DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIGENOUS YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

SCHEDULE 4.6

Under review March 2004

SCHEDULE TITLE

Development of an Indigenous Youth Leadership Program

Issues

*The parties agree that the issues to be addressed are:*

- The Northern Territory Government will pursue a policy and strategy to Build Stronger Regions.
- Some communities of the NT are perceived to have become dysfunctional areas of arrested development in the past ten or more years in social, economic and environmental senses.
- Remote regions need an active interventionist approach to leadership development.
- A program for Indigenous youth leadership would need to connect with existing capacity building and service delivery activities, as well as being structured and sustained over a sufficient period to provide a wide range of opportunities for action learning and feedback to be accessed by participants.
- An Indigenous Youth Leadership Program needs to be connected, strategically, with the expressed needs of young people.
- There is a perceived intergenerational skills gap between current leaders and future leaders of indigenous communities. Whatever the reality of the “gap”, there is evidence that past and current approaches to education of youth are not producing sufficient outcomes for leaders to develop.
There does not appear to be significant opportunity for young people from remote communities to be involved in development programs. Young leaders from remote communities miss out on the value of these programs - their communities denied capacity for leadership development.

There are numbers of younger people at Port Keats demonstrating leadership skills and potential, as leaders of their "gang", otherwise described as a faction or family group of young people. However, these individuals have had little apparent desire or opportunity to channel leadership in a positive direction.

For a long time Port Keats has had social problems resulting from a lack of direction and boredom among younger residents. Older people who have been actively involved in trying to address the problems within the community are reported to be exhausted and in need of assistance from other community members.

The Community Development Employment Programs (CDEP) is the only program that is reported to have significant participation. Experience in other places suggests that CDEP programs work best to build capacity when linked to other programs or strategies.

Goals
The goals of the proposed program are to:

- Engage youth in the governance of Wadeye
- To create incentives for youth engagement
- Develop knowledge and understanding of issues that impact on their community;
- Facilitate resourcefulness and life skills.
- To develop youth capacity.
- To build bridges with Thamarrurr leaders.
- Improve youth wellness.
- To build pride, confidence and resilience.
- Construct futures for Wadeye youth.
- To contribute positively to the community.

Strategies
The parties agree the key strategies they will employ are:
• An Indigenous Youth Leadership Program is developed and refined initially within the Wadeye (Port Keats) region and communities of interest.

• The development of content and learning activities for the indigenous youth leadership program will use and build on the capacity of expertise at the Northern Territory University and the resultant program will:
  o Provide leadership facilitation that can be provided to current and potential young Indigenous leaders across the Northern Territory.
  o Acknowledge that parents lack family leadership and life skills to teach children, therefore the program should encourage adults to be part of youth activities, so that parents or adults play and active role in the development of their children/youth.
  o Recognise that Aboriginal tradition and culture needs to underpin the youth program. Hence the program be based on positive Aboriginal cultural values and include activities that reinforce these positive cultural values.

• The goals and strategic actions identified by the Wadeye Youth Working Group are included as aims of the Wadeye Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.

• The input and advice from Wadeye youth is sought and incorporated into program design.

• Funding is sought from private sector/philanthropic sector partners (eg. The Foundation for Young Australians and BHP Billiton).

Phase 2

• Explore resource mechanisms and program options for a similar initiative to be developed for the southern region.

Performance Indicators

The parties agree the indicators to be used are:

• Those indicators developed by the social policy research advisor for CDSCA