



Babana Aboriginal Men's Group Incorporated

PO Box 3292 Redfern NSW 2016
ABN 27 157 748 337

Pam Kaur
Executive Assistant
National Centre of Indigenous Excellence
180 George Street
Redfern NSW 2016

Wednesday, 31 August 2011

Re: NCIE Opening Hours

Dear Pam,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Management Committee of the Babana Aboriginal Men's Group in support of the Centre being open from 6am. Our organisation is committed to working with our stakeholders to provide every opportunity for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders within the Greater Sydney region,

We have been in operation since 2006 and we work to improve the lives of the members and their families. One of the most important areas of focus is that of Aboriginal Health and aside from our health programs we actively encourage our membership to utilise the services that are provided at NCIE.

Your organisation has been influential in improving the health outcomes of a large number of our members and as we have received comments from members on the importance of using the gym in the morning and that it has provided them with a way to help shape their daily routine and allows for a safe environment to exercise before going to work or study.

A number of our members have also mentioned that with the later starting date they have not been able to continue with their exercise schedule as it would not allow them to get to their employment on time. Our organisation sees this as a very real problem and a major issue that needs to be addressed.

The rates of chronic illnesses and health problems amongst the Indigenous community in general are at alarming rates. Babana Men's Group support your effort to increase the time that is available for the community to access the centre and have seen the positive impact that the centre has had on the community.

We hope that NCIE received a positive response in your request to open the centre at the original time as the community needs to have ongoing access to quality training facilities such as those provided and we can only see the benefit for the ongoing wellbeing of all of the members of the centre with the earlier start time.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on my contact number or via email on Jeremy@babana.org.au

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Heathcote
Secretary
Babana Aboriginal Men's Group Inc.
Mobile: 0410 048 159

Lachlan McDaniel

39 Lavington Avenue, Chipping Norton.

New South Wales, 2170.

31 August 2011

To Whom it may Concern,

I am Wiradjuri man and member of the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence's (NCIE) gym. I am writing this letter to express my strong disappointment with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure for forcing the NCIE to open at 7am, rather than 6am.

The change in opening time will undoubtedly have an adverse affect on those who interact with the Centre, particularly with respect to health. The Centre provides affordable gym membership for Indigenous Australians in a bid to improve those unacceptably low health indicators within Australia's Indigenous population. A 6am start allows members to get up early, undertake a daily hour of exercise, eat breakfast, get ready and make it to their place of employment on time and at in a comfortable manner. By removing an hour of time from the above healthy routine the Department has unnecessarily placed constraints on the NCIE's predominantly Indigenous Australian members, requiring them to choose between committing to their employment and improving their health. I ask you to consider whether this is truly in line with the NSW Government's frequently-stated commitment to 'Close the Gap'?

It seems to me to be hypocrisy next to Liberal MP Andrew Laming's recent criticism of the Commonwealth government's decision to close down the Katungul Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) in Bega, NSW. In the matter of the Katungul the Liberal party claimed the Labor government's decision to limit the operation of an Indigenous health-promoting service was a failure of their commitment to 'Close the Gap' as they had failed to listen to the local Indigenous community and created a detrimental affect on their health. Assuming the NSW Liberal government stands by its Federal counterpart's criticism, I hope the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure can follow the state government's reasoning and insight. I am sure the adverse affects on Indigenous employment and health far outweigh the effects of fractional increase in traffic on George St, Redfern at 6am in the morning.

Yours Faithfully,



Lachlan McDaniel.

Pam Kaur

From: Kelly Roberts [Roberts.Kelly@abc.net.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 31 August 2011 2:32 PM
To: NCIE Info
Subject: Letter of support

I, Kelly Roberts, support the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence in its application to the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure to reinstate its opening time to 6am.

Having access to a gym that opens at 6am is essential to accommodate for people who prefer to exercise before heading off to work. There are many people who are only able to make it at 6am due to family restrictions and obligations and shifting the opening time forward by an hour will potentially affect many people to the point of discouraging them from exercising altogether. I personally need to access the gym at 6am and leave the gym by 6:45am due to family and work commitments. I would not be able to use the gym outside of these hours at all, therefore renewing my membership to the gym would not be necessary for me. I would, however, prefer to put my gym membership money towards NCIE, a gym that works with the community to create a better understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle than to a regular gym that is only looking to profit from patrons.

Regards,
Kelly Roberts



Kelly Roberts
Online Producer, ABC Innovation

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Pam Kaur

From: Peter Thomas [peter.thomas@amnesty.org.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 31 August 2011 10:12 PM
To: NCIE Info
Subject: Message for the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure

Dear Madam / Sir

I, Peter Thomas, support the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) in its application to the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure to reinstate its opening time to 6am.

I am a local resident that has lived directly opposite the NCIE ever since it open. The centre has only added to the feeling of community and safety in this part of Redfern. The opening time of 6am has never been an issue, and I have only ever heard positive comments about the NCIE from the residents in our 19 flat complex.

A later opening time would reduce the capacity of the centre to serve the local community - in particular those that need to travel for work or have irregular working hours. The early opening time is also popular with those that have child care responsibilities. Opening later would from my observations particularly disadvantage women.

Kind regards

Peter Thomas
19 / 199 George Street
Redfern 2016 NSW
0425 279 663



Tribal Warrior Association Inc
PO Box 3200
Redfern NSW 2016

1 September 2011

Ms Megan Fu
Senior Planner
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Megan,

On behalf of the Management Committee and staff of the Tribal Warrior Association in Redfern I would like to express my strong support for the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence's (NCIE) application to extend their opening hours so the Centre can open at 6.00am.

Tribal Warrior Association, in conjunction with the Babana Men's Group and the NSW Police Redfern Local Area Command run a mentoring program out of the NCIE three mornings each week for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women. At 6.00am each Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week we have met at the NCIE to deliver a boxing program.

This program helps our young people to get fit and lead healthier lifestyles. It also aims to build respectful two-way relationships between the young participants and the police men and women who join in the program. It is a vitally important program for the Redfern community.

I am a regular user of the NCIE's facilities and find that due to my busy workload I am often only able to access the gym between 6.00am and 7.00am. The NCIE plays a strong role within the local Redfern community and works to encourage members to get fit and lead active and healthy lifestyles.

I urge you to approve the NCIE's application to extend their opening hours.

Yours sincerely,

Shane Phillips
Chief Executive Officer

1 September 2011

AIME Indigenous Corporation throws its support behind the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence extended opening hours.

To whom it may concern,

Late on the 30th of August 2011 our team was informed the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence opening hours were to be revised and changed indefinitely from the 31st of September.

The revised 7am start, has not only impact on our staff members regular routine, whom utilize the gym before work hours, but more importantly impacted on a number of community driven initiatives, aimed at improving and support health lifestyle choice in the Redfern community and surrounding area.

Once such initiative is a program run by the Tribal Warrior Association, in collaboration with the NSW Police, helping youth caught up in the juvenile justice system get their lives back on track. The programs 6am start requires discipline and commitment from the 50 participants and allows the local area police and local community members to work alongside the young men and women. The change to the gyms opening times means the program cannot be completed before participant's work and education commitments, meaning the program is in risk of falling by the wayside.

This is just one of many stories justifying the need for the gym to re-open at 6am.

Your consideration and deliberation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

If you have any further questions or queries regards to the matters above please do not hesitate to contact me directly (0404679184).

Kindest regards,



Ben Lonsdale
Director, High Performance Unit