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**From:** Skene, Kathleen [mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au]  
**Sent:** Monday, 9 May 2011 12:14 PM  
**To:** THWAITES, Kate  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kate,

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Thanks for your help last week. Here's a link to the resulting stories  
[http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/article/2011/05/07/229021\\_news.html](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/article/2011/05/07/229021_news.html)

I would still like to speak directly to Ms Macklin about this issue -- is she still overseas? Is she out of phone contact?

Cheers,

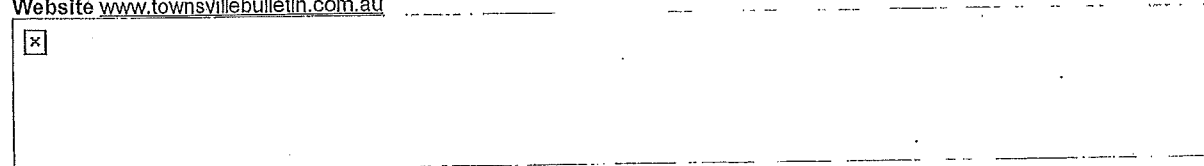
**Kathleen Skene** | Journalist

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Townsville Bulletin

198 Ogden St  
Townsville QLD 4810

Direct +61 7 4722 4746 | Fax +61 7 4722 4559  
Email [kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au](mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au)  
Website [www.townsvillebulletin.com.au](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au)



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**From:** THWAITES, Kate [mailto:Kate.THWAITES@fahcsia.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Friday, 6 May 2011 3:19 PM  
**To:** Skene, Kathleen  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

26/08/2011

Hi Kathleen,

Please find response to your questions below. Thanks, Kate

Please attribute to a spokesperson for the Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin

Minister Macklin referred Mr Lindsay's complaints to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs' (FaHCSIA) Indigenous Programs Investigation Branch for further investigation in 2008.

This investigation included consultation with Mr Lindsay and the three Australian Government Departments that provided the majority of the funding to the four organisations he specifically mentioned.

This investigation determined that there were no criminal or civil matters disclosed that would warrant further investigation by FaHCSIA.

The Department is not aware of any current allegations of mismanagement relating to Townsville based Indigenous organisations.

The Australian Government has strict measures in place to ensure funding accountability and has the ability to take action if there is alleged impropriety.

Organisations funded by the Australian Government are issued with performance-based and legally enforceable funding agreements which set out the terms and conditions governing a business relationship.

FaHCSIA also has a complaints management process whereby any member of the public can lodge a concern about a FaHCSIA funded service providers, including the reporting of suspected fraud.

If the service provider is not funded by FaHCSIA, the complainant would be referred to the appropriate Department/Agency for action

Kate Thwaites  
Media Adviser  
Jenny Macklin MP  
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
and Indigenous Affairs  
t. 02 6277 7560

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**From:** Skene, Kathleen [mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 5 May 2011 5:28 PM  
**To:** THWAITES, Kate  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Hi Kate,

Sure, tomorrow morning will be fine.

If it helps with your searching, I have some ICN/ABNs and registered names for some of the organisations. [redacted]  
[redacted] Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Services  
Limited ABN 66 010 113 603; [redacted]

I am particularly keen to get an answer from Ms Macklin to my fifth question:

'Some of these organisations are Aboriginal Corporations, under the jurisdiction of the Corporations Act (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) 2006, and some, like TAIHS, are companies under the jurisdiction of ASIC. Former staff of the organisations claim that money is moved between the groups (by shared board members) whenever one of the organisations is audited, making detection of any anomalies unlikely. Will the Minister seek a co-ordinated and concurrent investigation into the operations of all the above organisations in an effort to ensure public resources are being effectively used?'

I'm still more than happy to speak with Ms Macklin by phone – it would only take 10 minutes at the most and would save you being the middle woman. Is she somewhere with no mobile reception?

Cheers,

Kathleen Skene | Journalist

Townsville Bulletin

198 Ogden St  
Townsville QLD 4810

26/08/2011

Direct +61 7 4722 4746 | Fax +61 7 4722 4559  
Email [kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au](mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au)  
Website [www.townsvillebulletin.com.au](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au)

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**From:** THWAITES, Kate [mailto:Kate.THWAITES@fahcsia.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 5 May 2011 5:06 PM  
**To:** Skene, Kathleen  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kathleen,

Sorry – things have been flat out with budget here.

Are you able to hold until tomorrow – apologies it's taken a bit longer than I anticipated.

Cheers,

Kate

Kate Thwaites  
Media Adviser  
Jenny Macklin MP  
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
and Indigenous Affairs  
t. 02 6277 7560

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**From:** Skene, Kathleen [mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 5 May 2011 5:01 PM  
**To:** THWAITES, Kate  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kate,

How are you going with this inquiry?

Cheers,

Kathleen Skene | Journalist

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Townsville Bulletin

198 Ogden St  
Townsville QLD 4810

Direct +61 7 4722 4537 | Fax +61 7 4722 4559  
Email [kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au](mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au)  
Website [www.townsvillebulletin.com.au](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au)

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**From:** THWAITES, Kate [mailto:Kate.THWAITES@fahcsia.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 May 2011 8:53 AM  
**To:** Skene, Kathleen  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kathleen,

We're looking into your questions but I'm told it may take a little while to gather the information.

26/08/2011

I know you said you'd like the info by 4 pm today but are you able to hold until tomorrow?

Cheers,

Kate

Kate Thwaites  
Media Adviser  
Jenny Macklin MP  
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
and Indigenous Affairs  
t. 02 6277 7560

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**From:** Skene, Kathleen [mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 May 2011 3:30 PM  
**To:** THWAITES, Kate  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kate,

My questions are below. We require a named source for attribution of all answers. Thanks for your help.

1. Is Ms Macklin, or anyone in her department, aware of any allegations of mismanagement in Townsville Indigenous organisations, specifically the Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Health Service, [REDACTED] or any other local Indigenous organisation? If so, what are they?  
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2. What actions if any were taken by Ms Macklin and/her the department after former Herbert MP Peter Lindsay brought claims of nepotism in Townsville organisations to Federal Parliament in June 2008?  
<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/rep/dailys/dr240608.pdf>
3. What actions if any were taken by Ms Macklin and/her the department after former Herbert MP Peter Lindsay brought claims of nepotism in Townsville organisations to her attention in a letter dated June 25, 2008?
4. What investigations or inquiries have been made to assist local indigenous organisations in proving or disproving widespread claims of financial mismanagement, bullying and fraud on their boards?
5. Some of these organisations are Aboriginal Corporations, under the jurisdiction of the Corporations Act (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) 2006, and some, like TAIHS, are companies under the jurisdiction of ASIC. Former staff of the organisations claim that money is moved between the groups (by shared board members) whenever one of the organisations is audited, making detection of any anomalies unlikely. Will the Minister seek a co-ordinated and concurrent investigation into the operations of all the above organisations in an effort to ensure public resources are being effectively used?
6. Why/why not?

Regards,

Kathleen Skene | Journalist

Townsville Bulletin

198 Ogden St  
Townsville QLD 4810

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Direct +61 7 4722 4525 | Mobile [REDACTED] | Fax +61 7 4722 4559  
Email [kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au](mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au)  
Website [www.townsvillebulletin.com.au](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au)

x

26/08/2011

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**From:** THWAITES, Kate [mailto:Kate.THWAITES@fahcsia.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 May 2011 1:22 PM  
**To:** Skene, Kathleen  
**Cc:** BELL, Keely  
**Subject:** RE: Indigenous services in Townsville [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kathleen,

I'm one of Minister Macklin's media advisers -- Sandi has passed your inquiry onto me.

The Minister is currently overseas and so not available for interview.

Can you please send me specific questions you'd like answered and I can get you a response.

What is your deadline?

Kind regards,

Kate

Kate Thwaites  
Media Adviser  
Jenny Macklin MP  
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
and Indigenous Affairs  
t. 02 6277 7560  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Skene, Kathleen [mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 May 2011 11:17 AM  
**To:** GATT, Sandi  
**Subject:** Indigenous services in Townsville

Hi Sandi,

I would like to make a time to speak to Ms Macklin at her earliest convenience about serious and long-running claims of mismanagement in some of Townsville's Indigenous organisations.

By way of background, the organisations involved all share board members and directors, who are composed largely of members of one local family.

Former Federal Member for Herbert Peter Lindsay mentioned this issue before the House of Representatives on June 24, 2008 <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/reprs/dailys/dr240608.pdf> and wrote to Ms Macklin the following day requesting an open and detailed inquiry into the administration of four Townsville-based organisations. Current MP for Herbert Ewen Jones claims the office never received a reply to this letter or the parliamentary mention.

There have been numerous claims from the community, including former doctors and other staff of these organisations, of bullying and the misappropriation of funds and resources, which, they claim, have led to reduced services for the significant and disadvantaged Aboriginal and Islander community in North Queensland.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this important issue with Ms Macklin soon.

Thanks for your time.

Regards,

Kathleen Skene | Journalist

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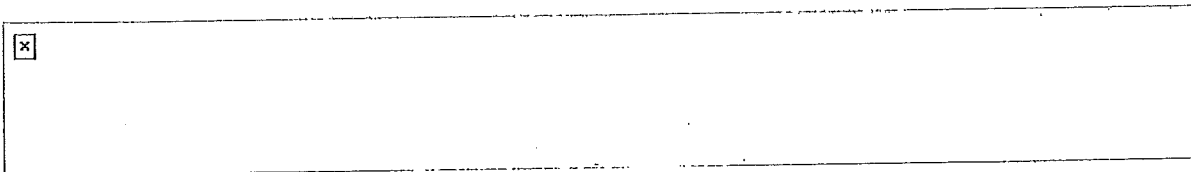
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198 Ogden St  
Townsville QLD 4810

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Direct +61 7 4722 4537 | Mobile [REDACTED] | Fax +61 7 4722 4559  
Email [kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au](mailto:kathleen.skene@townsvillebulletin.com.au)  
Website [www.townsvillebulletin.com.au](http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au)





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