

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee held its thirteenth meeting on 13 March 2020.

NSW Government response to recommendations

The Committee awaits with interest the NSW Government's response to the recommendations arising from the first stage of the evaluation of *OCHRE* and from the NSW Ombudsman's *OCHRE* Review Report – 28 October 2019. The Committee notes the cumulative impact of the recent bushfires, floods, and COVID-19 on the timing of this response.

Evaluation of *OCHRE* - Local Decision Making

The Committee notes the progress achieved and challenges encountered by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR). The Committee acknowledges that the severe bushfires, floods, and COVID-19 will impact on the evaluation schedule particularly on the capacity of Aboriginal communities to engage in the evaluation and, in the case of COVID-19, the appropriateness of face to face contact. The Committee awaits delivery of CAEPR's advice on alternate options to progress the evaluation, including the use of technologies.

The Committee is pleased that CAEPR have started working on how to measure changes in the relationship between government officials and Aboriginal peoples and communities, and looks forward to ongoing discussions with CAEPR over the course of its development.

The Committee notes progress in developing the model that will invest in young Aboriginal community members. This will support local Aboriginal communities to directly influence the conduct of the evaluation, and deliver a community-based researcher able to undertake fieldwork in their communities.

Activities of the NSW Deputy Ombudsman's (Aboriginal Affairs)

The Committee welcomed the presentation by the NSW Deputy Ombudsman (Aboriginal Programs) on his activities and notes the NSW Deputy Ombudsman's activities may extend this beyond *OCHRE*. The Committee looks forward to further discussions with the NSW Deputy Ombudsman at a future meeting on options for monitoring and reporting progress in implementing the recommendations arising through the first stage of the evaluation of *OCHRE* and the NSW Ombudsman's *OCHRE* 2019 Review Report.

Steering Committee membership

The Committee welcomed Alison Weaver as the NSW Treasury representative and Ben Barnes, the Director of Evaluation at the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, the NSW Department of Education as Steering Committee members and looks forward to contributions.

The Committee also welcomed Shar Goodwin, Seth Merritt and Jodie Stewart to the Steering Committee. Shar, Seth and Jodie work in AANSW regions across NSW and bring extensive knowledge of local Aboriginal communities and insights into operational and strategic issues the *OCHRE* evaluation must consider.



Dr Wendy Jarvie, Independent Chair