

Ms Sandra Lambert AM
Chair
ACT Remuneration Tribunal
Via email: remtrib@act.gov.au

Dear Ms Lambert,

Submission to the ACT Remuneration Tribunal – Remuneration Arrangements for Statutory Committee Members

I write to you on behalf of the ACT Children and Young People Death Review Committee (the Committee) and I am pleased to provide the attached submission for the Tribunal's consideration.

As you are aware, the Committee is an independent statutory committee established under the Children and Young People Act 2008 to review the deaths of children and young people, identify patterns and trends, undertake research, and make recommendations aimed at reducing preventable deaths and serious injuries.

The Committee's work relies on the contributions of members with highly specialised expertise drawn from a range of professional disciplines, including health, child protection, public policy, education, policing, epidemiology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems. Members contribute significant time and professional expertise to support the Committee's statutory functions and the broader objective of improving outcomes for children and young people in the ACT.

The attached submission highlights three matters the Committee considers may warrant consideration by the Tribunal:

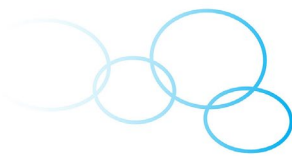
1. remuneration eligibility for part-time ACT Government employees undertaking committee duties outside their ordinary paid employment hours;
2. remuneration arrangements for ACT Government employees who undertake substantial committee-related work beyond normal working hours; and
3. recognition and remuneration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expertise and cultural load, irrespective of the individual's employment status with the ACT Government.

The Committee considers that addressing these matters is important to ensuring equitable recognition of members' contributions, supporting the recruitment and retention of appropriately skilled members, and valuing the cultural knowledge and lived expertise that strengthens the work of statutory bodies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission. Please contact Alana McNerney, Senior Research and Review Officer on telephone (02) 6205 4742 or via email on childdeathcommittee@act.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Megan Mitchell AM
Chair
ACT Children and Young People Death Review Committee



ACT Children and Young People Death Review Committee-Submission to the ACT Remuneration Tribunal

Review of Remuneration Arrangements for Committee Members

The ACT Children and Young People Death Review Committee (the Committee) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments to the ACT Remuneration Tribunal regarding remuneration arrangements for statutory committee members.

The Committee is established under the *Children and Young People Act 2008* and is responsible for reviewing the deaths of children and young people, identifying patterns and trends, undertaking research, and making recommendations to prevent future deaths and serious injuries. The Committee's work requires members to contribute specialised expertise, exercise independent judgement, and review sensitive and often complex matters involving child deaths and serious injury.

The Committee submits that the current remuneration arrangements would benefit from greater flexibility to recognise the expertise, contribution and workload of certain categories of members.

1. Part-time ACT Government Employees

The Committee notes that some members are appointed to statutory committees because of their specialist expertise, professional standing, lived experience, cultural knowledge, or representation within the broader community, whether or not they are an employee of the ACT Government. In some cases, individuals are employed by the ACT Government on a part-time basis while also maintaining professional, academic, clinical, community-sector, cultural or leadership roles outside government and it is these external roles, qualifications and contributions to the community that form the basis of their appointment to the Committee.

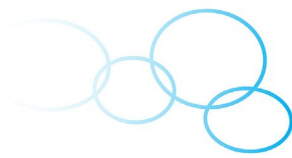
These members may therefore be appointed in recognition of expertise developed through employment or engagement outside the ACT Public Service, even though they also hold part-time positions within the ACT Government. However, current arrangements may preclude remuneration where an individual is employed by the ACT Government, regardless of the capacity in which they were appointed or the source of their expertise.

Committee members frequently participate in Committee meetings, working groups, report reviews and other Committee-related activities outside their contracted ACT Government employment hours. In these circumstances, their contribution to the Committee is separate from their substantive employment duties and reflects the independent expertise and experience for which they were appointed.

The Committee submits that part-time ACT Government employees should be eligible to receive remuneration under the *ACT Remuneration Tribunal Act* for Committee duties performed outside their ordinary paid employment hours.

This approach would:

- recognise the additional work undertaken beyond contracted employment obligations;
- acknowledge that members may have been appointed because of their employment, expertise, qualifications, cultural knowledge or community leadership outside their ACT Government employment;
- support equitable treatment between part-time ACT Government employees and members who are employed entirely outside government;



- encourage participation from individuals with specialist expertise across a broad range of sectors and professions;
- recognise the independent statutory role undertaken by committee members; and
- acknowledge that Committee work is often performed in a capacity that is distinct from, and additional to, a member's substantive employment duties within the ACT Government.

