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Aboriginal legal service backs voluntary income management

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An Aboriginal legal service has applauded the Federal Intervention Review Board's recommendation that income management be voluntary, but is critical of other recommendations made.

The panel says compulsory income control should be scrapped, but one member broke ranks to criticise that finding.

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) is urging the Federal Government to follow the panel's advice.

Chief executive Priscilla Collins says it is discriminatory to control the way people spend their income if they live in proscribed areas.

"A lot of these people are well-educated, good parents who are looking after their children and know how to manage their money," she said.

"The next thing is they're put onto income management where their income is controlled and it's very inconvenient where some of these people have to drive two hours in to go and get their cards every fortnight."

But NAAJA has questioned the board's recommendation to increase police numbers in Northern Territory communities.

The agency says the cost of a permanent police station in one community was more than \$7 million.

Ms Collins says there is no evidence the increased police presence is reducing crime, and the money would be better spent on other services like health.

"What we've found is that a lot of stuff that you read in the papers where there's disturbances in different communities, there are murders happening, those are coming from communities where there were already established police stations, so by putting in more police stations, is not actually addressing the problem," she said.