

MEDIA STATEMENT

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GOLDFIELDS LAND & SEA COUNCIL

Aboriginal Corporation (Representative Body)

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KALGOORLIE'S ABORIGINAL ITINERANTS

Reactive approach to anti-social behaviour, is not the answer in addressing Kalgoorlie's Aboriginal itinerant population. Fencing off parks and remodelling streets do not work in the long-term. Reactive policing does little else than move a perceived problem to another area, where the same issues persist. In place of reasoned and articulated policy regarding the use of public space, police must accept the role of de facto negotiators of public space issues.

The GLSC has always advocated a 'Reconciliation Action Plan' that would form the bed rock of any policy regarding the use of public spaces. The GLSC also has Aboriginal Rangers, who could be trained and employed as negotiators of public spaces, particularly when dealing with itinerant Aboriginals from the Lands. A 'Public Place Patrol' that tackles public drunkenness and anti-social behaviour.

Again we reiterate to the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder to consult with the people, for example the GLSC and Bega, instead of wasting rate-payer's money that will only antagonise already volatile relationships in the Community – fencing off parks is not the solution. **Better consultation and coordination is needed.**

Research has proven that reactive policing does not yield long-term results. Itinerants neither disappeared nor were they displaced in the long-term. Only short-term displacement occurred whereby itinerants gathered in another locale or served a jail sentence, before resuming their lifestyle (McDonald 1996:4).

It is argued that a reactive approach to anti-social behaviour sets in a cycle of stress on the Community as a whole, and the Aboriginal Itinerants, only to contribute to further anti-social behaviour.

Kalgoorlie regularly deals with travelling non-Aboriginal itinerants, known affectionately as the 'Grey Nomads', where public space is specifically provided for them. Let us afford the same public spaces to our Aboriginal itinerants.

Tackling anti-social behaviour requires a comprehensive strategic approach that entails finding an Aboriginal approach to the problem, as part of a **Reconciliation Action Plan.**

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