The Committee considers that remuneration should be available where a member's Committee responsibilities are clearly additional to their ordinary paid duties, are performed outside their agreed working hours, and reflect expertise or experience for which they were appointed, independently of their ACT Government employment. This would ensure that individuals are not disadvantaged or discouraged from contributing to statutory committees simply because they hold part-time employment within the ACT Public Service.

2. Overtime and Significant Work Outside Normal Hours

The Committee's work frequently extends beyond attendance at formal meetings. Members may be required to:

- review complex and sensitive case material;
- consider extensive research and briefing papers;
- participate in working groups and special reviews;
- contribute to report drafting and recommendations; and
- participate in stakeholder engagement activities.

For ACT Government employees serving on the Committee, significant amounts of this work may occur outside normal business hours due to competing operational responsibilities within their substantive positions.

The Committee submits that the Tribunal should consider provisions that allow remuneration for ACT Government employee members who undertake substantial Committee work outside ordinary working hours.

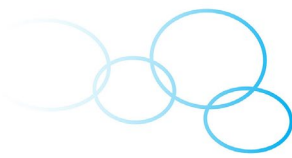
Such provisions could apply where:

- work exceeds normal meeting attendance expectations;
- significant preparation or review work is required;
- members contribute to major thematic reviews or special projects; or
- work is undertaken on evenings, weekends or public holidays.

Recognition of this additional contribution would support fairness and ensure that the Committee can continue to draw upon highly skilled practitioners and subject matter experts across government.

3. Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Expertise

The Committee places significant value on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge, expertise and leadership. The contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members extends beyond professional qualifications and employment experience and includes cultural authority, lived experience, community knowledge, kinship connections and an understanding of the historical and contemporary issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families.



Committee members who bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives provide unique expertise that cannot be readily replicated through formal qualifications alone. Their contribution assists statutory committees to better understand the broader social, cultural and systemic factors that influence outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and supports more culturally informed decision-making.

These members often provide guidance on:

- cultural safety and culturally responsive practice;
- the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families;
- culturally informed policy, program and practice responses;
- community engagement and consultation approaches;
- appropriate interpretation of evidence and findings through a cultural lens;
- the impact of historical policies, intergenerational trauma and systemic disadvantage;
- community priorities and perspectives; and
- opportunities to strengthen self-determination and community-led solutions.

Importantly, the expertise provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members is frequently derived not only from their professional employment but also from their standing and responsibilities within their communities. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee members hold leadership, advisory, mentoring or cultural roles within community and may be called upon to provide advice, support and representation beyond their formal committee responsibilities.

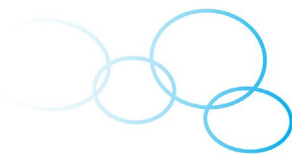
In many instances, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members also carry a significant cultural load. This cultural load may include community expectations, cultural obligations, participation in cultural events and ceremonies, supporting community members, providing cultural advice to organisations and government agencies, and acting as a bridge between communities and government. These responsibilities are often additional to both their employment and their committee responsibilities.

The Committee acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members are frequently asked to contribute cultural knowledge and perspectives that benefit the work of committees and improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, this contribution is not always recognised in remuneration arrangements in the same way as other forms of specialist expertise.

The Committee therefore submits that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people appointed to statutory committees should be eligible for remuneration for their cultural expertise, cultural authority and community knowledge, regardless of whether they are separately employed by the ACT Government.

The Committee considers that:

- cultural expertise should be recognised as a specialist and valuable form of expertise in its own right;
- lived experience, cultural knowledge and community leadership are important contributions to statutory decision-making processes;
- remuneration arrangements should appropriately acknowledge cultural load and community responsibilities;



- employment status should not prevent recognition of cultural contributions made in an independent committee capacity;
- remuneration settings should support the recruitment, retention and meaningful participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members on statutory bodies; and
- remuneration frameworks should reflect the ACT Government's commitment to closing the gap, self-determination, cultural safety and genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Providing remuneration for cultural expertise and load would recognise the unique value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members bring to statutory committees and support more inclusive, culturally informed and effective decision-making. It would also demonstrate respect for the knowledge, experience and responsibilities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute as professionals, community members, leaders and cultural knowledge holders.

Conclusion

The Committee respectfully recommends that the ACT Remuneration Tribunal consider:

1. Making part-time ACT Government employees eligible for remuneration when Committee duties are undertaken outside their ordinary paid employment hours.
2. Establishing provisions to compensate ACT Government employee members who undertake significant Committee work outside normal working hours.
3. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expertise and cultural load as a remunerable contribution, regardless of the individual's employment status within the ACT Government.

Such reforms would better reflect the expertise, responsibility and contribution required of members serving on statutory committees and would support the continued effectiveness, diversity and sustainability of committee membership across the ACT public sector.