

Date: 26 June 2009

Senators endorse watchdog role

The report of a Senate Inquiry – released yesterday – has highlighted the work of UnitingCare Wesley's [Anangu Lands Paper Tracker](#) project and called for similar projects to be established in other jurisdictions.

Established in mid 2007, the [Anangu Lands Paper Tracker](#) project monitors State and Federal government commitments to South Australia's remote [Anangu](#) communities and advocates for the timely fulfilment of existing commitments.

The second report of the [Select Committee on Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities](#) was tabled in the Australian Senate yesterday.

In a section on 'Government accountability', the Committee notes the "high degree of frustration people feel about the lack of information and apparent lack of coordination between government agencies" operating in Aboriginal communities.

The report goes on to endorse the Paper Tracker project as "a good monitoring and accountability tool for Indigenous communities in South Australia" and:

... urges governments to consider supporting the establishment and operation of similar independent government monitoring and accountability projects in other states and territories.

"Obviously, we're pleased that the Committee has recognised the importance of what we're doing and, more broadly, for the need to find ways to improve government accountability," Mr Jonathan Nicholls, Manager for Indigenous Policy and Advocacy commented.

He continued: "This is an important report for South Australia's remote Aboriginal communities, full of sharp observations and strong recommendations. In the coming weeks, the Paper Tracker will be working hard to make sure Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people are aware of the report and its relevance for them."

UnitingCare Wesley is particularly pleased at the Committee's recommendation that additional funding and support be provided to [Homemaker Centres](#) on the APY Lands (Recommendation 7). "The importance of those centres shouldn't be underestimated," Mr Nicholls said.

The Select Committee's next report is due to be tabled in the Senate later this year.

UnitingCare Wesley self-funds the Paper Tracker project.

Further comment

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