



Indigenous languages – training, resource-sharing, networking, and advocacy

Dr Nicolas Thieberger and Dr Margaret Florey from the Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity (RNLD) will appear before the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on Thursday 16 February, in relation to the Committee's inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities.

The RNLD is a network of 650 members with a common interest in supporting and sustaining Indigenous languages through documentation and revitalisation activities. RNLD's activities build from its four-pronged mission of training, resource-sharing, networking, and advocacy.

The RNLD's submission reviews the benefits of Indigenous languages to the well-being and identity of Indigenous peoples and ways in which Indigenous languages can contribute to Closing the Gap, including within health, education and employment targets. The RNLD supports bilingual schooling in situations where Indigenous children are learning their heritage language from their families and communities as their first language.

The importance of Indigenous people being able to gain formal recognition and educational qualifications for their language work is another area of interest for RNLD. One of the aims of the RNLD training program, *Documenting and Revitalising Indigenous Languages* (DRIL), is to build readiness for post-secondary education programs. The DRIL program aims to strengthen the ability of individuals, family groups, community groups, and Indigenous organisations to develop, run and manage their own language projects independently.

The Chair of the Committee Mr Shayne Neumann MP said "education and career pathways are important for Indigenous people interested in working in the area of Indigenous languages. The Committee is keen to find out from RNLD what the greatest resource needs are for various Indigenous language projects around Australia and to hear about some success stories for people who have participated in the *Documenting and Revitalising Indigenous Languages* program."

The hearing will be broadcast live from Committee Room 1R1, Parliament House, Canberra from approximately 12:15pm on Thursday 16 February via:
<http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Information about the inquiry including the program can be found at the inquiry's website: www.aph.gov.au/languages

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

For background information, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au