls are both part of an AIEIS field officer's duties. In view of this, it is understandable that many Divisional Returning Officers (DROs), one of whose major concerns is enrolment, should wish to maximise their opportunities by exploiting the field experience and contacts of field officers for enrolment work. Conflict between the two arises when enrolment work is emphasised and given priority over education and information work.

3.6 Clearly enrolment is an important part of raising electoral awareness but it is of no use in itself unless accompanied by increasing the general awareness of Aboriginal and Islander people of the wider electoral processes.

3.7 During site inspections the Committee was able to confirm good levels of enrolment among Aboriginal and Islander people in AIEIS areas (Evidence pp. S169-S170), for which the AEC, particularly DROs, are to be commended. The Committee considers, however, that electoral education and information should be AIEIS field officers' highest priority and that enrolment ought not to be achieved at the expense of the program's education function. The persistence of ambiguity regarding the priority of the two functions is a result of the AEC's failure to provide adequate policy direction and this ought to be remedied.

3.8 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission formulate an unambiguous policy giving priority to education and information work relative to

enrolment work in the AIEIS program and provide a clear statement to both divisional and field staff concerning the priority of each function.

Future Policy Directions: Continuing and Extending the Program

3.9 During the course of this inquiry and especially during the two site inspections in North Queensland and Western Australia, the Committee met many Aboriginal and Islander people who, because of the work of AIEIS, had a good knowledge of electoral affairs and whose knowledge of and involvement in elections was impressive. Levels of enrolment in the communities visited by the Committee were high and CEAs were committed to the program and its objectives.

3.10 This, and evidence received in submissions and a public hearing, has left the Committee in no doubt about the value of the AIEIS program. It provides a necessary service to Aboriginal and Islander people and the development of policies for its continuation, extension and improvement should be given a very high priority by the AEC.

3.11 The Committee recommends that:

the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service be continued as a national special needs program.

3.12 While the Committee is impressed by what AIEIS has accomplished so far, it is concerned that the program is reaching very few of its intended clients. The 1986 census revealed that of the 227,645 Aboriginal and Islander people in Australia, only 33% live in rural areas. The AIEIS program's focus on remote and traditional populations has meant that access to the program for the remaining 67% of Aborigines and Islanders living in urban localities has been restricted to those living

in Darwin and Perth, the only urban areas at present served by AIEIS and, for a limited period in the past, to those in Adelaide (Table 1).

3.13 In the ATISC elections, urban voter turnout figures were significantly lower than those for non-urban areas. In South Australia, for example, it was estimated that there were 3400 eligible Aboriginal voters in Adelaide, of which 372 or 10.9% voted, whereas in the north of the state in the Indulkana region, voter turnout was 537 or 41% of the eligible Aboriginal population (Evidence p. S170). While this can be attributed to a number of other factors (Evidence pp. S169-S170) it also indicates the probability that a need exists in more settled areas for the sort of education, information and enrolment program offered by AIEIS.

3.14 Not only is AIEIS not reaching the majority of the Aboriginal and Islander population, its geographical coverage is also inadequate. Almost 62% of Aboriginal and Islander people live in the eastern states yet seven of the ten currently active AIEIS field officers operate in the Northern Territory and in parts of Western Australia and South Australia. Aboriginal and Islander people in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, much of Queensland and most of South Australia do not have access to the AIEIS program. The Kimberley region of Western Australia is also currently without a field officer.

3.15 While the Committee appreciates the AEC's current support for the program's extension and its concern that additional resources will need to be made available for that extension (Evidence p. S141), it is evident that inadequate staffing levels are largely the result of the AEC's not having developed until recently a definite policy on the program's extension. In Queensland, for example, the National Party Government granted permission, in 1988, for AIEIS to operate in a limited number of places, but it is only recently, eighteen months after a change of government in that state, that the AEC has attempted to develop and

TABLE 1: Distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by Rural and Urban Areas

State	Urban		Total Urban as %	Rural		Total Rural as %	Total
	Major	Other		Localities	Other		
NSW	21416	27352	83%	3075	7168	17%	59011
VIC	5966	5224	89%	229	1172	11%	12811
QLD	11091	28788	65%	11031	10376	35%	61268
SA	5896	4590	72%	1223	2792	28%	14291
WA	8949	15795	65%	4672	8393	35%	37789
TAS	1351	3460	72%	568	1337	21%	6716
NT	-	10700	31%	13274	10765	69%	34739
ACT	1048	-	86%	-	172	14%	1220
AUSTRALIA	55537	95879	67%	34054	42175	33%	227645

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. Census 86: Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders - Australian States and Territories: ABS, Canberra, 1987 pp. 7-8.

Notes: Major urban areas are urban centres with a population of 100,000 persons and over. Other urban areas are urban centres with a population of 1000 to 99,999 persons. Rural localities are population clusters of 200 to 999 persons. Other rural is the balance of a state including migratory.

implement a policy concerning expanding AIEIS's area of operations in Queensland.

3.16 Similarly, even though both New South Wales and Victoria have substantial Aboriginal and Islander populations and though expansion into those states has been mooted at various times since the NARU Report (Evidence pp. S019; 23), the AEC had not, until recently, made any approach to those governments about introducing AIEIS to those states.

3.17 The Committee recommends that:

- the Australian Electoral Commission take immediate steps to present policy proposals to relevant state governments for the extension of AIEIS to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in New South Wales, Victoria and those parts of Queensland not already served
- the Australian Electoral Commission formulate a policy for the extension of the AIEIS program into more settled areas, including major metropolitan regions, and develop a special urban strategy for the implementation of the program in those areas
- the Commonwealth Government fund, as a matter of high priority, the extension of the AIEIS program to those areas not already served.

Future Policy Directions: Developing the Scope of the Program

3.18 The geographical extension of the program ought to be matched by a corresponding development in its scope. The NARU Report (pp. 69-70) recommended that the program should include

material on state and local government and it was certainly evident to the Committee during site inspections that a demand exists for more of this type of information. However, even though in its initial submission to the inquiry during the 35th Parliament the AEC stated an intention to pursue the matter with relevant government bodies (Evidence p. S017) there appears to have been only minimal progress made towards implementing the NARU Report recommendation (Evidence pp. S104-S105).

3.19 During the site inspections the Committee saw first hand the importance of political institutions and activities to many Aboriginal and Islander people. Naturally enough, community issues command most people's attention and interest; for this reason local and, to a lesser degree, state government are the levels of government most relevant to many of the people the Committee spoke to. The Committee was pleased to visit places like Halls Creek (where five out of seven shire councillors are Aboriginal) in which community interest in local affairs has prompted Aboriginal and Islander people to become involved in local government.

3.20 If this encouraging trend continues it bodes well for the early achievement of the government's objective of self-management for Aboriginal and Islander people. The AIEIS program's role in this process should be augmented by giving greater emphasis to information and material on state and local government. Such material should be developed through close liaison with state and local government agencies. This view was supported by the Premier of Western Australia and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory who made submissions to the inquiry (Evidence pp. S072-S073, S086).

3.21 In addition, like other electors Aboriginal and Islander people experience difficulty in coping with the different federal, state and

local government and ATSIC electoral processes and voting systems. They need all of those systems clarified.

3.22 The Committee recommends that:

- the AIEIS program include more information and materials, developed in conjunction with the relevant bodies, on the workings of state and local government and on state and local government elections

- the Australian Electoral Commission explore the possibility of securing funding from state and local government bodies for the development of state and local government components in the AIEIS program.

3.23 The NARU Report (p. 132) also recommended that information on Federal Parliament and the role of political parties be included in the AIEIS program. The Committee believes that familiarity with these matters is important for the political development of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and supports their inclusion in the program.

3.24 The Committee suggests that the incorporation of information on Federal Parliament in the AIEIS program be planned in cooperation with the Parliamentary Education Office which has expressed interest in becoming involved in parliamentary education specifically for Aboriginal and Islander clients (Evidence pp. S125-S132).

3.25 The AEC has objected to the use of material on political parties for fear of possible allegations of partisanship or political indoctrination (Evidence pp. S023-S024; 17, 75-76); the Committee does not accept this and sees no reason why the AEC cannot present basic

facts and procedural information on the role of political parties to Aboriginal and Islander people in the same way that this information would be provided to any other inquirer. In stating this the Committee does not wish to jeopardise the AEC's neutrality. Dissemination of information on such matters as party platforms would remain the responsibility of individual political parties.

3.26 The Committee recommends that:

- information and materials for a parliamentary education component of the AIEIS program be planned and developed in cooperation with the Parliamentary Education Office

- basic facts and procedural information on the role of political parties be included in the AIEIS program.

Future Policy Directions: Sunset Clause

3.27 With the program being expanded both geographically and in scope and gradually being wound down in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory as outlined in the AIEIS Remote Area Strategy, and as the program is introduced into the eastern states and urban areas, target dates for the achievement of goals and objectives must be set for each new phase of the program. According to the timetabling established by this process, the program should be provided with a sunset clause.

all policies for the future of AIEIS include an achievable timetable and provide for the program's reduction to a care and maintenance level within a timeframe which allows for the satisfactory realisation of all goals.

4 Resources for AIEIS

4.1 At present, the AIEIS staff establishment consists of thirteen positions: the National Coordinator, the Education Officer and eleven field officer positions. There are three field officer positions in Western Australia and four in the Northern Territory. South Australia has one field officer based in Alice Springs who covers the Pitjantjatjara Lands, and Queensland has two positions, one of which is filled. All of these are staffed under contract for three years. In Tasmania there is a permanent position, the occupant of which works half time for AIEIS and half time for other AEC programs. All active field officers have recruited and are training a network of CEAs. There are, Australia-wide, currently over 400 CEAs (Figure 1).

4.2 The current reality of AIEIS staffing (Evidence p. S142) is that one field position in Western Australia is vacant and has been since 1989, except for a six week period during the ATSIC elections in 1990. Application was made to fill it permanently after that but rejected because of problems which the Western Australian office had with salary dollars at that time. In Queensland, recruitment action has been initiated to fill the vacant position which is to be relocated from Cairns to Brisbane. The contract of the other Queensland officer, stationed on Thursday Island, has been extended pending the outcome of this inquiry. There is, at present, no operational field officer in Tasmania because the person is on leave for 12 months. All of these positions are vital to the success of the program and should be retained and filled.

4.3 Failure to keep AIEIS positions staffed has been a recurrent problem over the past few years (Evidence pp. S009, S142; 26). The AEC has attributed this to external factors such as reduced resources

as a result of the government's 1.25 efficiency dividend and the uncertainty of the program's future because of the NARU Report and this Committee's review. The Committee notes it is the AEC's decision how it will achieve its efficiency dividend and that the AEC has provided inconsistent evidence on the way in which it has allowed the future of the program to be dictated by the program reviews (Evidence pp. S009; 26, 60-61). The Committee considers the filling of the vacant positions was clearly an AEC decision and reflects the management problems outlined in the next chapter.

4.4 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission take immediate steps to fill all vacant field officer positions in their current locations and undertake to maintain AIEIS staffing at an optimum level.

