



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS

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Inquiry into language learning in Indigenous Communities

Utopia Homelands Public community meeting ALL WELCOME

**Tuesday, 3 April 2012
2.30pm — 4.30pm**

**to be held at the
Arlparra Secondary School**

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs is pleased to visit the Utopia Homelands as part of its inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities.

The Committee invites community members to attend a public meeting to discuss the links between language learning and improving education and vocational outcomes and community wellbeing in the Utopia Homelands.

The Chairman of the Committee Mr Shayne Neumann MP says:

“This inquiry provides an opportunity for the communities of the Utopia Homelands to have their say about the role of Indigenous languages in Closing the Gap and improving outcomes for Indigenous communities. Language is such an important part of a person’s culture and identity. By examining how we can give attention and proper recognition to Indigenous languages in Australia, we are also walking the path of reconciliation by giving attention and proper recognition to Indigenous cultures and identities.

We want to find out about how the use of Indigenous languages can assist in improving education outcomes where English is a second, third or fourth language. The Committee is looking at what’s working, and innovative measures to improve competency in English in communities.

At its community meeting in Arlparra, the Committee will invite community representatives to speak, and then open the meeting to the community to express their views for the Committee’s report.”

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Mr Shayne Neumann on (07) 3201 5300.

For background information see the Committee website: www.aph.gov.au/languages or contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au

Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Terms of reference

The Committee will inquire into and report on Indigenous languages in Australia, with a particular focus on:

- The benefits of giving attention and recognition to Indigenous languages
- The contribution of Indigenous languages to Closing the Gap and strengthening Indigenous identity and culture
- The potential benefits of including Indigenous languages in early education
- Measures to improve education outcomes in those Indigenous communities where English is a second Language
- The educational and vocational benefits of ensuring English language competency amongst Indigenous communities
- Measures to improve Indigenous language interpreting and translating services
- The effectiveness of current maintenance and revitalisation programs for Indigenous languages, and
- The effectiveness of the Commonwealth Government Indigenous languages policy in delivering its objectives and relevant policies of other Australian governments.