



Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to give evidence to the Indigenous alcohol inquiry

The House Indigenous Affairs Committee will hear from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on Thursday as part of the Committee's inquiry into the harmful use of alcohol in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Department has contributed a whole-of-government written submission to the inquiry, which addresses the Government's Indigenous Affairs priorities of improved school attendance and employment, and ensuring communities are safer and that the rule of law applies.

In its submission, the Department described alcohol misuse as a major contributing factor to the high levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, including low life expectancy, poor health, poor education, poor employment outcomes and high levels of contact with the criminal justice system.

As the lead Commonwealth agency for Indigenous Affairs, the Department is responsible for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop community-based alcohol management strategies, including alcohol restrictions, demand reduction strategies and harm reduction measures.

The Chair of the Committee, Dr Sharman Stone said: 'In its recent visit to Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek, the Committee saw first-hand what can be achieved by local Aboriginal people in the development of alcohol management strategies in their communities. The Committee is interested in hearing how the government will stimulate and support new community-led responses to alcohol misuse, in particular where problems are persisting or increasing.'

Details of the hearing are as follows:

When Thursday, 17 July 2014
Time 11.30am – 12.30pm
Where Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra

The full terms of reference are available at www.aph.gov.au/indigenousaffairs

The proceedings will be audio webcast live on: www.aph.gov.au/live

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Dr Sharman Stone MP on (03) 5821 5371. **For background information**, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or indigenousaffairs.reps@aph.gov.au