4.5 The NARU Report (p. 93) concluded that the AIEIS field officer/CEA structure is the only workable model for the delivery of the program to remote areas. Having seen this structure at work, the Committee agrees with the NARU Report's conclusion and urges that its use be continued in remote areas.

National Coordinator

4.6 Rather than overseeing the implementation of the AIEIS program, the National Coordinator provides its overall coordination, monitoring and evaluation. Given that the administration of AIEIS is devolved to five state Head Offices there is an ongoing need for this position to ensure the effective delivery of the program in all of the states where it operates. The present National Coordinator accepted the position on the understanding that she could be outposted to Broome.

4.7 The National Coordinator was appointed in 1989 for a term of five years. This length of time will be necessary for achieving the objectives of both the AIEIS program and the position.

4.8 The AIEIS program has, so far, concentrated mostly on remote areas of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia and it is these states that most field officers have been operating. In view of this the outposting to Broome of the National Coordinator was convenient. There have been, though, some disadvantages to the location, the main one of which has been the distance of the National Coordinator from Central Office and, in particular, from the AIEIS Education Officer. With the proposed expansion of AIEIS to the eastern states though, additional staff for coordination will be required or the National Coordinator would be more appropriately located somewhere more central and accessible to all field areas. This issue is taken up in the next chapter.

4.9 Because of the lengthy field vacancy in the Kimberleys the National Coordinator has been, to some extent, a de facto field officer for that area and is certainly regarded as such by other Western Australian divisional staff. The presence of the National Coordinator in Broome has probably contributed to the AEC's tardiness in filling the Kimberley field officer position. The Committee considers that, in view of the heavy coordination workload, it is inappropriate that the National Coordinator perform field duties, however sporadically, and emphasises the desirability of appointing a field officer for the Kimberleys as soon as possible.

4.10 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission undertake immediate recruitment action to fill the Western Australia field officer position in the Kimberleys.

Education Officer

4.11 The AEC's apparent indifference to the importance of the Education Officer in the AIEIS program was indicated by the length of time, from February 1988 until May 1991, during which there was no permanent appointment made to the position. The position was permanently filled, under a two year fixed-term contract, in May 1991. Until then, the task of producing adequate and appropriate resource material was performed by temporary, albeit well-qualified and exceptionally capable, personnel and in response to crisis situations such as the ATSIC elections.

4.12 However, the lack of staffing continuity has hindered the development of well-coordinated material. Several former occupants of the Education Officer position have expressed concern regarding the failure to fill the position on a permanent basis, the effects of that on the production of curriculum materials and the consequent inability of the program to offer an adequate service (Evidence pp. S094, S115; 89-90). This is not the foundation on which to construct an effective education and information program which requires well-planned resource material of consistently high quality.

4.13 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission recognise the importance of the Education Officer to the AIEIS program and that it ensure the

provision of well-planned and high-quality resource material by maintaining in the Education Officer position a permanent officer with appropriate training and skills.

Field Officers

4.14 Field officers are appointed under contract for three years. This is the minimum period recommended by the NARU Report (p. 85) and is adequate for a field officer to achieve the objectives set out in the program's Remote Area Strategy.

4.15 It is impossible to over-emphasise the degree to which the success of the AIEIS program depends on the calibre of its personnel. This is especially true of field officers and is apparent in the fact that where there are, or have been, good field officers, the program is achieving, or was on the way to achieving, its objectives in a timely and efficient manner.

4.16 A field officer's work is demanding and specialised and requires a combination of skills and attributes not easily found. The program has, from time to time, encountered difficulties when the selection process for field officers has not always been as rigorous and thorough as it should have been.

4.17 There has been, for example, insufficient emphasis placed on the necessity for field officers being skilled at imparting information. The vital 'training the trainers' aspect of field duties has sometimes been neglected so that field officers with little background or experience in training have been appointed and have not been able to fulfil their role adequately. The Committee is concerned that this does not occur in the future.

4.18 The Committee recommends that:

in the selection of field officers, greater emphasis be placed on the desirability of applicants:

- having a background or training in, or aptitude for, education; and
- being willing and capable of spending most of their time in the field.

4.19 Field officer training is a matter addressed at some length by the NARU Report (p. 75) which recommended a six to eight week training period. At present, new field officers spend one week with the National Coordinator in the Kimberleys and another in their state/territory Head Office. Provided suitably skilled and experienced people are recruited as field officers this should be adequate. There is no current inservice or further training but, following field officer demand, it is planned to incorporate training sessions as part of the annual field officers conference.

Facilities and Equipment for Field Officers

4.20 The ability of AIEIS field officers to do their job properly has often been impeded by the AEC's indifferent management of the program. Some have been provided with inadequate supervision and others have suffered from the absence of effective support from the AEC (Evidence p. S109). There is no doubt that, in dealing with the respective concerns of both AEC and AIEIS staff, flexibility is required and has been lacking. One difficulty brought to the attention of the Committee during site inspections is that office accommodation in close proximity to other AEC staff has prevented some field officers from performing their duties satisfactorily as a result of the demands made on

their time by state supervisors for work not related to AIEIS objectives (Evidence p. S183).

4.21 The Committee recommends that:

- field officers be provided with adequate, suitable and properly equipped office accommodation.

4.22 Some field officers, too, have been hampered by not being given, or not having the full use of, the facilities and resources necessary for the performance of their duties (Evidence p. S183). This is another result of the AEC's failure to fully recognise the worth of the AIEIS program and to apply to it the managerial standards it requires.

4.23 The Committee recommends that:

- the Australian Electoral Commission specify that field officers' resources and facilities are for the AIEIS program and not to be appropriated for other Australian Electoral Commission activities.

Community Electoral Assistants

4.24 Good CEAs are fundamental to the achievement of AIEIS's objectives. Their selection is largely a matter for the community but, because of the importance of making the right choice, the field officer should have some input into the selection. This was not the case in some communities visited by the Committee where CEAs were chosen according to their position in the community and not necessarily with their potential as communicators and educators in mind.

4.25 A related problem is that many of those CEAs, already heavily involved in community activities and administration or other

employment, are unable always to fulfil their CEA responsibilities because of the heavy demands made on their time. Field officers and community councils should keep this in mind when selecting CEAs.

4.26 The Committee wishes to stress, however, that it was deeply impressed with the commitment, political sophistication and innovative thinking of many of the CEAs it met.

4.27 The Committee recommends that:

Community Electoral Assistant selection occur only as a result of consultation between field officers and the community concerned.

4.28 As well as being the backbone of the AIEIS program, CEAs are a valuable ongoing resource to the AEC. Once CEAs are trained they are in a position to provide the AEC with assistance in enrolment, habitation reviews and electoral work. Their local knowledge and experience are invaluable in all of these areas.

4.29 One difficulty for CEAs is that the AEC regards them as being of use only periodically, and does not see their long-term value. CEAs are paid only for their training period and if they are hired to do election work. They are given little incentive to retain a commitment to the AEC or AIEIS. For example, when CEAs do habitation review work as part of their normal CEA tasks, they are not always paid as habitation review officers (Evidence pp. S098-S099; S7-58). This is not only unfair, it is unlikely to encourage CEA commitment to the AEC and is detrimental to the AIEIS program. The Committee urges the AEC to adopt a more positive approach to CEAs by looking for incentives to maintain CEAs' commitment to the program.

4.30 For CEAs in Queensland the situation is worse. There, CEAs are not paid at all (Evidence p. 4). This is the result of stipulations made by the National Party Government at the time of AIEIS's introduction into Queensland (Evidence p. S146). The AEC has only recently, nearly two years after a change of government there, made any effort to have this policy revised.

4.31 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission immediately institute policies which ensure fair and consistent treatment for all Community Electoral Assistants and that their value to the Australian Electoral Commission be recognised and promoted throughout the Commission, especially at divisional level.

National Training Strategy - Remote Areas

4.32 The AIEIS Remote Area Strategy (Evidence pp. S149-S154) contains the program's forward plan for the achievement of its aim and objectives in those areas where AIEIS already operates. Under the strategy all remote area CEAs will be trained and will have undergone a program of workshops by 30 June 1993. The program will then operate on a care and maintenance basis which will be undertaken by a single field officer in each state. Field staff in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia will then be considerably reduced. This strategy is functioning well and the program is on target in those areas.

Staffing of the Program in Urban Areas

4.33 It became clear during discussions with AIEIS staff in Perth and with representatives of New South Wales Aboriginal groups that the

extension of AIEIS to urban areas will make different demands on the program and its staff. In urban areas, for example, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders do not live in discrete communities, therefore the client group is difficult to identify and target. Similarly, the wide cultural diversity of urban Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders will have implications for the provision of appropriate AIEIS resource materials. In addition, as the Committee's discussions revealed, urban Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are a politically diverse group in which attitudes to voting and elections range from fear or apathy and hostility to strong political commitment. This, too, will have a bearing on the way AIEIS operates in towns and cities.

4.34 Thus the program's application in more settled areas will inevitably require strategies, recruitment and staffing suitable to the circumstances. The NARU Report (pp. 98-99) recommends that, rather than adopting a field officer/CEA structure for urban areas, the program be implemented by working through educational and community organisations. The Committee supports that recommendation.

4.35 The Committee is concerned that people with suitable skills and characteristics are employed to undertake the program's expansion. Considerations like political neutrality and cultural flexibility, for example, will need to be emphasised when city-based AIEIS staff are being selected.

4.36 The Committee recommends that:

the recruiting of AIEIS officers for urban areas be carried out only after the development of a separate urban strategy which includes selection criteria relevant to urban areas.

Funding

4.37 AIEIS expenditure for 1990-91 was \$853,870 of which \$399,748 was spent on salaries and \$454,122 on program costs. Despite the provision of these global amounts, the matter of AIEIS funding has been as subject to vagueness and lack of definition as many other aspects of the program. There exists a worrying scarcity of either information or documentation on the nature and sources of the program's funding. The Committee's repeated requests to the AEC for clarification on this matter have, until recently, met with little success. The Committee believes that this has more to do with the Commission's deficiencies in record keeping and changes in Central Office staff than an unwillingness to cooperate with the inquiry.

4.38 On the best available information from the AEC, there is no one line appropriation for AIEIS, that is, AIEIS is not separately funded but competes with all other AEC programs for funding (Evidence p. 62); once funds have been allocated, state/territory supervisors are responsible for their management. Those funds have not always, in the past, been spent by state/territory Head Offices on the AIEIS program, sometimes resulting in a shortfall in AIEIS funds. For example in 1990-91 in Queensland expenditure of AIEIS funds on other programs by the state office resulted in a shortage of funds to pay a field officer's travel claims.

4.39 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission make all information concerning AIEIS funding publicly available both within and outside the Commission.

4.40 Operational problems caused by uncertainty concerning the source and use of funds are not improved by the AEC's failure to exploit access to other funding sources. There is available, for example, training funding from the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) which could be used to fund CEA training and activities. Similarly the option of tapping into state or local government funding should be explored. Some use has been made of the Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) scheme as a way of employing CEAs in Queensland, but there has been no systematic policy developed for exploiting either this or other funding alternatives.

4.41 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission investigate funding options open to AIEIS and develop a strategy for the exploitation of alternative funding sources, especially the further use of the Community Development Employment Project scheme where appropriate.

