

# AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL INCLUSION BOARD

---

## Outcomes of the meeting of the Board on 2 April, 2009

---

### 1 Welcome

- The Board noted apologies from Elleni Bereded-Samuel, Fiona Stanley and Tony Nicholson, and that Ahmed Fahour would join the meeting by telephone.
- The Chair welcomed the Acting Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, to the meeting.

### 2 Discussion with the Acting Prime Minister

- The Acting Prime Minister advised Board members that:
  - › Although the economic circumstances have changed over the past year, the Board should continue to focus on the initial three priorities, having regard to the changing environment.
  - › The government needs to support people who are suffering impacts of the downturn, whilst continuing to focus on the deeply disadvantaged. She wants Australia to emerge from the economic crisis stronger and fairer.
  - › In particular, she is concerned about young people who will have reduced opportunities and early labour market disadvantage and middle-aged people who are less likely to re-enter the market after recession – their circumstances are likely to impact significantly on their current and future families.
  - › Innovative ways are sought to stem the flow of people into disadvantage in an environment of fiscal tightening – opportunities include shaping one-off stimulus investments and modifying universal platforms to progress social inclusion. She is particularly interested in cross-portfolio and cross-government ideas.
  - › She agrees that communications and measurement are important priorities for the Board. It is important to reinforce the message that we are all in this together and that the broader community is standing shoulder to shoulder with those who are suffering.
  - › There is room to contribute to the agenda at many levels – vision, measurement and analysis capacity, better sharing of knowledge about what works, better models for collaboration, coordination and partnership. This input can be made at the level of national policy, or quite specific advice on practical models for local communities.

### 3 Board's advice and priorities for 2009

The Board:

- noted the paper *Responding to the Global Economic Slowdown: Improving the Social and Economic Participation of Disadvantaged Australians*.
- agreed to recommend to the Deputy Prime Minister that the Government should

include in future labour market strategies:

- › creating job opportunities for disadvantaged groups, through fostering sustainable social enterprises; and
  - › making targeted use of social procurement measures to support social enterprises and encourage all sectors of the economy to employ disadvantaged job-seekers;
- agreed to provide further strategic advice on delivery of a proposed model for supporting social enterprise.

The Board agreed that their four priorities for 2009 would be:

### **1 Communication**

- › Increasing awareness and understanding of social inclusion through Board members' meetings, speaking engagements and communication products. This would include the social inclusion principles, and exploring and testing ideas being developed for the ten-year plan on social inclusion. The Board could also advise the government on effective communication about social inclusion.
- › The Board's first annual report would be a major component of this priority, and would also link with measuring social inclusion.

### **2 Measuring social inclusion**

- › Providing input and advice to the Government on its performance measurement and reporting framework for social inclusion in Australia.
- › The Board's compendium of headline social inclusion indicators, to be released in May 2009, and a proposal for a single indicator or index of social inclusion will be components. The Board's first report on social inclusion will also link to this priority.

### **3 Strategic advice on the three early priorities**

Within the three early priority areas of jobless families, children at greatest risk of long-term disadvantage and locations with concentrated disadvantage, advice on the following strategic issues:

#### **Social innovation / Social enterprise to support jobless families**

- ▣ What models or elements of effective models of social enterprise or innovation could be supported or prioritised through the Government's \$650m Jobs Fund.
- ▣ How social enterprises could deliver flexible and innovative training for low skilled adults and how the government could support this.

#### **Welfare conditionality (jobless families and children at risk of long term disadvantage)**

- ▣ What is the evidence about welfare conditionality and whether, and in what situations, it can work effectively to achieve social inclusion outcomes?

#### **Engaging children at risk of separating from school and education**

- ▣ Effective models to engage and re-engage multiply disadvantaged and disengaged young people, to inform proposed work on Youth Attainment

and Transitions being progressed through MCEETYA and potentially COAG.

- This work will include:
  - » Supporting transitions to university and recommendations of the Bradley review of higher education
  - » Raising expectations and standards of quality secondary education for remote Indigenous children – e.g. availability of quality secondary schools with boarding infrastructure and appropriate social and cultural supports in regional centres closer to country.

#### **Addressing health inequalities for socially excluded groups (children at risk of long term disadvantage and/or in locations of concentrated disadvantage)**

- How government could deliver better health responses, through an understanding of how drivers of exclusion relate to lifestyle, motivation and poor health outcomes.

#### **Community resilience (locations of concentrated disadvantage)**

- Simple advice on how to build resilient communities (including resources, infrastructure and community engagement required) that can be used in rebuilding communities after catastrophic events (e.g. bushfires, drought floods) and also in new developments and strengthening disadvantaged locations.
- How government could support community resilience, through an understanding of effective models of engagement and partnership, including how these could be applied to government service delivery.

#### **4 Inclusive delivery models**

Provide ongoing advice to the government on how upcoming initiatives in the three early priority areas (locational disadvantage, jobless families and children at greatest risk of long term disadvantage) can be delivered in ways that are socially inclusive way and achieve the best outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded members of the community.

In particular, the Board will consider whether members can work with specific communities selected for Government focus, to learn about what works, provide advice where appropriate and act as a champion for those communities. The Board will also consider how it can contribute to monitoring and reviewing progress in the selected locations.

---

#### **4 Compendium of Headline Social Inclusion Indicators**

The Board:

- endorsed the final Compendium content for design and print publication;
- noted that the final draft Compendium incorporates additional material identified at the February Board meeting; and
- agreed the plan for release of the Compendium.

---

## 5 Identifying priority locations

The Board:

- agreed to provide advice to the Deputy Prime Minister about identifying:
  - › broader regions and smaller locations that are deeply disadvantaged, including remote communities; and
  - › locations vulnerable to the economic downturn, including growth areas; and
- noted the updated summary of the intersection of locational issues.

---

## 6 Chair's report

The Board noted the Chair's report on:

- outcomes of the Community Response Taskforce meeting on 3 March 2009, which Tony Nicholson attended on the Chair's behalf; and
- meeting with Chairs of other advisory groups, also on 3 March 2009.

---

## 7 Other business

- The Board agreed that Patricia Faulkner, Ngiare Brown, Kerry Graham and John Falzon would meet with the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission to provide input following the release of their interim report.
- The Board agreed to consider a proposal at the May 2009 meeting on elements of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*.
- The next meeting will proceed on the scheduled date of 27 May 2009 in Kempsey, NSW.

---

## 8 Social Inclusion website and online collaboration

The Board:

- noted the recent upgrade to the Social Inclusion website, presented by Senator Stephens and including additional material and new architecture; and
  - agreed that a space will be established on GovDex for online collaboration among Board members.
-