Reference No. 55

Summarising: Hunt, The Governance of Government
Responsibility for the preparation of this research summary rests with the authors of the MCEETYA report *Education, Training and Indigenous Futures: CAEPR Policy Research 1990–2007* and not the original author(s) of the summarised material.

Title of Research:
The Governance of Government

Research Publication:
CAEPR Seminar April 2007

Name of Researcher(s):
J. Hunt

Time period:
2004–2007

Geographic location:
The following Council of Australian Governments (COAG) trial site evaluations were included: East Kimberley (WA), APY Lands (SA), Shepparton (Vic), Mudi Paaki (NSW), Wadeye (NT), Cape York (Qld.), Tasmania and ACT.

Methodology:
This seminar presentation reviews the findings of the evaluations of the COAG trials, drawing information from each of the completed evaluations. These evaluation reports are available at: www.oipc.gov.au/publications

Aims:
The seminar aimed to bring together the evaluation findings of the COAG trials and relate these to the work being undertaken by CAEPR and Reconciliation Australia on Indigenous governance.

Selected findings and insights:
The review of the COAG trials concluded that successful outcomes were most likely to be achieved when:

- there were strong inter-agency relationships involving senior governmental staff with sufficient authority to negotiate with communities;
- communities were thoroughly engaged in determining priorities and there was clarity about decision-making processes;
- there was clarity and shared agreement about desired outcomes, indicators and well-developed plans to achieve them;
- there was sufficient opportunity for relationship building and the development of trust, which requires time, continuity of personnel and cultural awareness and understanding by both government and community representatives on how each operates within a decision-making environment, underpinned by a partnership arrangement.

The review found that there was evidence that:

- governments and agencies held differing priorities, expectations and levels of commitment and operated in different policy and program implementation frameworks, including failing to follow through on agreed actions;
• there was considerable staff turnover of both government agency and community organisations which did not facilitate successful outcomes; and
• there was insufficient participation and sense of shared ownership by Indigenous people in decision-making, governance and accountability.

Several priorities were identified which needed to be addressed:

• Improving the capacity of government agencies to operate within a partnership arrangement with Indigenous communities, which required in some cases a cultural shift among staff and the development of realistic expectations of what might be achieved;
• Need for clear, agreed policy frameworks and simplification of program and funding arrangements; and
• Building community governance and capacity at local and regional level as this will be the foundation stone on which effective partnerships and programs can be built.

Educational implications:

This paper identifies the importance for schools and other educational providers to develop strategies to enhance their own capacity for developing educational partnerships with Indigenous communities. At the same time it raises the issue as to who is responsible for delivering education and training to Indigenous communities so that they might have sufficient skills and understandings to participate fully in the negotiation of educational partnership agreements. [partnerships]

Relevance:

Domain 2: School and Community Education Partnerships

Use and negotiation of educational partnership agreements between schools and communities

Educational partnership agreements and Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs)

Related papers:
