



Reducing Indigenous imprisonment – what the Australian Government can do

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs will hold a joint public hearing with officers of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and the Attorney-General's Department on Thursday, 27 May, as part of its inquiry into the high level of involvement of Indigenous juveniles and young adults in the criminal justice system.

FaHCSIA is responsible for coordination of and support for the Closing the Gap agenda which aims to address the social and economic conditions that create an environment for high levels of offending common to Indigenous youth and young adults.

The Attorney-General's Department is responsible for the delivery of a number of programs which seek to improve justice outcomes for Indigenous people, including the Legal Aid for Indigenous Australians program, the Indigenous Justice program and the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services program. The Department is also responsible for the provision of policy advice relating to Indigenous law and justice, and led the development of the National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework.

The Hon Bob Debus MP, Committee Chair, said, "There has never been a more considered approach to improving Indigenous life outcomes than we see today with the Council of Australian Governments' Closing the Gap strategy. Government departments play a crucial role in the future success of this strategy, and it is crucial that they help us identify what more can be done to ensure that we close the gap in the rates of detention and imprisonment for Indigenous youth and young adults."

Public hearing program:

12.15pm, Thursday 27 May 2010
Committee Room 1R2 Parliament House
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Attorney-General's Department

To listen to the public hearing on your computer, go to <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

For background information, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au or see the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/atsia>

For details of the Committee's upcoming **interstate public hearing program**, check the website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/atsia/sentencing/hearings.htm>