

**VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL
DRAFT ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**SEPTEMBER 1994
FOR CONSULTATION**





STEERING COMMITTEE

The Economic Development Committee was established as a result of a decision by the Camp Jungal Community Meeting in 1991. The Committee was charged with the responsibility to conduct a consultation, hold a conference and to develop an economic development strategy for Victoria.

Chairperson Paul Briggs, Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative

Representatives Daphne Yarram, Yangenanook
Nellie Flagg, Tumbukka
Gilla McGuinness, Yuroke
Lois Peeler, Yuroke
Andrew Gardiner, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

Project Officer Andrew McEwen

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CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

This Draft Strategy document is the first in 200 years that addresses specifically your economic future and that of our communities. Our future and that of our children's future is increasingly going to be dependent on economic development within our communities and employment. The consultation and process of developing this Economic Development Strategy has involved the participation of over 200 Koories and 15 to 20 community organisations in metropolitan and country Victoria.

Issues that surround are:

- *lack of an appropriate economic base;*
- *subsequent social and health consequences; and*
- *the need for strategies to develop an economic base, which would directly address the economic needs of our people and indirectly the social, health and welfare needs.*

It is clear that there are major issues that need to be addressed and in addressing them, that there has to be a balance achieved, between social and economic development. Similarly, there is a growing recognition of the need to balance growth of the economic base of individuals, families, clans and organisations as the building block to successful economic development.

This Draft Strategy Plan is based on views and experience expressed in statewide consultation and discussion. The strategies that have been developed have a shared purpose or vision and are agreed practical steps to move ahead to develop our economic future. The current scenario sees minimal injection of government funds having little effect on the economic and social status of our people.

Much of the benefit of Koori program dollars is lost as we do not have the Koori owned/controlled businesses and business infrastructure to effect change and benefit from these resources. Specific and complimentary strategies need to be developed in the areas of tourism, industry, agriculture, media, music and the arts, as vital steps to facilitating the development of our own business and sustainable economic base.

These Draft Strategies need to be discussed and endorsed as a forward step towards building a vibrant and self sufficient economy that ensures the benefits of our labour and the resources we generate remain in Koori Community control. Crucial to this is the development and establishment of a Koori controlled Credit Union or financial management institution.

An important process in our push towards economic stability will be the application of the (AEDP) Aboriginal Employment Development Policy, as a process for the development of an integrated approach to job creation, this being an important aspect of economic well being. It is estimated that we need 3,000 new jobs between now and the year 2000 just to keep the current level of unemployment at the level of today.

Your views and comments on this document are actively sought by the Economic Development Committee. This document is to be seen as a step in the economic future of our people, your participation is crucial.

Paul Briggs
Chairman, Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

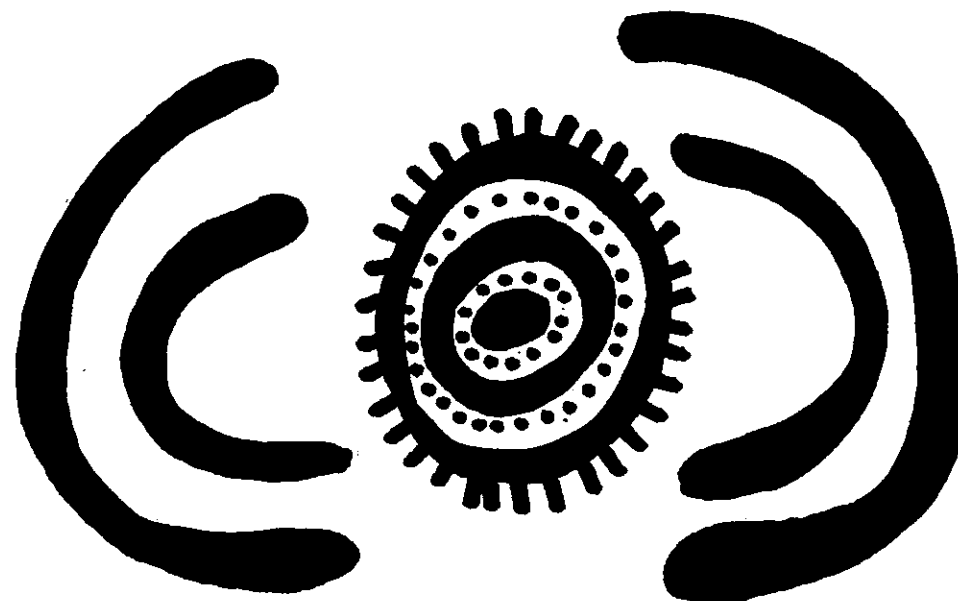
There was widespread endorsement that a high priority be given to strategies to support Koori economic development in Victoria. Both in the Consultation and at the Conference there was a general agreement that the continuation of "a welfare approach" to Koori development would not lead to a substantial improvement in family and community well being of Koories in Victoria.

Economic development was not seen as replacing a welfare and human services approach, but rather complementing it. Strategies were clearly needed to improve both the economic and social well being of Koori families and communities.

There was a consensus that economic development is an essential step in Koori people moving towards self determination and self management. To this extent a high priority was given to raising the priority and activities associated with economic development.

Economic development is seen in a variety of ways by individuals and communities. The Committee believes that genuine economic development for Koori people and communities involves the following.

- Having a larger asset base for families and communities which includes more home ownerships.
- Developing more employment opportunities for Koori people in government, community and private sectors.
- Developing more Koori owned businesses, including joint ventures with existing businesses, and making a profit in business.
- Having skills and knowledge to be in charge, to compete for jobs and run our own businesses successfully.
- Having a better lifestyle for family and communities.
- Controlling and managing our own health, education and welfare services.
- Hard work, holding your head high and having money in pockets.



Economic development in summary

- **Strategies to ensure appropriate education for business development and employment in general**
- **Strategies to gain equality in employment in three levels of government and the private sector**
- **Enterprise and small business development**
- **Control over social programs and associated employment**
- **Strategies to increase home ownership.**

PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE DRAFT STRATEGY

The Camp Jungai Community meeting endorsed the the plan to conduct an Economic Development Conference and the development of an Economic Development Strategy for Koories in Victoria.

Aims of the Conference and Consultation

The aim of the project was to develop a realistic and achievable strategy for facilitating economic and enterprise development in Victoria in the next 3 years. The following actions were specifically identified as critical to the process.

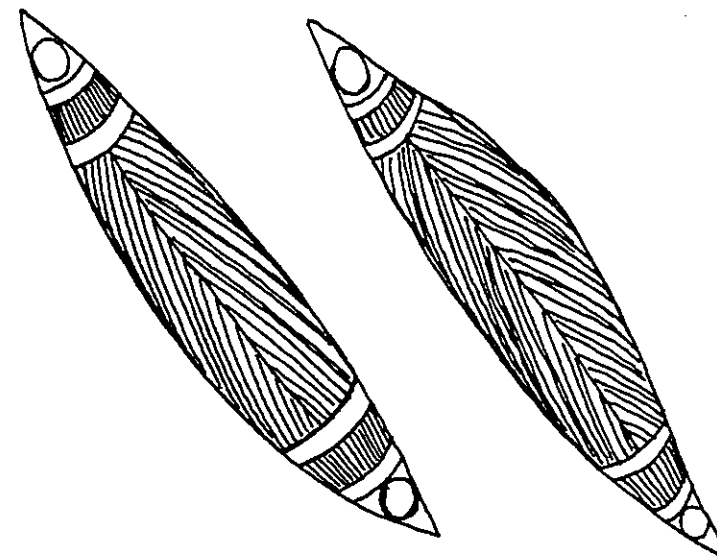
- *Seeking the involvement and participation of key Koori individuals, from co-operatives and the wider community, that are currently involved or are actively interested in being involved in enterprise and business development.*
- *Identifying individuals and communities with an understanding of and positive attitude towards business and economic development.*
- *Documenting and analysing the reasons why Koori businesses (Individual and co-operative) have failed in the past and what strategies may be useful to address these problems.*
- *Exploring alternative strategies and approaches that can facilitate and assist in Koori business and enterprise development.*
- *Exposing people to successful role models and discussing the findings of the three consultancies.*
- *Examining various models to facilitate economic and enterprise development.*
- *Developing a formal Draft Strategy.*

This process was seen as a learning process for all participants and the Regional Councils. As an ongoing learning process, it aims not merely to identify problems and issues, but to work through potential solutions and alternative options that are available to the community.

The process went through the following stages.

