

RE: AMRRIC submission to the Productivity Commission on the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy

Dear Productivity Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief submission on the Draft Indigenous Evaluation Strategy (IES). AMRRIC (Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities) is a national not-for-profit organisation that works with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve the health of their companion animals. In doing so, we are helping to create healthier, safer and happier communities. AMRRIC promotes a One Health, One Wellbeing model, developed over years of dialogue and engagement with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, where companion animals are recognised as being intrinsic to the fabric of the community; their health and wellbeing is inseparable from that of humans. AMRRIC exists to assist and empower communities to meet their needs for companion animal health, care and safety, and is governed by AMRRIC's Board and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group. AMRRIC is supported by the Australian Government, National Indigenous Australians Agency, as well as philanthropic and grant-based funding.

AMRRIC supports the Draft Indigenous Evaluation Strategy's objective to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a whole-of-government evaluation framework. We are particularly pleased to see the inclusion of an overarching principle centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, perspectives, priorities and knowledge. We also commend the IES's other principles – that evaluations be credible, useful, ethical and transparent. We note the similarities between all of these principles and AMRRIC's own values and strategic aims, as outlined in our Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025: <https://www.amrric.org/strategic-plan/>.

Relative to Indigenous policy within Australia, AMRRIC operates at a small scale. At both project and organisational levels however, we strive for continuous improvement through effective and meaningful monitoring and evaluation. Given the context in which we work, this means ensuring that the voices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that we serve and with whom we work are elevated, heard and valued. As an organisation that is committed to building long term and trusting relationships, deep listening and the provision of quality services is our modus operandi. If comprehensively adopted, the principles and framework outlined in the IES pave the way for significant and evidence-based improvements in Indigenous policy. With appropriate resourcing and oversight, AMRRIC believes that the Draft Indigenous Engagement Strategy provides a suitable framework within which organisations such as AMRRIC – as an Australian Government funding recipient - can contribute to evidence-based policy directions.

We welcome the opportunity to provide further feedback. Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Dr. Brooke Rankmore, AMRRIC's CEO ceo@amrric.org for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Dr Bonny Cumming, BVSc (Hons I), MVS (Cons Med)
AMRRIC Program Manager – Strategic Delivery |