5 AIEIS Management

AEC Attitudes to the Program

5.1 The AEC has claimed that many of the managerial difficulties noted by the NARU Report have been overcome (Evidence p. S141). This was not borne out by the Committee's inquiry which revealed that, on the ground, many of the tensions and problems between AIEIS and the AEC, although reduced, continue to exist. The Committee believes that most of the deficiencies, many of which have been noted in earlier sections of the report, are symptoms of a larger problem which is the failure of the AEC's senior management to take sufficient responsibility for or interest in the AIEIS program. Consequently senior AEC staff must accept responsibility for many of the managerial problems which prevent the program from operating effectively.

5.2 The length of time that key positions such as field officers, AIEIS Education Officer and AEC Director of Education remained unfilled or staffed by temporary officers is a good indication of the AEC's indifference to the program.

5.3 Further, in its initial submission to the Committee the AEC stated that since the completion of the NARU Report AIEIS, in all areas except Queensland, had been operating on a 'care and maintenance basis' and with the then approaching 1990 federal elections and the planned ATSIC elections, it was necessary to re-establish the field and support structure (Evidence p. S009).

5.4 With senior management not signalling clear support for AIEIS, it is not surprising that managers elsewhere in the organisation exhibit an imperfect commitment to the program. Matters like the siphoning off of AIEIS funds to other programs, the arbitrary use of AIEIS resources by AEC staff (Evidence p. S183) and a widespread lack of appreciation for the program's aim, methods and achievements (Evidence pp. S121-S123) are indicative of an unfortunate attitude to AIEIS which pervades some parts of the AEC.

5.5 Similarly, little attempt appears to have been made by AEC management to promote AIEIS as an integral part of the overall operations and culture of the AEC. During the course of its discussions the Committee became aware of the adversarial nature of relations between some AEC officers and some AIEIS staff. The Committee considers that until this sort of stance is eliminated and senior staff of the AEC develop and maintain an active interest in the program and its management and operation, AIEIS will not be able to function efficiently, or achieve its objectives effectively. The situation will only improve if senior management takes the lead in initiating attitudinal change throughout the AEC.

5.6 The Committee recommends that:

senior management of the Australian Electoral Commission develop and disseminate an appropriately informed, active and supportive attitude with regard to the AIEIS program.

5.7 Overall, though, the Committee has noted some improvement of AEC attitudes to AIEIS as a result of the critical role that AIEIS played in making the AEC's conduct of the ATSIC elections successful.

5.8 The Committee also appreciates that AIEIS staff have contributed to the attitudinal situation by not seeing themselves as a part of the wider AEC. There has been a tendency to overstress the differences between their work and that of other AEC state officers rather than looking for similarities. AIEIS staff have failed, for whatever reasons, to take advantage of the experience and skills that other AEC state officers might contribute to AIEIS objectives. The Committee also acknowledges the validity of certain criticisms made by AEC staff about some AIEIS officers.

5.9 The Committee recommends that:

in performing their respective roles, especially with regard to the conduct of elections, AIEIS and other Australian Electoral Commission officers develop strategies for benefiting from each other's skills and experience.

Control and Accountability

5.10 There have been considerable organisational implications for AIEIS as a consequence of the lack of interest, support and leadership from the management of the AEC. The lack of managerial focus combined with the administrative decentralisation of the program has resulted in lines of authority being obscured, and there has also developed, at state manager level, a degree of laxity with regard to the staffing and resourcing of the AIEIS program.

5.11 When financial responsibility for the AIEIS program was devolved to AEC state/territory offices, state managers, usually the Australian Electoral Officer, acquired the delegation for all AIEIS funds. This has given control for the day-to-day running of the program to state managers, but, as emerged from discussions during site inspections,

they appear not to have been correspondingly accountable for its effectiveness and they express little sense of ownership or responsibility for it. If, as is the case in Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland, the AIEIS state/territory supervisor is not the Australian Electoral Officer, yet another 'all control but no responsibility' level of authority is added to the AIEIS structure.

5.12 The devolution of financial responsibility has had a number of unhappy results for the program, most noticeably where state/territory supervisors have made inappropriate managerial decisions with respect to AIEIS staffing. In both Western Australia and Tasmania the program has been unable to operate properly because AIEIS positions have remained unfilled for lengthy periods. In both cases, the Australian Electoral Officer, who retains responsibility for staffing, has been remiss in not seeing that the program operates at full strength in those states.

5.13 Under decentralisation the National Coordinator has no implementation, effective supervisory or managerial role. This is, though, by no means obvious to the observer and is certainly not clear to many within the AEC which states that the National Coordinator has 'overall responsibility for the AIEIS program' (Evidence p. S142). With the delegation for AIEIS funds resting with state/territory managers it is difficult to see how this 'overall responsibility' might be exercised.

5.14 These inconsistencies inherent in the National Coordinator position are largely the result of two factors. First, the AEC failed to give due weight to suggestions concerning the position made in the NARU Report (pp. 99-109). While the recommendation for the appointment of a National Coordinator was implemented, it was not done according to the guidelines provided by the report - that is, that the appointment be at the same level as the AEC Director of Education and that the position be located in Canberra.

5.15 Second, with the AEC Director of Education and Education Officer positions not permanently filled, inadequate management of the program by the state/territory supervisors, insufficient interest in the AIEIS program by AEC management and the National Coordinator being responsible and accountable for the coordination of the program, the current National Coordinator appears to have taken a greater role in the program's management than envisaged by the AEC.

5.16 The outcome of this is that the AEC has created a hybrid National Coordinator position with insufficient status or control, remote from Central Office and with the responsibility for the program's coordination but not having the authority or delegation to ensure the efficient delivery of the service.

5.17 There is, then, a two-way division of responsibility for AIEIS: state/territory managers oversee the program's efficiency and the National Coordinator oversees its effectiveness. The end result of this is that the program suffers. Its managers, the state/territory officers of the AEC, do not involve themselves sufficiently with AIEIS, do not identify closely with the program's objectives and do not feel responsible for the achievement of those objectives.

5.18 The Committee is convinced that, because of the AEC management's laxity, the AIEIS program is being neither managed nor administered as well as it could be. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders will not be receiving the level of electoral information and education to which they are entitled under the program until the AEC adopts a new approach to the program's administration and takes the decision to manage it properly.

5.19 There are two main options for the future management of AIEIS. The first option is that all management and administration for the

program be recentralised so that all AIEIS policy, program implementation and financial delegations be overseen from Canberra. The National Coordinator would then take over all managerial responsibility for the program from state/territory offices and all AIEIS personnel, including field officers, would report directly to the National Coordinator. The National Coordinator would report to the Assistant Commissioner, Information and Education and the Board of Management. This would require the National Coordinator position being upgraded to Senior Officer Grade B level and located in Canberra.

5.20 The second option is that the management of the program remain decentralised, with management in the hands of state AEC officers, but that stringent reporting and accountability mechanisms be devised and put in place so that the program's managers become responsible not just for its efficiency, but also its effectiveness. The implications of this for the National Coordinator would be that the position's role would revert to encompassing the coordination and evaluation functions envisaged by the AEC (Appendix E).

5.21 In view of the program's proposed expansion and the additional responsibilities that implies, the demands made on the National Coordinator will be excessive. There will thus need to be created an additional coordinator position. This would be feasible if the program were to forgo the proposed new Queensland field officer position.

5.22 The Committee foresees that the duties of the two coordinators would be split along urban/remote lines, that is, that the current coordinator would retain responsibility for coordination and evaluation in remote areas, including North Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands, and that the new coordinator, based in Brisbane, would be responsible for the development and implementation of the new

urban strategy and the AIEIS program in the eastern states. Both of these positions would be staffed at the Senior Officer Grade C level, but this would be subject to review when current contracts expire. Under this arrangement, the Education Officer would be better reporting to the Director of Education in Canberra rather than to either coordinator.

5.23 Neither of these options is entirely problem-free. If the program were recentralised, many managerial and administrative problems would be solved in the short term but the logistics of managing such a far-flung program from Canberra, with little or no cooperation from state offices, would be extremely complex. In addition, removal of the management of AIEIS from state/territory offices would probably engender a greater degree of apathy or antipathy to the program than already exists. The immediate outcome would be a lack of state/territory cooperation with the National Coordinator whose task would thus be made even more difficult.

5.24 In addition, the future delivery of electoral information and education to Aboriginal and Islander people would be jeopardised. As the AIEIS program winds down and field officers are withdrawn, responsibility for supplying that information and education will revert to state/territory electoral offices, whose enthusiasm for, and interest in, the task will be minimal if they have been effectively removed from involvement with AIEIS.

5.25 If, on the other hand, the AEC retains but improves the present AIEIS managerial and administrative arrangements, there is little guarantee that the attitude of the program's managers would change, that they would become any more involved with the program or responsible for it, or that it would necessarily be any better managed.

5.26 On balance the Committee favours the second option.

5.27 The Committee recommends that:

- the existing National Coordinator become the coordinator for the Remote Area Strategy and continue being responsible for the coordination of that strategy in all states, except Tasmania, where the program currently operates
- a new coordinator position be created at the Senior Officer Grade C level, and its responsibilities encompass the AIEIS program in the eastern states, focusing on the new Urban Area Strategy in New South Wales, southern Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria
- the new coordinator position be funded using the additional resources sought in the current budget
- both coordinators report directly to the Director of Education, Australian Electoral Commission
- both coordinators be used as a source of advice for state managers on the best methods of implementing the program in their state including advice on dealing with any problems that may arise
- the Education Officer report to the Director of Education and provide curriculum materials and support for both the Remote and Urban Area Strategies
- the Assistant Commissioner, Information and Education report regularly to the Australian Electoral Commissioner on the way in which the AIEIS program is operating on a nationally coordinated basis

· field officers' monthly reports and any additional relevant management information be forwarded simultaneously from Australian Electoral Officers to the Australian Electoral Commissioner and the relevant program coordinator

· in its annual report the Australian Electoral Commission report more fully on the AIEIS program with specific reference to staffing, funding and the achievement of objectives.

Evaluation of the Program

5.28 In view of this dilemma concerning the management of AIEIS, some future evaluation will be necessary. This should be undertaken as part of the AEC's normal evaluation process.

5.29 The Committee recommends that:

· twelve months after the tabling of this report, the management of the AIEIS program be subject to an internal evaluation by the Australian Electoral Commission and that the report of that evaluation be referred to the Minister.

5.30 Whatever strategy is adopted for the future management of AIEIS it is necessary that the program's efficiency and effectiveness be subject to assessment. The AEC suggests that any assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of an education program like AIEIS is difficult as many of the quantifiable variables which may be suggested as performance indicators are open to different interpretations and other indicators are qualitative (Evidence p. S180).

5.31 While performance indicators for the program have been developed (Evidence p. S180) their application appears to be neither

systematic nor thorough. To date AIEIS is collecting statistics on numbers of CEA training sessions and community visits. Many of the other possible performance indicators are dependent on electoral events for collection and assessment.

5.32 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission apply existing performance indicators to the assessment of the AIEIS program and report on them in its Portfolio Performance Statements.

