



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

OPTIONS TO DRIVE ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Discussion paper released today

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
7 JULY 2016

‘Despite decades of investment and goodwill by successive governments, there continues to be an unacceptable level of disadvantage in Aboriginal communities,’ said Greg Pearce, Chair of the State Development Committee. Part of this inquiry’s focus is to consider options for the sustainability and capacity building of Aboriginal communities and enterprises,’ he said.

‘Aboriginal development is socially responsible and a key function of government,’ Mr Pearce continued. ‘The NSW Government has taken some positive steps through its OCHRE strategy, however there continues to be a lack of urgency and accountability, and only siloed responses. Economic development promises better lifestyle outcomes, including those related to health and wellbeing, in Aboriginal communities; better social and community engagement, and significant savings to the state budget,’ he said.

‘This discussion paper focuses on a number of key themes that were highlighted as being fundamental to enhancing Aboriginal economic development,’ Mr Pearce said. ‘They include the need for a strong coordinating agency to drive economic reform; the need to develop and harness capacity building opportunities at an individual level, as well as within Aboriginal land councils and enterprises and the private sector; and the need to ensure that the opportunities envisaged by the returning of land to Aboriginal communities under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* are able to be realised,’ he said.

‘The discussion paper asks a number of questions about what specific actions can be taken and by whom to address some of these issues. We strongly encourage individuals, government and non-government organisations, and the private sector to provide a submission in response to any or all of the questions asked in the paper,’ Mr Pearce stated.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 5 August 2016. Submissions should be lodged online at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/statedevelopment.

For more information please visit the committee’s website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/statedevelopment.

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*For further comment please contact the Hon Greg Pearce MLC,
Committee Chair, on 9230 2328*