

**Submission
No 24**

**INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN
ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES**

Name: Mr Graham Clarke & Ms Carolyn Caddy
Harry Nanya Tours

Date received: 16/12/2015

Monday 5th October 2015

Attention Cathryn Cummins
NSW Legislative council

email state.development@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Cummins

I thank you for your time on the phone to discuss my issues on Tuesday 29th September.

To recap my story for you

My name is Graham Clarke I am a traditional aboriginal person of Paakantji (Barkindji) descent & owner/operator of a company called Harry Nanya Tours which has been operating tours to Mungo National Park since 1992. I have been working for the company since 1994 and with Tourism Aust, NSW & Vic have highly promoted Mungo to become an export product and proud Tourism Australian Indigenous Champion.

I purchased the company with my partner in 2007 since then I continued to grow the business. I was employing my own people and initiating start up of new businesses for the local aboriginal community to own and benefit from and all was proudly being achieved by the companies own income.

During the months of October 2010 to Feb 2011 we experienced extreme rains out this way & the national park & roads were closed so we were unable to operate our tours. Through good business we survived and felt things would get back on track & we could proceed on with our future plans of expansion.

In March 2011 operators were invited to a meeting with NPWS local Buronga office where they casually told operators they were starting their own tours through what they called a Discovery program which originally was only operated on school holidays. There was no official notification that our licence holders OEH, NSW NP were going into competition with their own licensed commercial operators.

The local Buronga office started out selling their tours for only \$10 per person which is an insult to the aboriginal people & no small business could compete with, they have had a small increase in February 2014 but with the massive marketing campaign & undercutting commercial business & insistence that their own website be used under all promotions the bottom line of it is my business has been uncut and my market stolen as a result.

Myself & my business have been competed with, hindered and interfered with by people associated with the local office these issues have been detrimental to not only my business but to the advancement of Mungo National Park & my local indigenous community.

After many meetings with numerous staff throughout OEH to no avail we contacted the NSW Ombudsman that said they would not get involved as operating tours was considered a trading & commercial function. We also found out that government can go into business but they must adapt the competitive neutrality, which has still not been done and they have no discovery policy in place. Also to be noted is their Discovery program has not created any long term jobs for the aboriginal people they are still on training programs and casual positions.

In February 2013 the newly formed tourism department had used my image in promotion of Aboriginal tour guides wanted poster and now have used my company name in their Cultural Tourism Development program, this has been done without my permission and under normal circumstances I would of been proud to be used in this manner if the local office had not gone all out to try to shut me down. I had already spent 20 years in tourism and had established a good governed business through the tourism industry locally & internationally and resent the fact I am now expected to endorse their newly formed tourism developments when the local office has done nothing to resolve the conflict.

What also makes it worse since they became tour operators is the lack of park management that has made the park unkempt and cared for.

I also have tried to approach people in OEH and National Parks with my own resolution to only be told I must consult with the traditional owners (which I am) and the World heritage committee, but when I ask the local office who the traditional owners are I am to consult with & who these people on these committees are I am given no names & basically told that my community is dysfunctional, once again I resent this as I had tourism and business development sewn up for my community and the dysfunction has come from the interference within the NPW office.

I have documented everything I have had to endure over these years so there is plenty more documentation, issues and breaches I could share with you.

My concern is putting in a submission with you as I discussed the clause you have about where it states "Submissions become committee documents and are confidential until the committee decides to make them public. Anyone who republishes a committee document apart from the Parliament or its committees is subject to the laws of defamation. You should not distribute copies of your submission without the committee's permission."

As I have been trying for a resolution for over 4 years now with no outcome I have now started to tell my story. I will not be stopping in telling my story.

My story is one that was a good news story and delivered long-lasting benefits and advancement for economic development for our aboriginal community and now has become a sad news story and I also feel what has happened to me is detrimental to all aboriginal people of NSW.

I have given you some links where I have started to tell my story and also some links of how they are starting their own tourism enterprise.

<http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2015/s4285162.htm>

<http://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/437452355691/row-over-tourism-access-to-sacred-sites-in-nsw-national-parks>

<http://www.sunraysiaadaily.com.au/story/3178839/mungo-defended-more-visitors-planned-as-funding-cuts-blasted>

<http://www.afr.com/opinion/columnists/get-government-out-of-business-20150326-1m8e7d?stb=fb>

Should you wish any clarifications or any more information please do not hesitate to contact me or my partner.

We thank you for your time to review

Kind regards

Graham Clarke and Carolyn Caddy