
MEDIA RELEASE | TSIRC's lobbying pays off for our Environmental Health Team

After nearly a decade of uncertainty and year-to-year funding agreements, TSIRC have secured a 5-year funding commitment for the region's Environmental Health Program. The announcement was made by Cameron Dick, Queensland's Minister for Health. The commitment will ensure Council can provide secure employment for our Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health workforce.

This March, Mayor Gela lobbied Queensland Parliament to commit to a 5-year funding cycle for our Public Health Program.

Mayor Gela said "Council argued that funding intervals of 5 years -at a minimum - are critical to good planning, investment in training and development, and job security. Effective Environmental Health programs are integral to Closing the Gap, and to the safety and wellbeing of Torres Strait Islander people."

"The announcement is a great win for our staff on the ground, and their families. The win is a direct result of the dedicated advocacy work that TSIRC is leading on. We are now seeing a roll-out of announcements and we are not just seeing results for Council, but results for the entire region, and our people."

Over the past eight years, the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) has successfully delivered a Public Health Program across the fifteen remote island communities. The Program implements preventative health education and awareness, animal and pest management, biosecurity, inspectorial and compliance services.

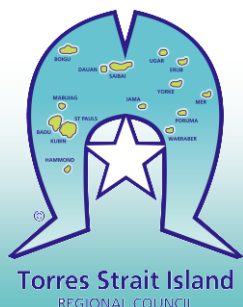
The Program employs nineteen Torres Strait Islander staff across our fifteen communities, providing career pathways for high performing staff.

TSIRC's Coordinator for Environmental Health, Philomena David lives and works on Iama (Yam) Island. Next February, Ms David, celebrates twenty years of Environmental Health expertise in the Torres Strait. She has seen many changes in her time and has spearheaded numerous changes to improve the health of her people, and her communities.

"Our employees can now feel secure in their jobs and plan their futures with their families." Ms David said of the Minister's announcement."

"As Environmental Health Workers, we are responsible for the Health and Wellbeing of our communities. It can be very challenging, because we have to work with our own families, but we understand the cultural protocols which are unique for every island."

"The uncertainty of job security had made me consider retiring, but now I want to stay on. I want to continue giving the next generation of Environmental Health Workers guidance and confidence, and make sure they continue with their professional development."



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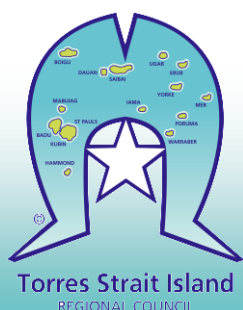
“Our Environmental Health Workers do such a good job, and our job is very rewarding, we get to see the results in our communities. I’m not ready to go until I’m satisfied that everything is in place.

Mayor Gela, along with the Palaszczuk Government, confirmed the “commitment shown by the Environmental Health Workers on the ground who are undertaking Council’s frontline services to improve the health and wellbeing for both our people, and our communities”.

Mayor Gela acknowledges the “strong working relationship with the Palaszczuk Government, and in this instance through Minister Cameron Dick for providing TSIRC the opportunity to meet with him, and his genuine support which is demonstrated through the funding of our public health program.”

Mayor Gela continues to lobby the State and will be visiting Brisbane next week again with Cr’s Torenzo Elisala of Dauan and David Bosun of Kubin, A/CEO Chris McLaughlin and our Principal Advocate Clare Richards. The team will be making submissions on a range of issues including Water and Wastewater, Ailan Adoption, Climate Adaptation and Treaty Zone Coordination Facility.

For further information, please contact Manager Engagement, Bianca Barling - Seden on 0400 856 333 or Bianca.Barling-Seden@tsirc.qld.gov.au



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