6 The AIEIS Program at Work

Orientation

6.1 In many communities it visited the Committee found great interest in government and political processes, especially at the local and ATSIC levels. This puts AIEIS into a context where the information imparted by the program is directly applicable to the daily life of many Aboriginal and Islander communities and individuals. The Committee considers that it would be beneficial if some aspects of the program were reoriented to exploit these links.

6.2 The degree of community interest and involvement in local and ATSIC elections, for example, suggests that AIEIS program components with a greater emphasis on local topics and using local examples would be useful. Similarly, in motivational components of the program which discuss reasons for voting, it would be beneficial to stress that the electoral process is a way of addressing community conditions, problems and needs.

6.3 The Committee recommends that:

experience and information gained in the field be used as a basis for reorienting the AIEIS program toward greater emphasis on local priorities thereby making it more relevant to the electoral education and information needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Content

6.4 In the same way, the program's content needs to be reviewed to make it more appropriate to the needs of its clientele. The Committee found, for instance, that much of the electoral process is simply confusing for many Aboriginal and Islander people. This is not surprising in view of the variety of electoral rolls and voting systems and different areas and levels of government with which people have to deal, as well as the number and variety of elections which occur. Greater emphasis should be given in the AIEIS curriculum to materials which will help to clarify and demystify the workings of government.

Methods of Program Delivery

Community Involvement

6.5 New emphasis should also be considered in relation to the program's method of delivery and the materials it uses. The program's delivery ought to be tailored to suit the circumstances in which people live. Where relevant - for instance in those places where people live in reasonably discrete communities - AIEIS could focus on the community lifestyle as a way of approaching people and introducing the program.

6.6 For example, rather than relying only on the individual work of CEAs, field officers could try to cultivate an image of AIEIS as a community-based service. Fostering greater community awareness of AIEIS in community meetings would be one way of achieving this. Field officers could also enlist community leaders and use their knowledge and experience, influence and political interest to raise the profile of AIEIS in the community.

6.7 The Committee recommends that:

there be greater emphasis placed on fostering wider community interest and developing stronger community participation in disseminating electoral education and information via the AIEIS program.

6.8 The concept of the CEA, too, should be given this community orientation. CEAs should have, or should be encouraged to develop, a high community profile for the AIEIS role which would greatly enhance their effectiveness as a community-based resource; at the same time they should be encouraged to use their place in community networks so as to reach as many people as possible.

6.9 There are, for instance, CEAs who work in or for other government departments or for community organisations through which they have contact with many other Aboriginal and Islander people. These CEAs are ideally placed to bring the work of AIEIS to the attention of a wide clientele. Community council employees might, for example, encourage their place of employment to display AIEIS posters or place enrolment forms on counters.

Involvement of Other Agencies

6.10 Similarly, field officers should be more assiduous in using other government departments and agencies such as DEET or TAFE colleges as a way of developing contacts or as venues for the distribution and/or display of material (Evidence pp. S037, S068). Employees in these organisations, especially Aborigines or Islanders, would be useful as a contact point between the field officer and clients. This would be particularly valuable when AIEIS extends to urban

areas where Aboriginal and Islander people are scattered throughout the population and difficult to identify and target as a group.

6.11 AIEIS workers in the urban situation will, as well, have to capitalise on such community organisations or networks as are available to them. Experience in Perth and elsewhere during the lead-up to the ATSIC elections suggests that contact with potential clients is best achieved and maintained through such organisations as women's resource centres, family groups, urban resource agencies, religious groups and government departments.

6.12 Another avenue open to AIEIS and which has so far not been systematically explored is working in and through schools (Evidence p. S173). This would not only bring electoral information and education to a significant target group of potential Aboriginal and Islander voters but would also give access, through their parents and family groups, to the wider Aboriginal and Islander community. AIEIS could also target older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools for enrolment.

6.13 As the delivery of electoral information and education in schools is a function of DROs, there will be, the Committee believes, a need for more liaison and greater cooperation between AIEIS and AEC officers to facilitate the delivery of the AIEIS program in schools with high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

6.14 The Committee recommends that:

the Australian Electoral Commission explore the possibility of developing formal working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups

that AIEIS field officers work with schools and other secondary educational institutions with a view to introducing the AIEIS program to older high school students.

Materials

6.15 There are certainly many AIEIS curriculum and motivational materials which are attractive and effective. The Committee is confident that the AEC's cultivation of a less laissez faire approach to the position and responsibilities of the AIEIS Education Officer will result in even better materials being produced.

6.16 However, there are several points concerning the production and distribution of curriculum materials which require consideration. It is most important that any materials produced are relevant and culturally appropriate to whatever group they are produced for. The Committee appreciates the necessity for a core curriculum with wide application but stresses that some diversity must be allowed for regional or tribal variations and linguistic differences (Evidence p. S173).

6.17 Care should be taken, though, to ensure the use of correct language, content and pictorial illustrations. Here, a new community-oriented approach would be valuable; with CEAs and field officers working closely with a group or community on the design of material, community input would help ensure accuracy and suitability.

6.18 The Committee recommends that:

in the production of AIEIS curriculum and motivational materials, greater emphasis should be given to the use of local material and content and local input should be solicited.

6.19 One of the very powerful impressions received by the Committee during its investigations was the important role of visual media in getting across electoral information and education. Where a visual medium had been used, the message had got across. The AEC has been responsible for the production of some excellent video material but the Committee believes that greater effort could be made to exploit this medium in a more systematic way.

6.20 Many communities have access to the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) even if it is not always used; yet there were not many places where field officers had utilised this excellent system, when it does operate, to show AEC or AIEIS video material. This should be rectified quickly to take advantage of the educative impact of visual media, especially videos.

6.21 The Committee recommends that:

- audio-visual aids, particularly videos, become a major method of delivery for AIEIS curriculum and motivational materials
- the Australian Electoral Commission explore all options for the exploitation of the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) as a means of conveying AIEIS material.

6.22 In towns and cities where BRACS does not operate, AIEIS must take care to develop materials and use media which will reach and be applicable to dispersed and culturally diverse urban Aboriginal and Islander populations. Mainstream media should be utilised where possible, but alternatives such as suburban throwaway newspapers and Aboriginal broadcasting should be investigated as well.

6.23 All of these suggested improvements in curriculum and program delivery should be possible now that the Education Officer position is permanently filled. One of the first tasks of the Education Officer should be to review the AIEIS materials and the methods of program delivery.

6.24 The Committee recommends that:

- the Australian Electoral Commission immediately institute a thorough review of the AIEIS program's content, its methods of delivery and the materials it uses with a view to making the program accessible to and effective for the widest possible client base.

7 ATSIC Elections

The Role of AIEIS in the ATSIC Elections

7.1 The first ATSIC Regional Council elections, held on 3 November 1990 were conducted by the AEC with a significant AIEIS contribution, both before and during the election. In non-compulsory elections using declaration voting procedures, more than 800 members of sixty regional councils and the seventeen commissioners of the ATSIC Board were elected. Field officers' duties at the time included explaining the election to CEAs and communities; encouraging accurate enrolment; briefing Regional Returning Officers (RROs) about communities in their territories; training Aboriginal polling officials; and supervising polling centres and/or conducting mobile polling.

7.2 A number of RROs and ATSIC officials expressed to the Committee the view that AIEIS was vital to the success of the ATSIC elections and that, in fact, polling could not have gone ahead at all in many places had it not been for the presence and commitment of both field officers and CEAs.

7.3 A number of factors contributed to variations in voter turnout during the ATSIC elections and care must be taken in comparing turnout figures for areas serviced by AIEIS and those areas not serviced, but statistics from the AEC on ATSIC voter turnout indicate that the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who participated in the elections was considerably higher in those areas where AIEIS had active programs (Evidence pp. S169-S171).

7.4 The role played by AIEIS in the ATSIC elections was influential in convincing a number of AEC officers that there are many aspects of the AEC's work in remote areas, and especially among Aboriginal and Islander people, which would be very difficult without the presence of AIEIS. As a result of this, some AEC staff reported during discussions with the Committee that they have revised their attitude to AIEIS. They see it now as a complementary, rather than a rival, program.

Conduct of the Elections

7.5 The elections did, however, suffer from a number of problems which made the process difficult for many electors and candidates. The main complaint voiced to the Committee by voters was that the requirement to prove Aboriginality combined with declaration voting made the whole operation very complicated. Having viewed a video purporting to explain ATSIC voting procedure, the Committee is compelled to agree.

7.6 Apart from the complexity of the process itself, many people said that ballot papers were too long and, where there were large numbers of candidates, confusing. This was difficult enough for ordinary voters but proved a significant disadvantage to those with poor literacy skills. This problem was overcome in some places by printing candidates' photos on ballot papers. The Committee endorses this practice and suggests its wider use in future ATSIC elections.

7.7 Under section 26 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* ATSIC will review the operation of the electoral system established for the ATSIC election. ATSIC has indicated that the review will be finalised within two years (Evidence p. S166). At the time of writing this report the AEC, which is contributing to this

review, had not yet finalised its submission and could not say when it would be providing its information to ATSIC. The Committee believes that the review should be completed as soon as possible and preferably before mid-1992 to allow sufficient time for changes to be introduced prior to the next round of ATSIC elections, scheduled to be held in the second half of 1993.

ATSIC and the AEC

7.8 The ATSIC elections were marked by a close cooperative relationship between ATSIC, which bore the cost of the elections, and the AEC, which ran them. ATSIC's funding included \$176,593 for the pre-election information and education campaign run by the AEC whose Education Section developed a wide range of promotional and educational material for the elections. ATSIC also provided a further \$255,668 for the employment of forty-seven Community Electoral Information Officers (CEIOs) in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania (Evidence p. 110).

7.9 These CEIOs were recruited to work with and through Aboriginal and Islander communities, encouraging enrolment and participation in the election and raising awareness of the issues involved in enrolment, nomination and voting. This temporary extension of the AIEIS concept to places where the program is not operating was very successful and highlights the necessity for AIEIS's expansion into those areas.

7.10 ATSIC and the AEC each took responsibility for an aspect of the pre-election information and education campaign. ATSIC disseminated information on ATSIC and undertook the 'Why Vote' component and the AEC took responsibility for explaining 'How to Vote' and the enrolment drive. As the Committee learned during site

inspections, this division was only partially successful. Many officers of both ATSIC and the AEC found that, on the ground, it was not easy to separate the two in a way that was meaningful and useful to information-seeking clients to whom the distinction was irrelevant (Evidence pp. 63-64, 101). In future ATSIC elections the AEC will need to take a more prominent role in convincing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of the advantages in participating in the electoral processes. This role is consistent with the AEC's responsibilities in federal elections.

7.11 The Committee also believes that voters and candidates would have been better served if ATSIC officers had been more familiar with the voting system used during the election. A number of ATSIC officers expressed concern that they were insufficiently knowledgeable to be able to answer general queries from either voters or candidates.

7.12 The Committee recommends that:

before the next ATSIC regional council elections, the Australian Electoral Commission design and conduct pre-election information briefings on the management of elections for all ATSIC regional officers likely to be involved in the elections.