- **Consultation**
 - Base line study of current activities
 - Sub regional business development workshops
 - Focus group discussion on key problems and issues
- **Conference**
 - Feedback from Consultation
 - Explore alternative approaches and models
 - Discuss potential strategies
- **Developing Strategy**
 - Development of Draft Strategy based on Consultations and Conference
 - Consultation on Draft Strategy
 - Finalisation of Strategy

To work in co-operation with VAEAI to develop appropriate training plans to support business development and skills development in key industries



Introduction

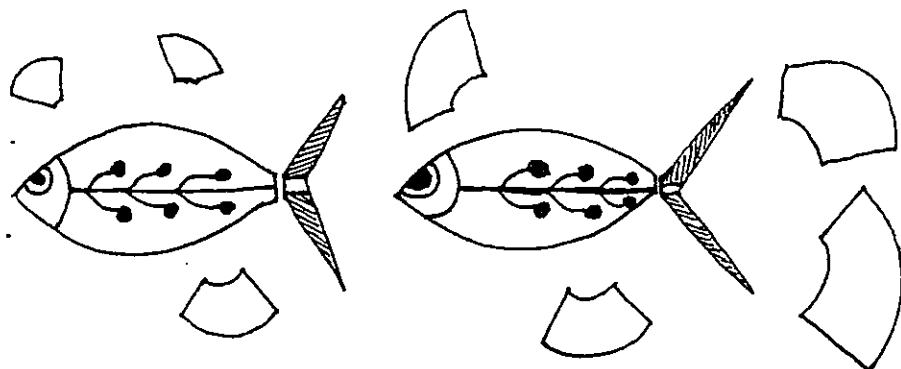
Concerns have been raised about the lack of participation and involvement of Koories in business, accounting and other associated courses. Koories tend to go into health, education and welfare courses. There is a critical need over the next 5 to 10 years to ensure that there are at least 500 young Koories involved in a variety of business courses and in developing skills and qualifications in tourism, arts and crafts, agriculture and other areas, where Koories are likely to be developing business. These need to be set up in the Koori Industry Training Plan for the State.

Key Problems and Issues

- Bad feedback from the Consultation on TAFE Colleges and courses.
- Concern about the reported over concentration of young Koories in Health Education and Welfare Courses.
- Need for specific skills to be developed in areas such as tourism, catering, agriculture and business.
- Need to link into the Industry Training Boards to obtain their support for courses for Koories.
- Need for flexible and locally available introductory business courses.

Proposed Strategy

- **Work in co-operation with VAEAI to develop appropriate training plans that support business development and skills development in key business and industry areas.**
 - Achieve Koori representation on TAFE Councils.
 - TAFE Colleges to be more responsive to individual/community business training needs.
 - Support the formation of Koori Community Education Centres funded by DEET and ATSIC.
 - Seek exemptions that should apply to HECS.
 - Development of wider accredited courses in such areas as tourism, arts/craft and management
 - Promote and encourage community mentors
 - Gain acceptance of Credit transfers between courses.



Preparing small business development strategies to support Koori people in establishing businesses or in running existing businesses

Introduction

Typically Koories, who have attempted to set up business and those who have been successful, have "done it hard". Most people don't know where to get support and assistance. They are confronted by a maze of agencies and legal requirements. They are frustrated by "red and black" tape. There is little support from communities and it is often reported that they are confronted by jealousy and envy. Too often they are victims of the "Tall Poppy" syndrome. Most people spoken to saw the community and their families however as a great source of strength. In most cases they are not experienced in basic business skills and have to learn as they go. There are few support structures for people wanting to develop an idea into a business.

Key Problems and Issues

- Red and Black Tape.
- Not knowing how to develop an idea into a business plan.
- Lack of basic business skills including bookkeeping, marketing and business planning.
- Lack of support networks.
- Slowness of agencies like ATSIC to respond and provide on going help.
- Lack of access to equity capital for businesses.
- Poor quality TAFE training options.
- Lack of information on available resources and services

Proposed Strategy

- Preparing small business development strategies to support Koori people in establishing businesses or in running existing businesses.
 - Developing a Koori Business Network to support and encourage Koori people in business.
 - Requesting Koori input into assessing ATSIC Business Loans.
 - Regional Council allocating resources for economic development.
 - Communities through VAEAI making use of Industry Training Boards.
 - Establishment of Koori Credit Union for Equity.
 - Developing an appropriate information package.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR KOORIES IN VICTORIA

