

AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL INCLUSION BOARD

Outcomes of the Inaugural meeting on 21 May, 2008

Item	Outcome
<p>1 Social Inclusion and a stronger, fairer Australia</p>	<p>The Board noted the Prime Minister's speech on the need for and significance of the government's social inclusion agenda, including that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ social inclusion is about securing a future for all Australians – a fair go for all and a helping hand for the most disadvantaged; ▪ it is not just about economics, but about people having the opportunity to fully participate in society; ▪ the government wants to act on causes, not symptoms; and ▪ the government wants to achieve concrete and measurable outcomes, through programs and services that work and make a difference. <p>In particular, the Prime Minister identified the potential to work through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ early intervention; ▪ building and adapting services to meet individual needs, (no more one size fits all); ▪ building capability and lifting skills through education and training; and ▪ building partnerships with business, communities, and local organisations to foster ground-up solutions.
<p>2 The Government's social inclusion agenda and its expectations of the Board</p>	<p>The Board noted the Deputy Prime Minister's speech, including that government is asking the Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ focus work on some areas initially, with a view to broadening the focus over time; ▪ keep the agenda connected to the parallel work on homelessness and employment for people with a disability; ▪ work as a first priority on jobless families and children at greatest risk of disadvantage, taking a locational approach as necessary; and ▪ Note that parallel work will be undertaken on developing a National Compact with the Third Sector. <p>The Board also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that a feedback mechanism will be established to seek the Board's views on how to coordinate the social inclusion agenda across the various streams of work being progressed through COAG between its July and October meetings; ▪ that part of the role of the Board is to help to explain to the community what the social inclusion agenda means; ▪ that the Social Inclusion Committee of Cabinet will coordinate the government's consideration of social inclusion issues across government, including advice provided by the Board; ▪ that responding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and closing the gap is an important element of the agenda; and ▪ people living with disabilities and people living with a mental illness will also be important target groups.
<p>3 Members' expertise and areas of interest</p>	<p>The Board noted the range and depth of experience, knowledge and commitment of Members and the particular issues, proposals and target groups Members have an interest in.</p>

4	Administrative Arrangements	<p>The Board noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ terms of reference; ▪ code of conduct; and ▪ arrangements to deal with potential or perceived conflicts of interest. <p>The Board also agreed to a communications protocol.</p>
5	Focusing social inclusion in the Australian context	The Board noted the presentation by the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on the dimensions of social inclusion, the implications for Australia and possible mechanisms to respond.
6	Hume Global Learning Centre	<p>The Board noted a presentation from Mr Domenic Isola, CEO of the Hume Global Learning Centre, on the history and establishment of the centre, and its impact on the community of Broadmeadows.</p> <p>The Centre provides access to resources including state-of-the-art multimedia equipment, computer and Internet training programs, seminar and meeting rooms, an exhibition space, and Broadmeadows' first public library - The Age Library. The Centre was established despite scepticism that the people of Hume would use such a facility, but instead the community of Hume is taking the opportunity to share in information, education and other services that foster learning and achievement.</p>
8	A national compact with the third sector	The Board noted a presentation by the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector on the development of a National Compact with the Third Sector.
7	Social Inclusion – possible priorities	<p>The Board agreed jobless families as a priority for future work, noting that further information on the characteristics of these families is needed to inform the Board's advice on how best to intervene and measure improvements for these families.</p> <p>The Board agreed children at greatest risk of long-term disadvantage as a priority for future work, noting that further information on successful international interventions, on possible critical intervention points, and on prospects for young people living with mental illness is needed to inform the Board's deliberations in this area.</p> <p>The Board agreed locational disadvantage as a priority for future work, noting that developing national community infrastructure standards for new housing developments could be an early focus. The Board noted the settlement of a standard framework to identify the most disadvantaged locations is needed. The Board also noted that further information on the coincidence of unemployment and labour shortages could reveal particular opportunities for location-based interventions.</p> <p>Other areas for possible future work were canvassed and will be discussed further at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Board agree to provide input to the development of the Homelessness White Paper and the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy, both expected to be released later in 2008.</p>
9	Developing the Board's program of work	The Board agreed that consulting with people living with mental illness or disability should be an early consultation priority.
10	Other business	The Board did not consider any other business
11	Next meetings	The Board agreed to settle dates and venues for future meetings out-of-session.