7.13 Many of the problems accompanying the ATSIC elections arose mainly as a result of the limited time available to both ATSIC and the AEC in the run-up to the elections and it is assumed that those circumstances will not recur (Evidence p. S100). Because of its coordinating role and special relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ATSIC has sought to be consulted and provide advice in the formulation of AIEIS programs (Evidence p. S172). The Committee is confident that the AEC and ATSIC are consulting already on relevant issues in relation to AIEIS and does not see the need to formalise this situation.

Matters Arising from the ATSIC Elections

7.14 The Committee's examination of the ATSIC elections prompted wide discussion on a number of issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voters which may be useful to both Commonwealth and state governments in the conduct of future ATSIC and other elections.

7.15 There is, for some Aboriginal and Islander groups and individuals, a degree of reluctance to enrol on the Commonwealth electoral roll. There are a number of reasons for this: some fear that enrolment will bring unwelcome attention from authorities or make them vulnerable to people with whom they are not on good terms; others resist becoming part of a political system they believe has no legal rights over, or relevance to, them.

7.16 In addition enrolment on the Commonwealth electoral roll and voting have been compulsory for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders only since 1983. This has not been long enough for involvement in electoral processes to become the habit that it is for most other Australians. As a result of these factors many Aboriginal and Islander people fail to enrol or to update their enrolment, resulting in fines for not voting.

7.17 While the AIEIS program has and is doing much to improve the situation more needs to be done by the AEC and state electoral agencies to mitigate the concerns many Aboriginal and Islander people have about registering their name on the electoral roll and voting procedures.

7.18 The Committee offers the following suggestions:

that DROs employ CEAs during other than ATSIC elections, to assist in polling places where there are substantial Aboriginal and Islander populations

that a separate polling officer, preferably an Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander, be employed to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voters in metropolitan polling places and so encourage greater participation in elections among urban Aboriginal and Islander people

that polling places that are not intimidating to Aboriginal and Islander people be used where possible. For example, during the ATSIC elections community halls were trialled and proved more successful than the past practice of using schools

that, as suggested to the Committee by representatives of New South Wales Aboriginal groups, greater use be made of mobile polling booths in urban areas to make voting easier for Aboriginal and Islander electors in those areas

that, for the benefit of all Australian voters, Commonwealth and state electoral bodies consider how to make more consistent, and consequently simpler, the numerous voting systems and processes in which Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, and all Australians, are involved.

Hon L J Brereton MP
Chairman
5 September 1991



Dissenting Report from Senator R Kemp and Mr M Cobb MP

- 1 The report failed to adequately assess the effectiveness of the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service.
- 2 The support for the program from many submissions was noted and the objectives of the program are certainly worthwhile.
- 3 However, it was of particular concern that the report did not adequately address criticism as outlined in a number of submissions.
- 4 The analysis in the report is therefore inadequate. The AEIS was commenced due to a perception of low turnout and high informal voting amongst Aboriginal people. There is evidence that informal voting is not statistically different in Aboriginal communities than in the broader population. The committee chose not to adequately consider this evidence.
- 5 A major failing of the report was the inability of the sub-committee to provide adequate survey information on objective (iii) concerning the enrolment of Aboriginal and Islander people and the maintenance of electoral roles.
- 6 The committee was prepared to recommend a major expansion of the program into urban areas without adequate information demonstrating the need for this important recommendation.
- 7 The report was excessively critical of the AEC, without any recognition of the significant problems the AEC faces in coping with limited

resources. Also, the fact that the AEC was sensibly awaiting the recommendations of the Joint Standing Committee before undertaking major recruitment and restructuring activities of AIEIS was given little recognition in the report.

- 8 The report also failed to adequately analyse the differences in the philosophy between the management of the AEC, which appeared to give a high priority to enrolment objectives, and the AIEIS management, which gave the major emphasis to educational activities.



Senator R Kemp



Mr M Cobb MP

20 September 1991

Appendix A

List of Organisations and Individuals who Made Submissions

Submissions 1-5 released for publication on 17 August 1989

- 1 Submission from Mr John R Bannon, 3 Lowan Avenue, Glenalta SA undated
- 2 Submission from the Australian Electoral Commission dated 10 August 1989
- 3 Submission from Mr Ken Houghton, Australian Electoral Commission dated 11 August 1989
- 4 Submission from Mr John Anderson MP, Member for Gwydir dated 16 August 1989
- 5 Letter from Senator Sue Knowles, Senator for Western Australia dated 15 August 1989

Submissions 6-10 released for publication on 30 August 1989

- 6 Submission from the Australian Labor Party, Aboriginal Affairs Policy Committee, Ms Marie Andrews, Committee Secretary dated 25 August 1989
- 7 Letter from the Premier's Department, Queensland, E F F Finger, Director-General dated 28 August 1989
- 8 Letter from the Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory, the Hon Rosemary Follett MLA dated 23 August 1989
- 9 Submission from Mr Gregory P Lehman, 154 Forest Road, West Hobart TAS dated 23 August 1989
- 10 Submission from the Parliamentary Education Office, Mr Richard Gilbert, Director of Parliamentary Education dated 29 August 1989

Submissions 11-12 released for publication on 4 September 1989

- 11 Submission from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs undated
- 12 Letter from the Local Government Association of New South Wales and the Shires Association of New South Wales, D J McSullea, Deputy Secretary dated 25 August 1989

Submissions 13-18 released for publication on 21 February 1991

- 13 Letter from the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, the Hon Marshall Perron MLA dated 3 September 1989
- 14 Submission from the North Australia Research Unit, Dr Peter Loveday, Executive Director dated 5 September 1989
- 15 Letter from the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, Mr Robert Jackson, Director dated 12 October 1989
- 16 Submission from the Premier of Western Australia, the Hon Peter Dowding MLA dated 29 September 1989
- 17 Submission from the Premier of Tasmania, the Hon Michael Field MHA dated 25 October 1989
- 18 Letter from the Premier of Victoria, the Hon John Cain MLA dated 31 October 1989

Submissions 19-33 released for publication on 15 April 1991

- 19 Letter from Ms Helen Murnane, 32 Etrema Loop, South Hedland WA undated
- 20 Supplementary letter from Ms Helen Murnane, PO Box 959, Broome WA undated
- 21 Submission from P T Smyth, Divisional Returning Officer, Division of Moore dated 27 March 1991
- 22 Submission from Mr Gordon S Coulthard, Aboriginal Community Affairs Panel, Port Augusta SA dated 28 March 1991
- 23 Submission from Mr Allan Willcox, Divisional Returning Officer, Division of Cowper dated 4 April 1991
- 24 Letter from Dr M R L Wooldridge MP, Member for Chisholm dated 28 February 1991
- 25 Letter from the Hon Marshall Perron MLA, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory dated 24 March 1991
- 26 Submission from Mr Terry Holmes, Aboriginal Electoral Information Service, Australian Electoral Commission, Darwin NT dated 4 April 1991
- 27 Submission from Mr Alistair Legge, Unit 5, Melrose Gardens, 115 Corinna Street, Lyons ACT dated 9 April 1991

- 28 Submission from Mr A K Becker, State Electoral Commissioner, South Australia dated 8 April 1991
- 29 Submission from Mr G Taylor, Divisional Returning Officer, Division of Leichhardt dated 3 April 1991
- 30 Submission from the Parliamentary Education Office, Mr Richard Gilbert, Director of Parliamentary Education dated 9 April 1991
- 31 Submission from the Central Land Council, Mr Bruce Tilmouth, Assistant Director dated 8 April 1991
- 32 Submission from the Australian Electoral Commission dated April 1991
- 33 Submission from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission dated 11 April 1991
- Submissions 34-36 released for publication on 14 May 1991*
- 34 Submission from Mr R W Smith, Divisional Returning Officer, Division of Kalgoorlie dated 15 April 1991
- 35 Supplementary submission from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission dated 24 April 1991
- 36 Supplementary submission from the Australian Electoral Commission dated 26 April 1991
- Submission 37 released for publication on 21 June 1991*
- 37 Letter from the Hon Wendy Fatin MP, Minister for Local Government dated 27 May 1991
- Submission 38 released for publication on 3 September 1991*
- 38 Supplementary submission from the Australian Electoral Commission dated 15 May 1991

Appendix B

List of Exhibits Received

Exhibit Number	Description	Individual/Organisation who Provided Exhibit
<i>Exhibit No 1 received as evidence on 15 April 1990</i>		
1	Community Electoral Assistant's Manual	Australian Electoral Commission
<i>Exhibit No 2 received as evidence on 21 June 1991</i>		
2	Aboriginal Communities and Local Government in New South Wales	Office of Local Government

Appendix C

Public Hearings Held and Witnesses who Appeared before the Subcommittee

35th Parliament

Canberra, 4 September 1989

Australian Electoral Commission

Dr Colin Anfield Hughes, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Ms Christine Elizabeth Lucas, Senior Training Officer, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr James Scott Mahony, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Corporate Services, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Trevor Willson, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Information and Education, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Mr Terrence Robert Feltham, Acting Assistant Secretary, Housing and Infrastructure Branch, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Robert John Munn, Assistant Director, Community Services and Local Government, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Parliamentary Education Office, Parliament House

Mr Richard Gilbert, Director, Parliamentary Education Office, Parliament House, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

36th Parliament

Canberra 15 April 1991

Australian Electoral Commission

Ms Pamela Baxter, Acting Director, Electoral Education, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Brian Cox, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Ms Barbara Miller, National Coordinator AIEIS, Australian Electoral Commission, Broome, Western Australia

Mr Trevor Willson, Assistant Commissioner, Information and Education, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Mr John Patrick Kelly, Manager, Liaison and Electoral, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr William Edward Miller, General Manager, Policy Coordination, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Gerald Moore, Commissioner, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Michael Anthony Stewart, Assistant General Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

Mr Roy Michael Tatten, Assistant Director, Media - Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Brisbane, Queensland

Appendix D

List of Informal Discussions and Site Inspections

Queensland

Bamaga -

AIEIS Field Officer, Torres Strait	29.4.91
Bamaga Council	29.4.91
New Mapoon Council	29.4.91
Seisia Council	29.4.91
Umagico Council	30.4.91
Injinoo Council	30.4.91

Thursday Island -

Tamwoy Community Council	1.5.91
Port Kennedy Community	1.5.91
ATSIC Regional Council, Port Kennedy	1.5.91
ATSIC Regional Council, Horn Island	1.5.91
ATSIC Regional Office, Thursday Island	1.5.91

Cairns -

AIEIS Field Officer, North Queensland	2.5.91
AEC Division of Leichhardt	2.5.91
ATSIC Regional Office, Cairns	2.5.91

Western Australia

Perth -

AEC Head Office, Perth	20.5.91
AIEIS Field Officer, Perth and Southern Western Australia	20.5.91
ATSIC Regional Office, Perth	20.5.91
Aboriginal and Islander Women's Congress of Western Australia, East Perth	20.5.91
Cullacabardee Aboriginal Community, Ballajura	20.5.91

Broome -

AIEIS National Coordinator, Broome	21.5.91
AIEIS Field Officer, Pilbara Region	21.5.91
ATSIC Regional Council, Gularri	21.5.91
Bidyadanga Community	21.5.91
Mumabulanjin Aboriginal Corporation	21.5.91
Mallingbar Community	21.5.91

