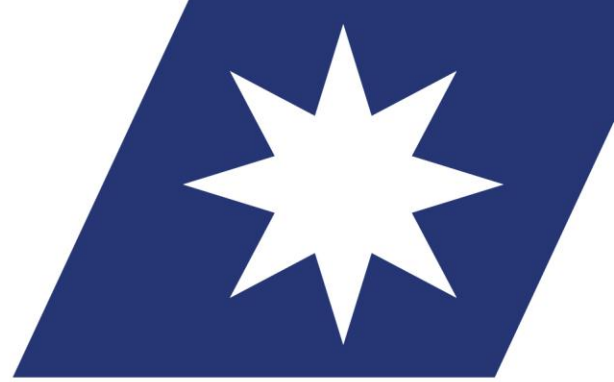


**ROBBIE KATTER**

Member for Traeger



## MEDIA RELEASE

October 19, 2018

### FIRST AUSTRALIANS THE FOCUS OF KAP'S BLUE CARD BILL

Queensland's Blue Card system will work for, not against, remote indigenous communities under a Bill introduced into State Parliament by State KAP Leader Robbie Katter this week.

The changes will create a new category of Blue Card that better reflects the unique needs of indigenous communities in remote Queensland.

Instead of the 'one-size-fits-all' system that currently impedes employment opportunities for First Australians, Blue Card applications in those remote communities will be determined by the communities themselves.

Applications will be decided by relevant, local Community Justice Groups who have an interment knowledge of the individuals involved.

"The current system is inadvertently causing more risk to children by keeping parents and carers out of work," Mr Katter said.

"Children's safety remains the number one priority and under these changes and the treatment of sexually-based offences will not change. No person who has a sexually based offence will be illegible as with the current system.

"I have come across many cases in remote indigenous communities where a person who has completely turned their life around is unable to work or contribute fully to the community because of a decades old conviction that has nothing to do with children.

"Feedback from the CJGs, community leaders and law enforcement is that by handing more decision making power to the communities themselves, this will assist in opening up Blue Card based employment opportunities whilst maintaining child safety standards."

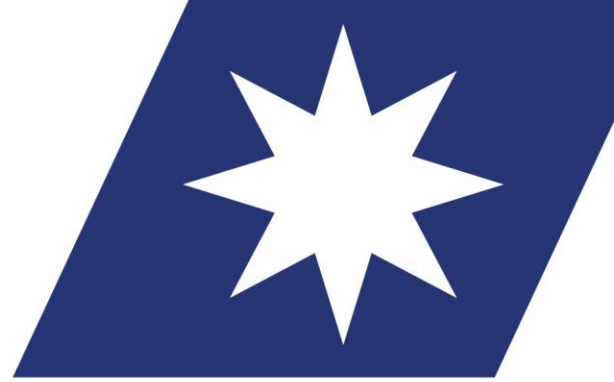
"The new system will only apply to a specific Community area and a Blue Card issued for a specific area cannot be used in other areas."

Under the Bill, applications from individuals in remote communities will be assessed under the normal Blue Card process but then the Community Justice Groups will have the ultimate say in whether a Blue Card is issued.

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## MEDIA RELEASE

“If an applicant for a Blue Card is going to be rejected by the Department, under our Bill the Community Justice Group will be given the opportunity to review the case and make the final decision,” Mr Katter said.

“The Community Justice Groups are the people on the ground and they will have the final say as to whether the applicant is appropriate.”

Mr Katter said there are few jobs in remote Indigenous communities that don’t require a Blue Card and there were significant opportunities for employment that will help overcome a lot of social issues.

“People who offended early in their lives and who have since played a positive role in their communities deserve to be able to get a job and it shouldn’t be up to some bureaucrat who has no idea about the circumstances or individuals involved to decide,” he said.

“Nothing is more important than protecting our kids and because this system requires the communities themselves to make the decision, I believe it improves child safety.”

This is the second time Mr Katter has introduced this bill into Parliament.

Last year the Bill lapsed before being voted on due to the calling of the 2017 State Election.

—ENDS—

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