

SENATOR THE HON KIM CARR

MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, INDUSTRY,
SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Professor Michael Dodson AM
Chairperson
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies
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CANBERRA ACT 2601

23 FEB 2010

Mick
Dear Professor Dodson

I am pleased to provide you with my Statement of Expectations (SoEs) for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies (AIATSIS).

The SoEs consolidate and refine the Government's expectations of AIATSIS. It includes reference to the Government's priorities for research and innovation, strategic direction, research excellence, local and international collaboration, training of researchers, communications with myself and my Department, and encouragement of public debate and the independence of AIATSIS.

I have asked the Research Agencies Section within my Department to be available to assist in developing your Statement of Intent which I expect to focus on how the Council will meet my expectations specified in the SoEs.

I look forward to receiving the Council's response via a Statement of Intent by 31 March 2010 and to working with you over the coming year.

Yours sincerely

Kim Carr

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES (AIATSIS)

As the Minister with overall responsibility for policy matters falling within the Innovation, Industry, Science and Research portfolio, I am committed to the Government's innovation agenda outlined in *Powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century*.

The Australian Government intends to make the best use of resources; to encourage research organisations to attract the best and brightest minds to conduct world-class research thus fuelling the innovation system with new knowledge and ideas; and requires researchers to work collaboratively to address national and global challenges.

Australia's public research capacity is critical to the national innovation system. It generates knowledge and ideas that lead to new and improved products, processes, policies and programs. This kind of research yields important economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for Australia. The public research system also trains Australia's research workforce, producing people with specific skills and tacit knowledge that can be applied in government, industry, and the research sector itself to generate home-grown innovations and help us absorb innovations from elsewhere.

My expectation is the Council of the Institute will ensure that AIATSIS plays an active role in implementing Australia's innovation agenda.

Priorities for research and innovation

I expect the Council to ensure that AIATSIS undertakes research and delivers outcomes relevant to the National Research Priorities.

I also expect AIATSIS to undertake activities that support the National Innovation Priorities as outlined in the Innovation White Paper *Powering Ideas*.

Strategic direction

I expect the Council to ensure that AIATSIS pursues excellence in the performance of its functions outlined in the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989*.

I expect the Council to develop and implement a corporate plan that sets out the broad objectives for AIATSIS and outlines the policies and strategies to be pursued by AIATSIS. In developing this plan, I expect the Council to have regard for the current policies of the Government, including the Government's National Research Priorities and National Innovation Priorities. The corporate plan is to be reviewed on an annual basis and I expect to receive an update on AIATSIS's performance against the corporate plan.

I also expect that the Council will review its performance, composition and skill base at regular intervals to ensure it is operating efficiently, effectively and with regard for the principles of good corporate governance. I expect that every second review will be an independent review.

It is important that AIATSIS enhances and maintains its links with Government policies and programs through regular liaison with the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research and other relevant Australian Government departments and agencies.

Research excellence

In line with its tradition of research excellence, I expect that AIATSIS will conduct research at world class levels in fields relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, as measured by international performance benchmarks. Such benchmarks include publication of research articles, books and chapters, as well as national and international awards. Similarly, AIATSIS should continue to carry out and initiate high-quality research that addresses national challenges. In tackling national challenges I expect that AIATSIS will investigate complex problems and undertake multidisciplinary research.

National and international collaboration

I expect AIATSIS to foster national and international collaboration with a variety of organisations including other Publicly Funded Research Agencies and universities. I also expect AIATSIS to encourage other bodies to undertake research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies.

I expect AIATSIS to work towards improving Australia's productivity and competitiveness by working in collaboration with industry, including small and medium enterprises.

I expect AIATSIS to be a national centre for research on Indigenous studies, attracting national and international visitors to work at AIATSIS and utilise the collections.

Training of researchers

In order to sustain Australia's quality system of research, I expect AIATSIS to promote careers in research and also provide a career path for researchers, particularly Aboriginal persons and Torres Strait Islanders. AIATSIS should develop its researchers by investing in their training and assisting in their training where possible and appropriate.

I also expect AIATSIS to promote and support the research sector by facilitating access by university students to AIATSIS facilities.

Encouragement of public debate and the independence of the public research agencies

In accordance with the Public Research Agencies Charter I encourage the independence of research. I support the freedom of researchers to debate and question in order to test their work, in both a peer review setting and in the public arena.

I expect AIATSIS to provide the Government with independent technical advice as required. I also expect AIATSIS to inform the policy making process to assist the Government to decide how to best meet the challenges Australia faces. It can do this by conducting the highest quality research and providing the best available knowledge to government and the public, and by engaging in the public discussion and consideration of its research and findings.

Fostering research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies

I expect AIATSIS to take a leadership role in the ethical conduct of research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples and to provide support and advice on the conduct of research.

I expect AIATSIS to publish the work of researchers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, particularly Indigenous authors.

Research Collections Infrastructure

I expect AIATSIS to continue to develop its world class Indigenous collections that support research into Indigenous studies.

I also expect AIATSIS to maintain the collection and provide access to the materials for use by Indigenous communities and researchers.

AIATSIS should collaborate to ensure that its collections are discoverable through online catalogues and other Internet-based resources as a part of Australia's research collections infrastructure.

Transfer of research outputs to industry and the community

The community should benefit from the work of AIATSIS. I expect that AIATSIS will communicate its research and technical knowledge to the community through the publication of peer reviewed scientific and technical papers and through access to its cultural resource collection.

I also expect that the community should have an understanding of the work AIATSIS conducts. To this end AIATSIS should actively raise community awareness and understanding of its activities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies.

Communications with the Minister and the Department

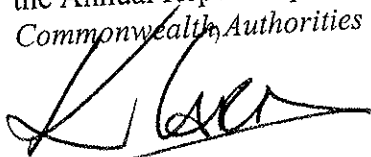
I expect AIATSIS to inform me and the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research of significant issues relating to the agency in a timely manner. I expect AIATSIS to provide information, including copies of ministerial briefings and correspondence, to the relevant area in the Department in parallel to providing it to me and my staff. I emphasise the role of the Secretary of my Department in supporting and advising me on matters related to AIATSIS. In order to effectively undertake this task, I expect AIATSIS and my Department to work in collaboration to maintain an appropriate level of awareness and understanding of each other's operations and priorities.

I look forward to regular meetings between myself and the Chair of the Council, and expect the Council to engage with me regarding Council appointments and the appointment of a Principal. I look forward to participating in an effective relationship, in which AIATSIS and my Department continue to work in strong collaboration.

Performance monitoring and review

This Statement of Expectations will be reviewed annually by my Department, subject to changes of Minister or Government.

I expect the Council to brief me in writing detailing the performance of AIATSIS against the criteria set out in this Statement of Expectations. This will complement the Annual Report required of all Publicly Funded Research Agencies under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.



Senator the Hon Kim Carr
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

25th
February 2010