

MEDIA STATEMENT

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GOLDFIELDS LAND & SEA COUNCIL

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A study found Aboriginals in Kalgoorlie-Boulder amongst most disadvantaged¹

A study and paper soon to be released by Dr Nicholas Biddle and Francis Markham reinforces the issues alive in the Goldfields region and in particular, Kalgoorlie-Boulder. There is a marked lack of Government, both State and Federal funding for programs that contribute to the economic and socio-cultural well-being of Aboriginal people in regional centres. The focus of government programs to date has been remote communities.

The effect that this has had, at both the community and individual level, is exemplified by data from the 2011 census. The Aboriginal population of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is 6.75% of the population compared with the Australian average of 3% (ABS 2011). When that is added to the fact that the average number of people per household for Aboriginal people is 3.4 people per household compared to 2.7 people of the entire population of Kalgoorlie (ABS 2011), and combined with a significantly less household income, it points to severe disadvantage for the Aboriginal population in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

One way for Federal and State governments to provide employment and training opportunities that links with the desire of Indigenous people to remain close to family and community, is to provide financial resources for Caring-for-Country and land management programs in the Goldfields region that generate real, on-going employment for Aboriginal people. To date these programs have been lacking in the Goldfields region compared to other areas within the state. Government is now provided with an ideal opportunity to redress this disparity and contribute to the improvement of social indicators among Aboriginal people in the Goldfields region .

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¹ See also Karvelas, P & Elks, S 2013, 'Situation of remote indigenous people often overlooked', *The Australian*, October 10.