

29/07/2025

QUESTION

Need for Government to Work with Elders

Mr GUYULA to MINISTER for ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Why will your government not work with Aboriginal leaders, communities and organisations to create solutions to current problems of crime and disadvantage?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, our government is working hard to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle, after Labor scrapped community government councils in 2008. It is important to recognise that not only did it scrap local government councils back in 2008, in 2005 it scrapped the Northern Territory Law and Justice Strategy. That is an important step which sets the Northern Territory back a number of years, in particular, the Law and Justice Agreement was signed 15 years after the Labor government scrapped the Law and Justice Strategy in the Northern Territory.

To add fuel to the fire, in 2022 the Labor government allowed the Stronger Futures legislation to lapse, causing chaos, putting women and the community at risk and leading to further alcohol-related harm across the Northern Territory.

We are working very closely with Aboriginal peak organisations. I co-Chair the Northern Territory Executive Council on Aboriginal Affairs with Dr John Paterson from APO NT. We are working together with Aboriginal peak bodies that include the four land councils. The work being done across the board not only includes the land councils, it includes NAAJA, the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network and Aboriginal Housing NT.

We are working with many organisations in tackling the root causes of crime. We are working through the \$4bn housing agreement to tackle housing in remote areas, \$1bn investment in education and working together to deliver the \$842m through the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment Agreement.

When it comes to working with Aboriginal organisations across the board we are doing what is needed to be done. We will continue to work across the board when it comes to tackling these issues, so when ...

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The Member for Mulka asked directly about community leaders in remote communities, not about organisations.

Madam SPEAKER: Take your seat. Please continue, minister.

Mr EDGINGTON: We are working with Aboriginal organisations and leaders across the board. One example is the establishment of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council. We are restoring real decision-making at the local level after leadership and council structures were taken away in 2008. We will continue to work with leaders ...

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr EDGINGTON: ... with leaders across the board when it comes to dealing with local government, to restoring leadership and building those structures to work with government in every remote area across the Northern Territory.

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