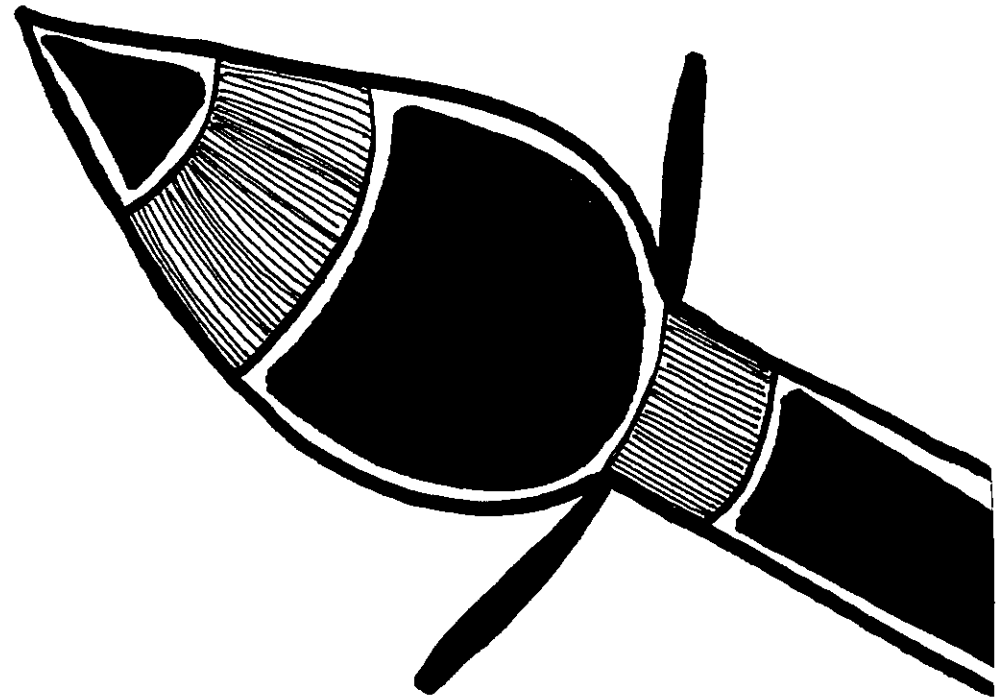
On the basis of the Consultation and the Conference, the Committee has endorsed the following Draft Strategies to address the key barriers to economic development. The Draft Strategies will be circulated for comment.

- **Immediate expansion of the Economic Development Committee to assist in developing strategies and in the establishment of a Victorian Economic Development Trust/Agency.**
 - Representative of VAEAI
 - Representative of Koori Women Means Business
 - Representative of State Wide Koori Organisation
 - A Koori business person.
- **Preparation of funding proposal and business plan for the Victorian Koori Economic Development Trust/Agency.**
 - To provide for membership
 - To provide for functions
 - To proposed funding sources
- **Establishment of Victorian Economic Development Trust/Agency to develop and provide:**
 - a Victorian Koori controlled Credit Union;
 - financial and business advisory services;
 - a Business Planning service;
 - assistance in community and regional economic planning; and
 - a rolling equity investment fund to assist small business development.
- **Development of co-ordinated economic development strategies to assist community economic development initiatives by communities and individuals by:**
 - developing sub regional economic development plans;
 - preparing a case to employ community economic development officers;
 - supporting the expansion of CDEP projects focusing on business development;
 - establishing local business development training workshops; and
 - developing Regional Enterprise Workshops to skill Koories in developing their own business plans.
- **Preparing small business development strategies to support Koori people in establishing businesses or in running existing businesses.**
 - Developing a Koori Business Network to support and encourage Koori people in business.
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- **Developing a strategic plan for Koori cultural tourism in Victoria.**
 - CP&DP funding to an appropriate organisation to develop strategy plan.
 - Approach to ATSIC Commission and to Victorian Government to support the development of a strategy plan.
 - Wide consultation in developing strategy plan.

- **Developing a strategic plan for arts, craft and cultural activities for Victoria.**
 - Seek funding for development of strategy plan
 - Victorian Aboriginal Arts Development Association be the appropriate body to develop a strategic plan for the development of Koori arts, craft and culture based on consultation with and recognition of the needs of communities and individual artists.
 - Plan for the development of a central place for promoting art and culture and develop a marketing approach that supports the Arts Coop.
 - Look at heritage advisory officers being located in communities to support strategic plans implementation.
 - Seek copyright protection for traditional designs.

- **Work in co-operation with VAEAI to develop appropriate training plans that support business development and skills development in key business and industry areas.**
 - Achieve Koori representation on TAFE Councils.
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The Committee is taking immediate action, as directed, to expand the Interim Committee and to seek funds to support its activities in the next six months.