One Arm Point -

One Arm Point Community Council	22.5.91
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Lombadina/Djarindjin -

Djarindjin Community Council	22.5.91
Lombadina Community Council	22.5.91

Beagle Bay -

Beagle Bay Community Council	22.5.91
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Halls Creek -

Halls Creek Shire Council	23.5.91
Ngoonjuwah Corporation	24.5.91

Turkey Creek -

Warmun Community	23.5.91
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Fitzroy Crossing -

Marra Worra Worra Resource Agency	24.5.91
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Derby -

ATSIC Regional Office, Derby	24.5.91
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Mr Jack Beetson, ATSIC Regional Councillor, Sydney Tranby Aboriginal College	5.6.91
Mr Cliff Foley, ATSIC Regional Councillor, Sydney Member, NSW Aboriginal Land Council, Tranby Aboriginal College	5.6.91
Ms Sandra Sue Member, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Sydney	5.6.91

Appendix E AIEIS Officers - Division of Responsibilities

Director Education

- Responsible for the overall operation of AIEIS
- Long term policy including advice to the Electoral Commissioner/Minister
- High level liaison/negotiation with other agencies/AEC staff on the operation of AIEIS
- Ensuring that, as far as possible, adequate resources are provided for AIEIS

National Coordinator

- Responsible for the operation of the AIEIS field program in regard to:
 - the AIEIS model
 - program strategies, remote and urban, including targets, implementation of strategies and evaluation
- Financial coordination
- Coordinate the operation of the field program with state/territory supervisors
- Oversight of curriculum and motivational materials
- Participation in field officer selection panels
- Development of national selection criteria and associated documentation

Education Officer

- Development and production of curriculum and motivational materials
- Assisting in the evaluation of materials
- Provide advice to field officers on the use of materials
- Assist field officers with the development and production of local materials consistent with the direction of AIEIS

Australian Electoral Officer

- Liaison with state officials in conjunction with Director of Education if a policy change is envisaged

State/Territory Supervisors

- Responsible for the day to day operation of AIEIS within their state/territory
- Forward planning in conjunction with the National Coordinator
- Administrative support
- Management of allocated funds
- Responsible for all field officer activities from close of the rolls to one week following an election

- Recruitment of staff
- Ensuring that monthly reports are submitted within three days of the end of each month
- Forward estimates to National Coordinator
- Maintenance of equipment and inventories

Field Officers

- Implementation of the field program in their area of operation
- Monthly report on activities
- Participation in forward planning for their area
- Liaison/coordination with other agencies in their area of operation
- Maintenance and security of vehicles and equipment allocated to them

Source: Australian Electoral Commission 1991

Appendix F Acronyms

AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AEIS	Aboriginal Electoral Information Service
AEO	Australian Electoral Officer
AIEIS	Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
BRACS	Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme
CEIO	Community Electoral Information Officer
CDEP	Community Development Employment Project
CEA	Community Electoral Assistant
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DRO	Divisional Returning Officer
NARU	North Australia Research Unit
RRO	Regional Returning Officer
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

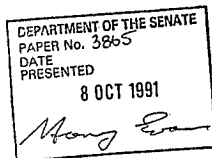
TABLED PAPER 3865/1990-92

**ABORIGINAL & ISLANDER ELECTORAL
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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

MONDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 1990

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP

Senator M Beahan
Senator B Harradine

1. Members met for an informal discussion at 4.20 pm.
2. PROGRAM FOR PROPOSED AEIS INQUIRY

Members agreed that:

- They would not hold an inspection during ATSIC elections on 3 November 1990. Rather there should be a briefing on the elections by the AEC prior to their being held as well as a briefing and report from the Commission following the elections. In that report it would be useful to get the views of the AEIS National Coordinator as well as some representatives from Aboriginal communities as to how well the elections progressed.
- An Aboriginal secondee would be essential to the successful facilitation of the inspections/informal discussions which the Committee plans to hold with Aboriginal communities next year.
 - If possible, Barbara Miller, the National Coordinator of AEIS would be the most suitable person for this task.
- The general inquiry program is acceptable as is the proposed public hearing/inspection schedule for 1991.
- Secretariat to identify the relevant contact person within the AEC for AEIS. Some background information is required on the number of people voting in the ATSIC elections, the location of ATSIC polling places, number of Aboriginal people in each federal electorate etc.

6-1-87

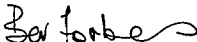
3. EMERGING ISSUES IN RELATION TO THE INQUIRY

The Members noted the draft background paper prepared by the Secretariat.

Senator Harradine suggested that it would be useful to keep a detailed record of press clippings in relation to ATSIIC so that the Committee can follow progress.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Members adjourned at 4.40 pm.



Bev Forbes
Secretary

17 September 1990



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DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 3865
DATE
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8 OCT 1991

Mary Evans

THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

INFORMAL BRIEFING

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 1990

CANBERRA

Present: Senator Beahan
Senator Harradine

Apologies: Mr C Miles MP



1. The subcommittee met at 4.35 pm.
2. **Informal Briefing on Electoral Aspects of ATSIC Elections**

The subcommittee was briefed by the following officers of the Australian Electoral Commission

Mr Brian Cox
Australian Electoral Commissioner

Mr Paul Dacey
Acting Assistant Commissioner
Development and Research

Mr Trevor Wilson
Acting Assistant Commissioner
Information and Education

ATSIC Electoral Co-ordinator

3. **Adjournment**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.00 pm.

Bev Forbes

Bev Forbes
Secretary

16 October 1990

THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 3865
DATE
PRESENTED

8 OCT 1991

Mary Evans

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 1

THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY 1991

CANBERRA



Present:

Mr C Miles MP

Senator M Beahan

Other Members of the Committee: Senator C Kernot

Apologies: Senator B Harradine

Private Meeting:

1. The subcommittee met at 9.05 am.

2. **MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE**

The Chairman noted that the inclusion of a woman on the subcommittee would facilitate the subcommittee's work, particularly during site inspections of traditional Aboriginal communities. Senator Kernot has agreed to join the subcommittee. Approval for this will be sought at the next full Committee meeting.

Senator Harradine informed the subcommittee Chairman that he will be resigning from the subcommittee due to other work pressures.

3. **INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH MS BARBARA MILLER**

The Chairman reported on an informal discussion held on 13 February with Ms Miller, National Co-ordinator of AIEIS, in which Ms Miller recommended that visits to Aboriginal communities be restricted to small groups and be conducted as unobtrusively as possible.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman reported that a letter has been written to the Australian Electoral Commissioner requesting that Ms Miller be available to assist the subcommittee and that the Commission assist with any expense involved.

The Secretariat reported that correspondence seeking submissions will be sent out within the coming week.

5. **ADVERTISING**

The subcommittee discussed advertising for the inquiry and concluded that press advertisements to cover North Queensland would be desirable. The secretariat is to investigate the possibility of advertising the inquiry in papers in Townsville, Cairns and Mackay. Other advertising avenues such as the Northern Territory Land Council paper and the Speaking Out Program on ABC radio were suggested. The secretariat agreed to look into this.

6. **STATUS REPORT ON THE INQUIRY**

The subcommittee noted the status report on the inquiry and agreed to the inquiry program.

7. **DRAFT ITINERARY FOR SITE INSPECTIONS**

The subcommittee noted the draft itinerary for site inspections in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and North Queensland. Difficulties concerning dates and the duration of the trip were noted and alternatives were discussed. It was decided that two trips were necessary to accommodate the difficulties posed by timing and distance. The secretariat is to prepare draft itineraries for two trips to occur between 28 April - 4 May and 17 May - 24 May.

8. **PUBLICATION OF SUBMISSIONS**

Resolved (Mr Miles) -

That submission Nos 13-18 be received as evidence as part of the Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service and pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2 (2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908* this Committee authorises publication.

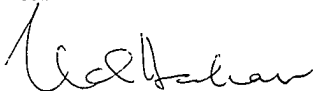
9. **ISSUES PAPERS ON AIEIS**

The subcommittee noted the issues papers on the inquiry.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9.45 am the subcommittee adjourned until the first week of the next sitting.

Confirmed



Senator Michael Beahan
Chairman



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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

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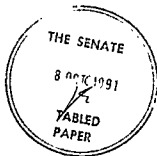
THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 2

TUESDAY 5 MARCH 1991

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator M Beahan

Other members of the Committee: Senator C Kernot

Apologies: Senator B Harradine

1. The subcommittee met at 1.12 pm.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of proceedings of the meeting of 21 February 1991 were confirmed.

3. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Chairman noted that replies to letters requesting submissions had been received.

4. **DRAFT ITINERARIES FOR SITE INSPECTIONS IN QUEENSLAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

The Chairman noted that Ms Barbara Miller will be unavailable to accompany the subcommittee on its North Queensland site inspection tour from 28 April to 3 May. The Australian Electoral Commission will be asked to nominate another officer.

Senator Kernot raised doubts about the availability of accommodation on Coconut Island. The secretariat agreed to investigate this.

The secretariat is to initiate the necessary action to begin arranging the subcommittee's travel and accommodation.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE**

The subcommittee agreed to the following public hearing program:

Monday 15 April 1991 (AEC, ATSCIC)

Monday 13 May 1991.

6. **INQUIRY BUDGET**

The subcommittee approved the proposed budget and its submission to the full committee.

7. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

The subcommittee discussed the solicitation of submissions and suggestions were called for regarding further individuals or organisations who might be approached.

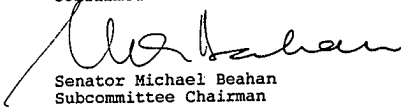
8. **NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting after the first public hearing.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 1.22 pm the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed



Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman



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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
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8 OCT 1991

Mary Evans

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 3

MONDAY 15 APRIL 1991

CANBERRA



Present:

Mr C Miles MP

Senator M Beahan

Senator C Kernot

PRIVATE MEETING

1. The subcommittee met at 9.12 am.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of proceedings of the meeting of 5 March 1991 were confirmed.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

The receipt of correspondence from the Hon Robert Tickner, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and the Australian Electoral Commissioner was noted. Other correspondence received and noted also.

Correspondence listed at Attachment A.

4. PUBLICATION OF SUBMISSIONS

Resolved (Mr Miles) -

That submission Nos 19 - 33 be received as evidence as part of the Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service and pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2 (2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908* this

Committee authorises publication.

Submission Nos 19 - 33 listed at Attachment B.

Also received: Exhibit No 1
 Community Electoral Assistant's Manual

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

- . Press and public admitted.
- . The Chairman opened the hearing and made a statement.
- . The following witnesses from the Australian Electoral Commission were called and examined together:

Mr Brian Cox
Australian Electoral Commissioner

Mr Trevor Willson
Assistant Commissioner
Information and Education

Ms Pamela Baxter
Acting Director
Education

Ms Barbara Miller
National Coordinator
Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

- . The witnesses withdrew.

