

Report of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body

High Tea | Friday 2 August 2013



RESPECT, RESILIENCE and REPRESENTATION:
the three Rs that define us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women



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PURPOSE

To continue the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body's (ATSIEB) engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the ACT, a high tea was held. The high tea provided an opportunity to:

- share insight on issues/concerns
- allow ATSIEB to share highlights and challenges during this term
- provide feedback on how ATSIEB can increase engagement in an effective manner
- discuss where to for the next 12 months
- network
- support each other.

SUMMARY

The event attracted 42 women ranging from CEOs, community, Commonwealth Government, ACT Government, and community organisations. The high tea enabled the women to network and share their concerns and issues. A welcome to country was provided by Aunty Agnes Shea. Lucky door prizes were also provided, one of the many highlights of the afternoon. The food and beverages were exceptional, and many comments were received on how lovely it tasted. The energy and vibe from all women, and positive feedback on such a fantastic event, was well received. The afternoon went very quickly, a testament to the success of the event. A pack was provided to all women that included the ATSIEB Strategic Plan, factsheets, protocols and 'Our community, our future'.

NEXT STEPS

- Provide report to attendees for information
- Arrange the next women's gathering in February/March 2014
- Continue to engage women

EVALUATIONS (30 evaluation forms received)

I liked:

- everything
- coming together
- strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women empowering each other
- atmosphere
- people
- food
- friendliness
- everyone was accepted and acknowledged
- networking
- not having a formal agenda
- social setting
- catching up
- opportunity to experience something never done before
- the information pack
- relaxing and taking time for ourselves

I would like to change:

- bigger or talking space
- nothing
- more private venue to be more personal and easier to hear
- ensure dietary requirements are catered for
- ensure each participant introduces themselves
- encouragement of discussions on questions/evaluations
- more community attending
- a list of key ATSIEB dates.

Most interesting part of today:

- food
- great people
- seeing my elders
- hearing from women
- seeing everyone
- conversations
- laughing
- interacting
- meeting women whom I have heard about
- meeting women whom I have never met before
- many women from various parts of community
- venue
- reconnecting
- listening
- working towards a common goal
- experiencing posh life
- the three R's
- having talk at beginning and leaving group to make up own minds to contribute
- what is happening in the ACT and what women want

Other suggestions:

- ongoing happy events
- quieter/private space
- talk to share ideas for future
- guest speaker to inspire and motivate
- event needs to happen more often
- casual events, less posh
- events that require you to talk to those you don't know and share
- sharing contact details
- another yarnning circle including lunch
- more time to talk and share
- event needs to be larger with more women invited
- a few games
- rotating tables to meet others

Overall how would you rate the event?

- Excellent (18)
- Good (4)

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS/FEEDBACK (30 received)

What are the best ways ATSIEB can/should engage with you?

- newsletter
- email
- phone
- community events/forums with a monthly theme
- facebook
- continued conversations
- as an information source
- more high teas
- a quiz night
- bushwalk and brunch
- information nights on specific issues e.g. health, housing, education
- having a young male and female representative
- raising profile with ACT directorates
- having a presence in the schools
- in the workplace, working collaboratively
- visiting professional places e.g. uni's
- informing community of ATSIEB roles and responsibilities
- continue to engage with key leaders
- provide updates to APS departments through Indigenous staff networks e.g. FaHCSIA

What are the three priority areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the ACT?

- networking—particularly for those working in mainstream
- mentoring
- education—no leadership in Indigenous unit
- empowerment
- equality of wages
- health—long waiting lists for specialist treatments/surgery, women's health and healing, mental health, dental
- housing—affordability, additional, safe community, homelessness
- employment and career development
- childcare
- support
- youth—including those disengaged from school
- young men—having role models
- young people in custody
- happiness—joy and peace
- funding
- happy communities
- domestic, family and lateral violence—education programs
- social justice
- family
- leadership and personal growth
- cultural programs—for whole of family, in contemporary society, traditional protocols, respect
- care and protection, out of home care—stop kids being removed from families
- isolation
- throughcare model
- what is happening in the community
- how things are going
- what is the future
- sexual assault
- identified support services and workers
- social inclusion
- accredited training
- services for new mums and young mums

What suggestions do you have that will ensure more community participates in ATSIEB elections in 2014?

- shorter term of members
- more community talks
- involving school kids through disco's or sports
- promoting awareness of events with a wider outreach
- bringing along someone
- using networks
- youth involvement
- ensure people are enrolled to vote
- use the community bus
- more family oriented events
- focus on wider advertising, outside ACT Indigenous email network
- members with more profile in the community
- early and regular promotion
- use social media
- information nights
- discussion at NAIDOC events
- polling booths at shopping centres and community centres
- at local Indigenous organisations
- utilise media
- more involvement with community during NAIDOC
- women's and men's gatherings
- communication strategy, promoting benefits
- allow voting for two weeks, for those who travel during NAIDOC

Where should ATSIEB have a presence?

- education system—identity fraud is a concern, creates negative statistics
- at significant events
- multicultural centre
- in the workplace at team meetings
- at community events
- everywhere
- ACT Government
- local Indigenous organisations
- holding ACT Government accountable for Indigenous funding
- cultural centre
- Bimberi Youth Justice Centre
- Alexander Maconochie Centre
- Indigenous service providers
- community health centres
- APSC Diversity Council

What events would you like to attend in the next 12 months?

- 4 meetings
- more NAIDOC events
- bridge walk
- another high tea
- events held all throughout year
- more women's gatherings
- family days
- networking events
- gatherings for youth, elders and community
- camping weekend

What role would you like to play with ATSIEB?

- show my concerns to see if elected body can do something—concern about state of Indigenous education
- being involved to contribute and support
- provide feedback
- continuing to support the women's leadership that exists
- to have a visible presence so more community know who members are
- adviser
- through interagency meetings linking ACT Government and community

Have you seen any ATSIEB material?

- first time I have read/seen material
- more advertisements and letters
- heard of hearings
- involvement with Community Services Directorate
- new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unit
- not seen or aware of website
- attending women's yarning circles—need more youth involved
- aware of members
- need to ensure feedback is provided back to community who don't have access to internet
- would like more information on how ATSIEB is engaging with ACT Government and what the outcomes are