It is the view of the Committee that wider consultation is required to develop the details of the Strategy Plans.

This Draft Strategy Plan is being circulated for comment from interested parties.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

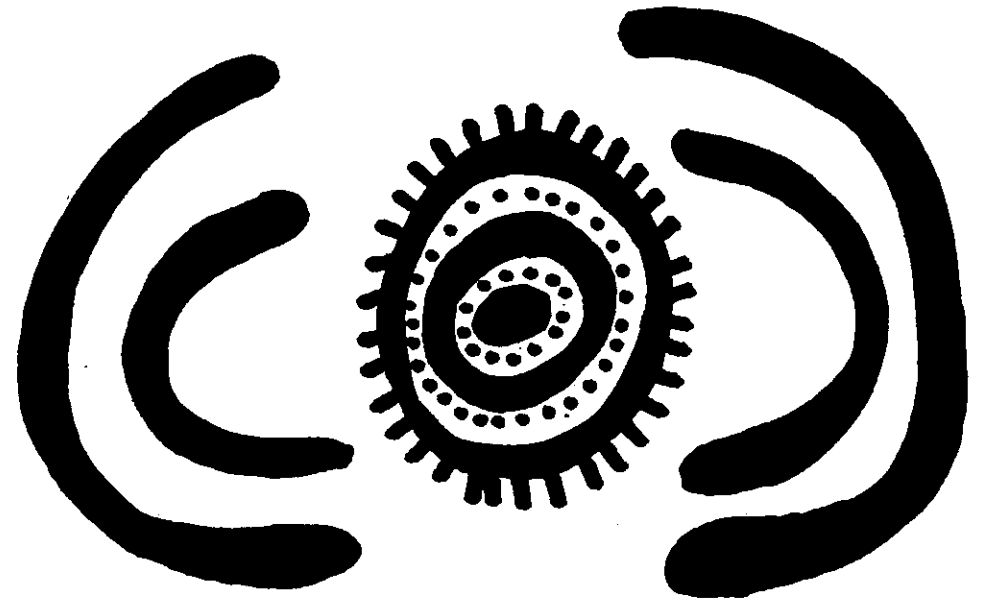
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Development of co-ordinated economic development strategies to assist community economic development initiatives by communities and individuals

Introduction

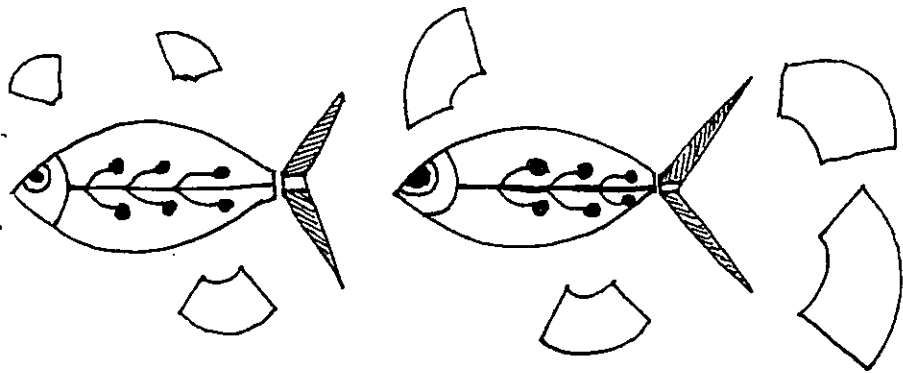
It was almost universally agreed that business development would most likely be achieved through a combination of individual families and communities. Many people saw community organisations as having an important role to play in facilitating and assisting in business and economic development. There was wide agreement that co-operatives should not be directly involved in running businesses. There are, however, a range of supportive actions and planning that they can be involved in.

Key Problems and Issues

- If we are not careful, CDEP will be a "dead end" that does not lead onto business development or skills development.
- CEIS scheme, which provides access to loan and capital funds must be based on a community plan involving economic development proposals which have wide community support.
- Many people have ideas but don't know how to proceed.
- People lack information on the programs and supports that are available.
- There is not a shared vision in most communities of how to proceed.

