

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



UN SUBMISSION REVEALS GOVT FAILURE ON INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

A submission to the UN Race Discrimination (CERD)* Committee by Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) highlights an alarming decrease in Indigenous employment in Indigenous administration, particularly at a senior management level, in the Australian Public Service (APS).

"The exodus of Indigenous people from Indigenous administration is a disastrous development at a time when the centrepiece of Government policy is the mainstreaming of Indigenous service delivery," ANTaR National Director, David Cooper, said today.

"The Government promised that its move to mainstreaming would be accompanied by an increase in Indigenous participation in the public service. New figures reveal very clearly that this is not happening."

Figures published by the *National Indigenous Times* included in ANTaR's submission to the UN, reveal that the Howard Government's new black bureaucracy is managed almost exclusively by white bureaucrats. There is only one senior Indigenous manager in the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC).

Indigenous people are also leaving the APS at almost double the intake rate.

"Our submission to the UN Committee contends that this represents a breach of the CERD Convention," Mr Cooper said.

"ANTaR's submission catalogues other multiple breaches of the UN's CERD Convention, including the moves to abolish ATSIC and with it Indigenous representation."

"This has been accompanied by a failure to address Indigenous disadvantage after 8 years of 'practical reconciliation'. In many areas, such as health, the situation of Indigenous peoples has declined relative to other Australians."

"ANTaR's submission to the UN's CERD Committee points to a long list of areas in which the Howard Government has breached Australia's obligations, including:

- the stalling of progress on national reconciliation;
- failure to implement the recommendations of key reports such as the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the stolen generations *Bringing Them Home* report and the Final Report of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

"As another Australia Day approaches, there is little to celebrate in the Howard Government's record on Indigenous people, as the UN will soon consider," Mr Cooper concluded.

* UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

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