



BOARD MEETING WRAP

Werte!

The following topics were discussed at the last Congress Board of Director's Meeting, held on 18 June 2020:

- Congress' Organisational Budget 2020-21 Approved
- Business Services Report
- 10 Year Finance Plan Assumptions
- August meeting at Yulara
- Research project: Audit of alcohol related harm presenting to Alice Springs Hospital Emergency Department
- From the CEO
 - » COVID-19 Update
 - » Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness
 - » Meeting with Minister Wakefield
 - » Local language names for meeting rooms
 - » Meeting with Tangentyere Council

The next Congress Board of Director's Meeting will be held on 20 August 2020

Congress' Organisational Budget 2020-21 Approved

The Board was presented with the proposal for the Organisational Budget for the 2020-21 financial year. This important financial plan outlines the way that Congress manages its financial obligations and the costs of delivering our services. This was considered by the Directors and approved to commence 1 July 2020.

Business Services Report

The Board was provided an update about the division's operations as we head towards the end of financial year. Despite the impacts of the pandemic on our business operations, including pandemic resourcing and concern about the impact on Medicare income, Congress is solvent and continues to have a positive outlook approaching 30 June. The impact of accrued leave (with staff unable to take leave during the pandemic) is reflected on the income statement. This has to be monitored to ensure it is managed and that staff can access a well-earned break, especially ahead of border restrictions reducing.

Operationally, the Board heard that earlier work in moving our Information Technology systems to the cloud has proven valuable, affording easier access to support people at work during the pandemic, including access to work off-site and assisting remote sites have meetings via Zoom. Additionally, Congress' communications team undertook a significant amount of pandemic related work despite staff vacancies. Both of these teams are now moving back towards business as usual, but their contributions during the pandemic were notable.

10 Year Finance Plan Assumptions

The Board will be scheduling a workshop to formulate the list of assumptions under which the Congress 10-year plan can be formulated. These assumptions include things like inflation rates and future

strategic goals, and a thorough process for workshopping the assumptions will mean a better and more accurate base for which Congress can plan for the next decade. At this workshop the Board will also consider other keys Congress documents such as the Asset Management Framework to ensure the plan for the next 10 years is robust and well considered. After the workshop the 10 year finance plan will be developed and a final version put to the Board in October.

August meeting at Yulara

The next meeting of the Congress Board of directors will be held in Yulara. This is in line with our strategic priority of *supporting remote communities*, evidencing the importance placed by the Board on our remote communities and strengthening the link with our remote sites and Board representatives. The Board of Directors look forward to their Board meeting at Yulara, close to the home of Congress Deputy Chairperson Dorethea Randall and Congress' Mutitjulu clinic.

Research project: Audit of alcohol related harm presenting to Alice Springs Hospital Emergency Department

The Board were presented with a research proposal that uses a questionnaire conducted with alcohol-related hospital admissions to audit the circumstances around their presentation. This type of evaluation can be an effective way to reduce alcohol related harms and can help identify hotspots or where people are getting alcohol from. Some information can even be used to identify secondary supply. All client information is de-identified and consent of people must be given. Many other local agencies have been invited to participate in the project, and the Board voted to support Congress' participation in this important project.



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From the CEO

The CEO provided the following updates to the Board:

COVID-19 Update

Congress has been strongly advocating that the government adopts the [Contain and Test](#) strategy as the response to any outbreak of COVID-19 in a remote community. Essentially, this plan means that if a person living in a remote community has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the community will all go into quarantine. This means they will have to stay in their households and yards for 14 days, and that thorough testing will occur for residents and workers. The model is based on the story of a small Italian community who avoided many deaths by taking this type of action. We know that applying this life-saving model in Central Australia will need a high level of support and engagement so that the people affected feel safe, are cared for and have what they need while in quarantine. As such we are working hard alongside the Government to ensure that this is applied more broadly than just the communities we work in, and that it is implemented correctly.

Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness

Congress has provided a submission to House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into Homelessness in Australia, substantially based on Congress' 2018 "Housing and Health" submission.

Ninety percent of homelessness in the Northern Territory is 'secondary' homelessness, meaning people living in severely overcrowded houses. In this regard, the submission notes that there is slow improvement occurring in the NT in the level of homelessness given the investment that has been occurring in remote housing. At the current rate of improvement, it will take 70 years for the problem to be fully

addressed. This is unacceptable and there needs to be a much larger investment in social housing both in remote communities and public housing in regional centres.

The submission highlights the reduction in the role of the Aboriginal controlled housing organisations in the NT and seeks to have their former role re-instated where they are able to own and manage housing stock.

Meeting with Minister Wakefield

Led by our Chair, Congress joined Central Land Council to meet with Minister Wakefield who wanted to catch up and discuss where we are at following the COVID-19 experience.

She was very impressed with the work Congress did through our health promotion team in educating people in the community, especially the town camps, on COVID-19. She credits this work in turning around the initial perception that this virus was not a problem for Aboriginal people and "was just a whitefella disease". She also commented on the work Congress did in supporting people in quarantine which again did not go unnoticed.

Local language names for meeting rooms

The CEO reported that the Cultural Lead has advised ways that Aboriginal culture can be strengthened at work and a suggestion was to use Arrernte names throughout the organisation. This would also be applied in other languages where appropriate. The Board have been given the responsibility to name the Boardroom where they meet. We look forward to seeing these changes throughout the organisation.

Meeting with Tangentyere Council

The CEO reported productive meetings with the Congress Chair and Tangentyere, related to general common concerns. This is important for both organisations and the community and is in line with Congress Board's core value of coming together and strengthening important partnerships.

Proof of Aboriginality applications

Please be reminded that requests for Proof of Aboriginality are only able to be assessed by the Congress Board of Directors at our scheduled Board meetings.

Update your details

It is important that we have the right details recorded in our membership register so that we can contact you the right way, and for accountability.

These are separate to your clinical records at Congress. Because your privacy is important to us, we never access your medical records for membership business.

You can help us make sure your details are up to date by emailing membership@caac.org.au.

Remind your friends and family too!

Keep our mob safe from COVID-19

- Wash your hands often, with soap and water, for over 20 secs
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow
- Throw used tissues in the bin
- Avoid big crowds and stay three steps away from other people
- Don't smoke
- Don't share smokes / drinks / chewing tobacco / toothbrushes
- Don't spit
- Get more information at caac.org.au