

Indigenous Affairs – Senate Estimates Opening Address

I thank the Senate for the opportunity to provide an opening address.

This government has worked hard to deliver on our ambitious reforms to Indigenous affairs and the 2016/17 Budget re-affirms our commitment to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The 2016/17 Budget outlines the Government's investment in the Indigenous Advancement Strategy that was introduced in 2014.

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy unpicked a tangle of **over 150 disparate activities** into the five broad programme streams under the **Indigenous Advancement Strategy**.

The IAS provided a level of transparency never before seen in Indigenous programmes and ensured that every dollar correlates to real on the ground outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Of course we have had our critics, people resistant to change or lacking the understanding of reforms required. But the results speak for themselves.

I am pleased to advise the committee that we have achieved great success through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and paved the way to real and lasting change.

We are getting adults into work.

More than 39,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have started a job through programmes just in my portfolio alone.

And **20,472 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians** have started a job in the first 9 months of Jobactive (to 31 March 2016).

Senate F&PA Committee

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Witness Name Senator the Hon
Nigel Scullion

Organisation:

We've got **more than 2, 600 Indigenous rangers** employed and delivering work on country activities.

We've provided **Aboriginal land grants** totalling approximately **459 hectares** with an additional **212,300 hectares** currently being finalised, including the **historic Kenbi settlement** to support economic growth through land use.

And we've seen **\$91.6 million** worth of contracts provided to **252 Indigenous businesses** in the first six months of the **Indigenous Procurement Policy**. This is an enormous success and opens the door to many opportunities for Indigenous businesses.

We are getting children to school.

We are providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families with access to quality early childhood services through a **\$165 million** investment in **315 early childhood services** providers.

Students are being supported to stay at school and complete their education through **\$78 million investment in scholarships, mentoring and academies**.

The **Remote School Attendance Strategy**, operating in **77 schools in 74 communities**, has achieved a **2 percentage point increase** in school attendance.

And, Mr Chair, we are improving community safety.

The Women's Safety Package included significant investment of **\$21 million for activities to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families safe**.

We have invested considerably in improving police presence with **\$28 million in Wadeye alone**.

We are creating opportunities for people to move into employment when they exit the criminal justice system through the **Prison to Work blueprint**.

We have made in-roads with State and Territory Governments on **alcohol misuse, improving policing and reducing Indigenous Australians' contact with the criminal justice system**.

We have rolled out low aromatic unleaded fuel to **170 sites** across regional and remote parts of the **Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia**.

I thank the committee members and senior officials for their time and interest in these important reforms over the last three years.

Thank you, Mr Chair.