The hearing resumed after a short break. The following witnesses from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission were called and examined together:

Mr Gerry Moore
Commissioner

Mr William Miller
General Manager
Policy Development Division

Mr Michael Stewart
Assistant General Manager
Regional Coordination Branch

Mr John Kelly
Manager
Liaison and Electoral Branch

Mr Roy Tatten
Assistant Director
Media and Communications

- . The witnesses withdrew.

6. PUBLICATION OF EVIDENCE

Resolved (Senator Kernot) -

That pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2 (2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908*, this subcommittee authorises publication of the evidence given before it at the public hearing this day.

7. ADJOURNMENT

At 12.15 pm the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Beahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman



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SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
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DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 3865
DATE
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8 OCT 1991

MONDAY 29 APRIL 1991 - THURSDAY 2 MAY 1991

INFORMAL BRIEFINGS

NORTH QUEENSLAND



Monday 29 April 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee commenced site inspections at Bamaga on Monday 29 April 1991. Discussions began at 1.00 pm.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Aboriginal and Islander Information Service

Mr George Dewis
Field Officer

Bamaga Community Council

Mr Waika Jawai
Chairperson
Mr Ronnie Jawai
Ms Deborah Wasiu
Mr Ned Motlo
Mr Waraka Adidi

New Mapoon Community Council

Mr Colin Bond
Chairperson

Mr Frank Sagigi
Mr Lenny Bond
Mr Mervyn Bond
Ms Vicki Kennedy

Seisia Community Council

Mr Joseph Elu
Chairperson
Mr Daniel Elu
Ms Dituni Elu
Ms Edna Gebadi
Mr Walter Elu

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 5.00 pm.

Tuesday 30 April 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee recommenced site inspections at Bamaga on Tuesday 30 April 1991. Discussions began at 9.30 am.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Injunoo Community Council

Mr Robertson Sabe
Council Clerk
Ms Annie Mosby

Bamaga State High School

Mr Graeme Jenkins
Principal

Umagico Community Council

Ms Helen Peters
Council Clerk

Mr Harry Salvador

Mr Charles Woosup

Mr Michael Namok

Department of Family Services and Aboriginal Affairs

Mr Rod Willie
Executive Officer

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 3.30 pm.

Wednesday 1 May 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted site inspections on Thursday Island on Wednesday 1 May 1991. Discussions began at 1.30 pm.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Port Kennedy Association

Mr Bill Shibasaki
Chairperson

ATSIC Regional Councillor

Ms Remina Fuji

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Mr Tim Cornforth
Regional Manager

Torres Strait Shire Council

Mrs L Filewood

Tamwoy Community Council

Mr Alan Ketchel
Chairperson

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 5.30 pm.

Thursday 2 May 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted informal briefings in Cairns on Thursday 2 May 1991. Discussions began at 1.30 pm.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Division of Leichhardt

Mr Gordon Taylor
Divisional Returning Officer

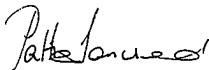
Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Mr Bill Sneider
Field Officer

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission

Mr Jeff Richardson
Regional Manager

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 4.30 pm.



Pattie Tancred
Subcommittee Secretary

11 June 1991

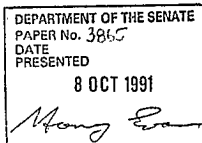


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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 4

TUESDAY 14 MAY 1991

CANBERRA



Present:

Mr C Miles MP

Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

Other members of the Committee: Senator J Faulkner

Private Meeting

1. The Subcommittee met at 1.10 pm.

2. DRAFT LETTER CONCERNING QUEENSLAND AIEIS FIELD OFFICER
CONTRACTS

The Chairman noted that a letter to Senator the Hon Nick Bolkus, Minister for Administrative Services, concerning the contracts of AIEIS field officers in Queensland had been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Acting First Clerk Assistant. The Chairman noted that the letter made no recommendations but rather drew the situation concerning the termination of field officer contracts to the Minister's attention.

It was agreed that the letter be sent to the Minister and the Chairman speak to the Minister about the contents.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of 15 April 1991 were confirmed.

4. PUBLICATION OF SUBMISSIONS

Resolved (Senator Kernot) -

That submission Nos 34-36 be received as evidence as part

of the Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service and pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2 (2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908* this Committee authorises publication.

Submission No. 34-36 listed at Attachment A.

5. **DRAFT ITINERARY FOR SITE INSPECTIONS IN WA**

The subcommittee noted and approved changes to the draft itinerary.

6. **EXTENSION OF THE AIEIS PROGRAM TO NSW**

The subcommittee noted that, as a result of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission's submission to the Inquiry, and at the instigation of Mr Robert Tickner, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Australian Electoral Commission had been requested by Senator Bolkus to put forward a policy proposal concerning the extension of the program to NSW. The Chairman agreed to discuss this matter with Senator Bolkus.

The subcommittee and Senator Faulkner discussed the desirability of undertaking site inspections in NSW to gather information concerning the possible extension of AIEIS into NSW. Possible approaches to the collection of information were discussed. It was agreed that:

- the NSW site inspections should focus on discussions with representatives of urban Aboriginal groups and communities
- submissions be solicited from Aboriginal groups in NSW; and that the Secretariat approach ATSIC to provide suggestions concerning possible contacts.

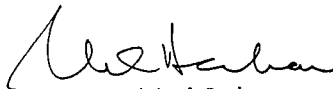
7. **QUEENSLAND SITE INSPECTIONS**

The subcommittee discussed their impressions of the site inspections in North Queensland.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 1.35 pm the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed



Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman

30 May 1991



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

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Murray Evans

THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE

INFORMAL BRIEFINGS

MONDAY 20 MAY 1991 - FRIDAY 24 MAY 1991

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE SENATE

8 OCT 1991

KE
TABLED
PAPER

Monday 20 May 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted informal briefings in Perth on Monday 20 May 1991. Discussions began at 9.30 am.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Australian Electoral Commission

Mr Barry Young

Mr Bill Elkins

Mr Adrian McDonald

Mr Pat Smyth

Mr Ian Stringall

Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Mr Ken Houghton
Field Officer

ATSIC Regional Council Perth

Mr Robert Riley
Chairperson

Mr Ron Santen
ATSIC Regional Manager

Mr Ian Thrum

Mr Laurie Butterly

Mr Peter Manning

Aboriginal and Islander Women's Congress

Mrs Laurel Winder
Chairperson

Cullacabardee Aboriginal Community

Mrs Ivy Mourish
Chairperson

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 5.00 pm.

Tuesday 21 May 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted informal briefings in Broome on Tuesday 21 May 1991. Discussions began at 12.00 noon
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Mrs Neenya Tessling
Community Electoral Assistant

Mr Johari Bin Demin
Community Electoral Assistant

Ms Donna Ifould
Community Electoral Assistant

Ms Ruth Bonser
Community Electoral Assistant

Gullarri ATSIC Regional Council

Mr John Cox
Acting Chairperson

Mr Stephen Albert

Mr Ivan Turner

Bidyadanga Community

Mr Wantilla Wright

Mumabulanjin Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Ronnie Roe
Chairperson

Ms Eileen Torres

Mallingbar Community

Mr Bill Stephen
Chairperson

Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Ms Katie Wigan
Community Electoral Assistant

Ms Sally Thomas
Field Officer

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 5.30 pm.

Wednesday 22 May 1991

Present: Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted informal briefings at One Arm Point on Wednesday 22 May 1991. Discussions began at 9.30 am.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

One Arm Point Community Council

Mr Philip McCarthy
Chairperson

Ms Lucy Wiggan

Mr Aubrey Tigan
Ms Lena Stumpage
Ms Irene Davy
Mr Eric Hunter
Mr Peter Hunter
Mr Colin Shovellor

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 11.30 am.
4. The subcommittee later conducted informal briefings at Lombadina/Djarindjin. Discussions began at 1.00 pm.
5. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Djarindjin Community Council

Mr Patrick Sampi
Chairperson
Ms Maureen Sampi
Mr Percy Shadforth

Lombadina Community Council

Mr Basil Sibosoda
Chairperson

6. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 2.15 pm.
7. The subcommittee later conducted informal briefings at Beagle Bay. Discussions began at 3.00 pm.
8. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Beagle Bay Community Council

Mr Matthew Cox
Chairperson
Ms Michelle Skinner
Mr Oliver Hunter
Ms Rosie Wunju

Ms Kathleen Shadforth

9. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 5.00 pm.

Thursday 23 May 1991

Present: Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted informal briefings at Halls Creek on Wednesday 22 May 1991. Discussions began at 2.00 pm.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Halls Creek Shire Council

Mr Malcolm Edwards
President

Mr Adrian Brahim

Mr Jossie Farrer

Mr Warren Delachy

Ms Bonney James

Mr Sam Butters

Mr David Skeen

Mr Philip Foster
Shire Clerk

Mr Bill Molloy
Assistant Shire Clerk

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 3.45 pm.
4. The subcommittee later conducted informal briefings at Turkey Creek. Discussions began at 6.00 pm.
5. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Warmun Community

Ms Judy Butters
Community Electoral Assistant
Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Ms Eileen Bray
Community Electoral Assistant
Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

Ms Shirley Bray
Community Electoral Assistant
Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service

6. The Subcommittee's discussions ended at 7.30 pm.

Friday 24 May 1991

Present: Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee conducted further informal briefings at Halls Creek on Friday 24 May 1991. Discussions began at 8.30 am.
2. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Ngoonjuwah Aboriginal Corporation

Mr John Green
Chairperson

Mr David Skeen

Ms Phyllis Gallagher

Mr Raymond Yeeda

Mr Sandy Cox

3. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 9.30 am.
4. The subcommittee later conducted informal briefings at Fitzroy Crossing. Discussions began at 1.00 pm.
5. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Eric Bedford
Chairperson

Ms Patsy Bedford

Mr John Hill

Ms Selina Middleton,

Ms Mavis Shirhal

6. The subcommittee's discussions ended at 2.30 pm.
5. The subcommittee later conducted an informal briefing in Derby. The discussion began at 5.30 pm.
6. The subcommittee was briefed by the following individuals and organisations:

Mr Kevin Fong
ATSIC Regional Manager

7. The Subcommittee's discussions ended at 7.30 pm.



Pattie Tancred
Subcommittee Secretary

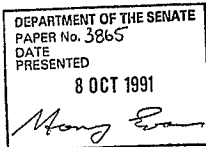
11 June 1991



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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 5

THURSDAY 30 MAY 1991

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

Private Meeting

1. The subcommittee met at 9.00 am.
2. The Subcommittee held an informal discussion with the following officers of the Australian Electoral Commission:

Mr Trevor Willson
Assistant Commissioner
Information and Education

Mr Paul Anderson
Director
Education

Mr Willson and Mr Anderson withdrew at 9.30 am.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of 14 May 1991 were confirmed.

4. **EXTENSION OF THE AIEIS PROGRAM TO NSW - COLLECTION OF INFORMATION**

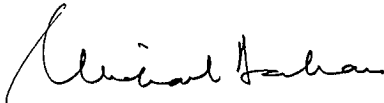
The subcommittee discussed options for the collection of information concerning the introduction of AIEIS into NSW and agreed to conduct informal discussions in Canberra with representatives of Aboriginal groups and organisations from NSW.

