



# **Capacity Building Needs of Queensland Indigenous Councils**

## **Scoping Report Presentation**

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## **Outline of presentation**

- 1. Context**
- 2. Scoping study method**
- 3. Priority needs**
- 4. Responses, past and present**
- 5. Future response - A national framework  
for rural-remote and Indigenous councils?**



## Context: Qld Indigenous Councils

- 1984: Administration of reserves handed over from State Government & churches to local councils (granted local government status)
- 2004: Further adoption of mainstream local government model (Shire Council status)



## Context: Qld Indigenous Councils

- 14 Aboriginal shire councils and 2 Indigenous regional councils ranging from 200 to 3000 residents
- Mayor + 4 councillors; elected every 4 years by community at large; compulsory voting



## Case study findings: What makes an Aboriginal Council successful?

### Contextual factors

Education and skills

Exposure to outside world

Overcoming dependency

'Whole of community' egalitarian norm

### Successful governance attributes

Separation of powers

Rule of law

Strategic vision

Effective, stable and supported administration

Community engagement

Strategic engagement with government

Council performance

## Priority capacity-building needs

- Governance practices (strategic vision & planning, leadership, separation of powers, policies & procedures)
- Senior staff recruitment and retention
- Training and development of local staff
- Operational planning & project management skills





## Priority capacity-building needs

- HRM systems and practices
- Financial management
- Asset management
- Compliance burden
- Engagement with government
- Community engagement



## Evaluation of previous responses

- Limited resources prior to 2004
- Community Governance Improvement Strategy 2004-2008
- Indigenous Councils Skills Bank 2007
- Indigenous Council Task Force 2009
- Financial controllers
- Bureau approach



## Current responses

- Short, targeted training
- Financial management & systems focus
- Intensive Council engagement using experienced local govt professionals
- Focus on mentoring and coaching



## Future responses

- Governance training
  - delivered on-site with real world scenarios
  - adapted to Indigenous learning styles
  - delivered by experienced professionals
- Staff training
  - financial management
  - HR management
  - operational planning and project management
  - capacity to engage with government
- Coaching and mentoring



## Future responses

- Workforce development
  - opportunities for experience outside community
  - Skills Bank model
  - attraction of high quality CEOs – accreditation system
- Peer support and networking
  - more face to face events for remote staff
  - online networking and training



## Future responses

- Reform to reduce compliance burden
  - do compliance requirements improve outcomes?
  - what is the optimal level of regulation/reporting?
- Structural reform and collaborative arrangements
- Sharing of best practice resources
  - clearinghouse of precedents, policies, templates
  - benchmarking performance
- Financial and asset management
- Systems for finance, HR and IT

**Thank you**