Proposed Strategy

- **Development of co-ordinated economic development strategies to assist community economic development initiatives by communities and individuals by:**
 - developing sub regional economic development plans;
 - preparing a case to employ community economic development officers;
 - supporting the expansion of CDEP projects focusing on business development;
 - establishing local business development training workshops;
 - developing Regional Enterprise Workshops to skill Koories in developing their own business plans; and
 - supporting the development of CEIS proposals for Victoria.



Preparing small business development strategies to support Koori people in establishing businesses or in running existing businesses

Introduction

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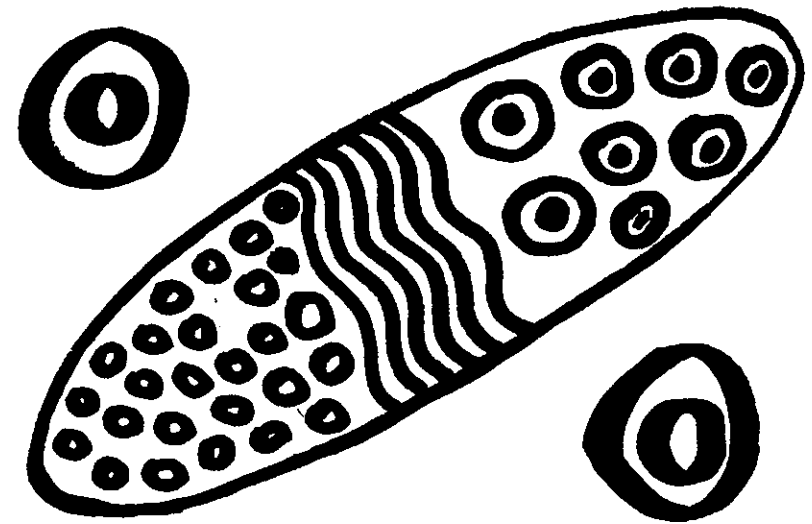
Developing a strategic plan for Koori cultural tourism in Victoria

Introduction

Eco or cultural tourism is anticipated to grow from a \$200m industry to \$1.5 to \$2 billion dollar industry by the year 2000. Currently 70% of overseas visitors want to meet and share with Indigenous people their culture. Currently less than 3% of overseas tourists actually meet Indigenous people in Australia. The industry has a potential to employ 20,000 Indigenous people nationally and up to 2000 people in Victoria by the year 2000. Concerns have arisen that just as in social programs where 4 to 70 cents in the dollar go to the wider community that the same or worse will happen for Indigenous people in eco tourism. The potential employment and incomes will not be realised without detailed planning, hard work and persistence.

Key Problems and Issues

- The right for Indigenous people to control tourism developments in Aboriginal culture is seen as a critical issue.
- Concerns that Indigenous culture will be "prostituted" to the almighty dollar.
- Concerns that what developments do occur are not at the expense of culture.
- The need for protection of "Intellectual Property" that is embodied in the culture and the rights of the traditional custodians.
- There is wide consultation within the Indigenous communities and the right balance is stuck between protecting culture and sacred sites and providing employment opportunities for Indigenous people.
- The communities will not have the resources and management skills to ensure that the Indigenous people earn 90c in the tourist dollar.
- A planned approach is taken to developing the business infrastructure to ensure that Koori people benefit from economic development.



Proposed Strategy

- Developing a strategic plan for Koori cultural tourism in Victoria.
 - CP&DP funding to an appropriate organisation to develop strategy plan.
 - Approach to ATSIC Commission and to Victorian Government to support the development of a strategy plan.
 - Wide consultation in developing a strategy plan.

Developing a strategic plan for arts, craft and cultural activities for Victoria

Introduction

While there are many skilled artists, musicians and crafts people in Victoria there is a lack of planned support and encouragement for them. Most Victorians, if they think about Aboriginal Art, think about non Koori art and culture. There is a need to support the artists in practical ways to ensure that they are given proper recognition and to ensure that they receive a fair price for their art, craft and culture.

Key Problems and Issues

- Need for wider recognition of Victorian Koori art and culture.
- Need for a Koori controlled central shop/gallery/centre to promote and sell Koori arts and to ensure that a fair return is given to the artists.
- Need to support the formation and development of the Arts Co-operative.
- Need to encourage young peoples' involvement in art and culture.

Proposed Strategy

- Developing a strategic plan for arts, craft and cultural activities for Victoria.
 - Seek funding for development of strategy plan
 - Victorian Aboriginal Arts Development Association be the appropriate body to develop a strategic plan for the development of Koori arts, craft and culture based on consultation with and recognition of the needs of communities and individual artists.
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