The secretariat is to approach Senator Faulkner, Mr Melham and ATSIC for suggestions concerning possible contacts and is to initiate action to organise an informal briefing.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9.50 am the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Beahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL
INFORMATION SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
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8 OCT 1991

INFORMAL BRIEFING

WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE 1991

CANBERRA



Present:

Mr C Miles MP
Senator Beahan (Chairman)
Senator Kernot

1. The subcommittee met at 10.00 am.
2. Informal Briefing on the Possible Introduction of AIEIS into NSW

The subcommittee was briefed by the following representatives of NSW Aboriginal organisations:

Mr Jack Beetson
ATSIC Regional Councillor
Assistant Director of Tranby Aboriginal College

Mr Cliff Foley
ATSIC Regional Councillor
NSW Aboriginal Land Council
Board of Directors, Tranby Aboriginal College

Ms Sandra Sue
Former Community Electoral Information Officer
Member Local Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council
ATSIC Housing Loans Officer.

3. The meeting adjourned at 11.45 am.

Pattie Tancred
Pattie Tancred
Subcommittee Secretary

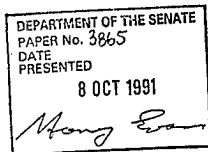
11 June 1991



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600
TEL (06) 277 2374
FAX: (06) 277 2067

THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 6

FRIDAY 21 JUNE 1991

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

Private Meeting

1. The subcommittee met at 10.45 am.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of 30 May 1991 were confirmed.

3. PUBLICATION OF EVIDENCE

Resolved (Senator Kernot) -

That submission No. 37 be received as evidence as par of the Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service and pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908* this subcommittee authorises publication and

Ordered (Mr Miles) -

That document No. 2 be received as an exhibit and included in the records of the Committee's Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service.

4. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT REPORT COVER AND OUTLINE

- Ms Coates reported on planning for the cover of the report. The subcommittee agreed to proceed with the design as proposed.

- The subcommittee approved the draft report outline.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The subcommittee noted Mr Santer's reply to the Chairman's letter.

6. **AIEIS REPORT VIDEO**

The subcommittee discussed the proposal to produce a video of the report and agreed to proceed.

The Chairman agreed to inform the full Committee about the video.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 11.10 am the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Beahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M".

Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman

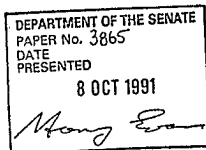


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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 7

TUESDAY 6 AUGUST 1991

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

Private Meeting

1. The subcommittee met at 10.20 am
2. DRAFT AIEIS VIDEO SCRIPT

The subcommittee discussed the draft video script and following some revision agreed to its use.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of 21 June 1991 were confirmed.

4. DRAFT REPORT ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

The Committee commenced its consideration of the draft report.

PARAGRAPH

DECISION

Chapter 1

- | | |
|----------|--------------------|
| 1.1-1.7 | agreed |
| 1.8 | amended and agreed |
| 1.9-1.21 | agreed |

Chapter 2

- | | |
|----------|--------------------|
| 2.1-2.4 | agreed |
| 2.5 | amended and agreed |
| 2.6-2.13 | agreed |

Chapter 3

3.1-3.5	agreed
3.6	amended and agreed
3.7-3.11	agreed
3.12	amended and agreed
3.13-3.23	agreed

Chapter 4

4.1-4.8	agreed
4.9	amended and agreed
4.10-4.15	agreed
4.16	amended and agreed
4.17-4.29	agreed
4.30	amended and agreed
4.31	amended and agreed

Chapter 5

5.1-5.3	agreed
5.4	amended and agreed
5.5-5.10	agreed
5.11	amended and agreed
5.12-5.13	agreed
5.14	amended and agreed
5.15-5.17	agreed
5.18	amended and agreed
5.19	amended and agreed
5.20-5.24	agreed
5.25	amended and agreed
5.26-5.29	agreed

Chapter 6

6.1-6.11	agreed
6.12	amended and agreed
6.13-6.20	agreed
6.21	amended and agreed
6.22-6.24	agreed


Chapter 7

7.1-7.5	agreed
7.6	deleted
7.7-7.11	agreed
7.12	amended and agreed

5. ADJOURNMENT

At 11.30 am the subcommittee adjourned until Tuesday
20 August 1991 at 12.45 pm.

Confirmed


Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman



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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 3865
DATE
PRESENTED

8 OCT 1991

Mary Evans

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 8

TUESDAY 20 AUGUST 1991

CANBERRA

THE SENATE

8 OCT 1991

JS
TABLED
PAPER

Present: Mr C Miles MP Senator M Beahan
Apologies: Senator C Kernot

Private Meeting

1. The subcommittee met at 12.55 pm.
2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of proceedings of the meeting of 6 August 1991 were confirmed.

3. DRAFT REPORT ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

The subcommittee continued its consideration of the draft report.

PARAGRAPH DECISION

Chapter 1

1.4	Amended and agreed
1.15	" " "

Chapter 2

2.3	" " "
2.12	" " "

Chapter 3

3.1	" " "
3.2	" " "
3.9	" " "

Chapter 4

4.2	"	"	"
4.3	"	"	"

Chapter 5

5.25	"	"	"
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Chapter 7

7.1	"	"	"
7.3	"	"	"
7.5-7.7	"	"	"
7.10-7.18	"	"	"

4. PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF AIEIS VIDEO

The Chairman outlined progress on the production of the subcommittee's video on the report. The video is scheduled for completion by Friday 23 August 1991.

Members discussed and agreed the proposed distribution of the video and suggested that its availability also should be announced when copies of the report are distributed.

The Chairman agreed to table the video with the report.

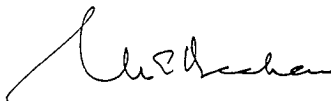
5. PAYMENT TO TERRY PLATT FOR ARTWORK

The subcommittee agreed that a payment of \$100 should be made to Terry Platt for the use of his artwork on the report cover and in the video.

6. ADJOURNMENT

At 1.20 pm the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed



Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman



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PAPER No. 3865
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THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

NO. 9

TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 1991

CANBERRA



Present:

Mr C Miles MP

Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

Private Meeting

1. The subcommittee met at 8.35 am.
2. DRAFT REPORT ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

The subcommittee continued its consideration of the draft report.

PARAGRAPH

DECISION

Chapter 1

- 1.1-1.3
- 1.4
- 1.5
- 1.6
- 1.7-1.9
- 1.10-1.11
- 1.12
- 1.13-1.16
- 1.17
- 1.18
- 1.19-1.20

Agreed
Amended and agreed
Agreed
Amended and agreed
Agreed
Amended and agreed
Agreed
Amended and agreed
Agreed
Amended and agreed
Agreed

Chapter 2

- 2.1-2.2
- 2.3

Agreed
Amended and agreed

2.4	Agreed
2.5-2.6	Amended and agreed
2.7-2.10	Agreed
2.11	Amended and agreed
2.12	Inserted and agreed
2.13-2.14	Agreed

Chapter 3

3.1-3.2	Agreed
3.3	Amended and agreed
3.4-3.6	Agreed
3.7	Amended and agreed
3.8-3.12	Agreed
3.13	Amended and agreed
3.14	Agreed
3.15-3.16	Amended and agreed
3.17	Agreed
3.18	Amended and agreed
3.19-3.24	Agreed
3.25-3.26	Amended and agreed
3.27-3.28	Moved from chp 5 and agreed

Chapter 4

4.1-4.2	Amended and agreed
4.3	Inserted and agreed
4.4	Amended and agreed
4.5-4.8	Agreed
4.9	Amended and agreed
4.10	Agreed
4.11-4.12	Amended and agreed
4.13-4.19	Agreed
4.20	Amended and agreed
4.21	Agreed
4.22	Amended and agreed
4.23-4.24	Agreed
4.25	Amended and agreed
4.26-4.27	Agreed
4.28-4.30	Amended and agreed
4.31	Agreed
4.32-4.33	Amended and agreed
4.34-4.36	Agreed
4.37-4.38	Amended and agreed
4.39	Agreed
4.40	Amended and agreed
4.41	Agreed

Chapter 5

5.1	Amended and agreed
5.2	Agreed
5.3-5.5	Amended and agreed
5.6-5.7	Agreed
5.8	Amended and agreed
5.9-5.10	Agreed
5.11	Amended and agreed
5.12-5.14	Agreed

5.15-5.18	Amended and agreed
5.19	Agreed
5.20	Amended and agreed
	New paragraph created
5.21	Amended and Agreed
5.22-5.24	Agreed
	New paragraph inserted
5.25- 5.26	Amended and agreed
5.27	Agreed
5.28-5.29	Inserted and agreed
5.30	Amended and agreed

Chapter 6

6.1	Agreed
6.2	Amended and agreed
6.3-6.4	Agreed
6.5-6.6	Amended and agreed
6.7	Agreed
6.8-6.10	Amended and agreed
6.11	Agreed
6.12-6.13	Amended and agreed
6.14	Agreed
6.15-6.16	Amended and agreed
6.17-6.18	Agreed
6.19	Amended and agreed
6.20	Agreed
6.21	Amended and agreed
6.22-6.24	Agreed

Chapter 7

7.1-7.3	Agreed
7.4	Amended and agreed
7.5-7.6	Agreed
7.7-7.8	Amended and agreed
7.9	Agreed
7.10	Amended and agreed
7.11-7.12	Agreed
7.13-7.14	Amended and agreed
7.15-7.16	Agreed
7.17-7.18	Amended and agreed

Table 1 and Figure 1	Agreed
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Appendices A-F	Agreed
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The draft report (as amended) was agreed to as the report of the subcommittee.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of 20 August 1991 were confirmed.

4. PUBLICATION OF EVIDENCE

Resolved (Mr Miles) -

That supplementary submission No. 38 from the Australian Electoral Commission be received as evidence as part of the 'Inquiry on the Aboriginal and Islander Electoral Information Service' and pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2(2) of the *Parliamentary Papers Act 1908* this subcommittee authorises its publication.

and:

Attachment 1 which had inadvertently been omitted from Submission No. 36 by the AEC was accepted and authorised for publication as part of the submission.

5. VIDEO ON THE AIEIS REPORT

The subcommittee watched the video on the report and agreed to it. The subcommittee thanked Mr Nicholls and Ms Beringer for their contribution to its production.

6. ADJOURNMENT

At 9.30 am the subcommittee adjourned until a time and date to be fixed by the Chairman.

Confirmed

Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman

NOT YET CONFIRMED BY SUBCOMMITTEE



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DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 3865
DATE
PRESENTED

8 OCT 1991

Mary Evans

THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
ELECTORAL INFORMATION SERVICE

NO. 10

THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 1991

CANBERRA



Present: Mr C Miles MP Senator M Beahan
Senator C Kernot

1. The subcommittee met at 8.35 am.

2. COVER FOR AIEIS VIDEO

The subcommittee agreed that a cover should be prepared for the AIEIS video using a similar design to that of the AIEIS report. The Secretary informed members that the cost would be about \$200-\$400 and that the video project was still within budget.

3. ADJOURNMENT

At 8.40 am the subcommittee adjourned until a date and time to be determined by the Chairman.

Confirmed

Senator Michael Beahan
Subcommittee Chairman