

Torres Strait Islanders Regional Education Council (TSIREC)

TSIREC's Vision

YUMI Education which is culturally, spiritually appropriate education for our children and families on which to build their skills and abilities to become valued, responsible and independent contributors to society

About TSIREC

For more than 20 years, the Torres Strait Islanders Regional Education Council (TSIREC) has held responsibility for making decisions on education issues in the region, providing advice to education providers and to government on broader policy issues. The Council includes community representatives from each local community and every school in the Torres Strait. As a community based organisation, the Council brings together community members from across the region to set targets for improvement and strategies for monitoring progress. A management committee, elected from the Council, meets quarterly to support the Council in its work.

TSIREC and Tagai State College share the vision for a YUMI Education for Torres Strait Islander children and young people. TSIREC defines a YUMI Education as one that is culturally and spiritually respectful and appropriate to Torres Strait Islanders. It serves as the basis for building the skills, abilities, attitudes and values that are necessary for each child to develop into a valued, responsible and independent contributor to the society of their choice.

TSIREC & Government - Memorandum of Understanding

All levels of government recognise TSIREC's role in the region on behalf of Torres Strait Islanders. Since 2000, TSIREC and the Queensland Government have been working together under a framework agreement to improve the educational outcomes of students in the Torres Strait.

From 2006, TSIREC established a three-year agreement with the Australian and Queensland Governments to support increased Indigenous involvement, participation and collaboration with government in making decisions about educational issues. This "Memorandum of Understanding" (which expired in 2008) acknowledge the central role TSIREC plays in advocating for a YUMI Education and in representing the specific educational interests of Torres Strait Islanders.

A new "Memorandum of Understanding" is currently under development.

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⋄ Torres Strait Region Education, Training & Employment Memorandum of Understanding (2006-2008)

TSIREC & the Torres Strait Institute for Policy and Research

The Business Case for the Torres Strait Institute for Policy and Research was prepared for TSIREC by Adjunct Associate Professor Richard Monypenny from the School of Business, James Cook University and Dr Lesley Clark and Ross Clark from PacificPlus Consulting.

The journey which led to the development of this Business Case uncovered many ideas and raised numerous questions regarding the future of Torres Strait and its peoples. It also provided an opportunity for many Torres Strait Islanders - young and old, male and female - to stand-up and lead.

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⋄ Torres Strait Institute for Policy and Research: A Business Case

Through all the forums (which commenced in 2004/2005) across schools, communities and councils, including presentations to Torres Strait Regional Authority, the Island Coordinating Council and the newly formed Torres Strait Islands Regional Council, the concept of an institute grew in prominence against other priorities that TSIREC had set for the region.

The current fiscal, political and environmental climate of the Torres Strait is a continual reminder that the region needs to be better prepared in terms of policy development and planning for the region. This must surely reinforce the need for a community owned and driven evidence based approach entity that serves the needs of the region and its' peoples.

Whilst we have achieved a significant milestone in the delivery of the Business Case, it is by no means the final destination. This is a waypoint on the roadmap to create a vehicle that serves a specific purpose for the future growth of the Torres Strait.