

15 September 2011

To the
House of Representatives Standing Committee
On Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Please find attached FATSILC Corporation responses to the above committee.

As a national peak body for Indigenous languages and a board consisting of Indigenous directors across the nation, the Federation of Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture Corporation (FATSILC) Believe these problems are occurring due to the lack of strong cultural identity And connection between traditional culture/language and mainstream influences.

The problems which are prominent in Aboriginal communities today have been escalating for over 200 years. The slow breakdowns of traditional language and culture have been instrumental in the escalation of drug and substance abuse, domestic violence, suicide and self-harm, as Aboriginal people have lost their strong identity in whom they are where they come from and where they are going.

FATSILC is the national peak body for community based Indigenous language programs in Australia. The organisation was established in 1991 in response to the Australian Language and Literacy Policy and became incorporated on 3rd December 1993.

It is through the individual experience of our Directors throughout the nation who network directly with Indigenous communities and deal face to face with these issues everyday that we are able to identify many obstacles that impact on our people and our languages. Indigenous language centres, programs and projects are and have been functioning at the grass roots level and their sole purpose is to revitalize, maintain and preserve the multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait languages and cultures of Australia with very limited resources.

FATSILC's position is to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and culture embedded in policies and procedures in all areas of health, education, youth, justice and legal, housing, social, employment and all professions. These policies and procedures should be fully in practice and utilized when engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within these service areas, not just token programs on the side, because Australia has to be seen as doing something for the plight of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and land have been separated by government as an identity on its own. It is often seen and facilitated as a separate to the areas of health, education, youth, justice and legal, housing, social and employment. The above 'problems' are only ever going to become more prominent in our future generations. It is through a loss of strong cultural identity amongst our youth of today that we are seeing them 'losing their way' and the lack of confidence and esteem to be strong in their culture and heritage in today's society.

Our Languages need to be recognised and acknowledged as the first languages of Australia and incorporated in the Australian Constitution. No excuses, we do not want to hear that there are too many languages? Which languages do we choose or acknowledge? The answer is Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Have respect for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Come on Australian government listen to us, respect us as we are a unique nation and need to be acknowledged and shown recognition and respect as the first people of this nation.

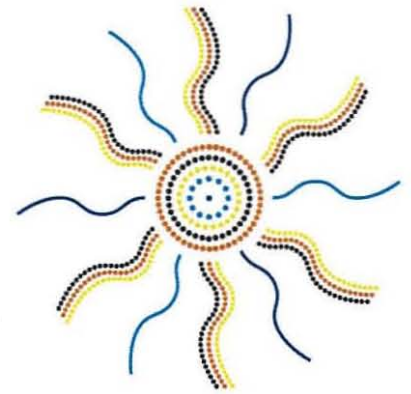
FATSILC Chairperson



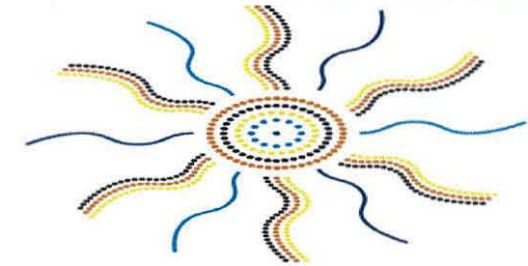
Barbara McGillivray WA Director
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CC: Working Group
Directors and Alternatives

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FATSILC
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(CORPORATION)



FATSILC

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ISLANDER LANGUAGES & CULTURE
(CORPORATION)

FATSILC (Corp),
Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture
Corporation

Response to the

House Of Representatives Standing Committee On Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities 19 August 2011,

Email: atsia.reps@aph.gov.au | Phone: (02) 6277 4559 | Fax: (02) 6277 4427 | www.aph.gov.au/languages Postal
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House Of Representatives Standing Committee On Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities 19 August 2011, Email: atsia.reps@aph.gov.au | Phone: (02) 6277 4559 | Fax: (02) 6277 4427 | www.aph.gov.au/languages
Postal address: House of Representatives ATSI Committee, R1 106, PO Box 6021, Parliament House, ACT 2600

Question and Responses

Question 1 **What are the languages spoken in your community?**

Response 1 FATSILC (Corp), The Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture is the national peak body for community based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs in Australia.

The National Indigenous Languages Survey developed jointly in 2004 and completed in 2005, between AIATSIS and FATSIL found that only 145 Indigenous languages were still spoken in Australia and about 110 of these were severely or critically endangered. Many languages are no longer spoken in their entirety by anyone; rather, Indigenous people use words and phrases from them. There is widespread community support for language projects to assist the revival and maintenance of Australian Indigenous languages. Bilingual education was introduced in some Indigenous communities in the early 1970s and continues today.

For further information please ref to our website www.fatsilc.org.au. Section:-Language organisation directory to view the languages list.

Question 2 **How well are they spoken by children, adults and elders?**

Response 2 The (NILS) National Indigenous Languages Survey (2005) found that 18 languages were spoken by all age groups and at least three or four of these showed some signs of endangerment. Sadly, Importunely, some of the languages that are spoken now are not all fluent, many of our people speak pidgin, Kriol, Aboriginal English and as they speak up to 2 years of age they can understand grammar and can be easily influence by other languages.

Question 3 **Describe your group and project:**

3.1 Why was it important to start up?

At a National conference held in Alice Springs, Northern Territory in 1991, extremely concern delegates realised the extreme status of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages and that they were in extreme decline and it was critical to act fast so that ATSI languages were not lost. Recommendations from the forum highlighted the serious position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and that a series of discussion had to occur to establish a national body to assist in the protection of existing ATSI languages around Australia in Adelaide, South Australia and Dampier, Western Australia.

The Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL Corp) organisation was established in 1991 in response to the Australian Language and Literacy Policy. Its functions included the retrieval, revival and maintenance of Indigenous languages and cultural programs. FATSIL accomplished this by supporting community based language and cultural programs. In 3 December 1993 became a corporation as a not for profit organisation. The organisation is currently based in Melbourne Victoria and remains the national peak body for community based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs.

FATSILC objectives include:

- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are considered as core issue in the development of all policy and legislation relation to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people in Australia
- Support and the maintenance of cultural practices and traditions so that they will survive for future generations
- Proved information and advice to government, non-government agencies and the general community relation to language issues
- Contribute to the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language policies and programs
- Provide consultative support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language management committees, language centres, community groups including individuals, families and communities
- Promote the recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language skills, experience and knowledge in languages, culture, arts and heritage through educational and employment programs
- Encourage the training and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers and specialist language speakers.

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| | <p>FATSILC communications plan identifies and informs the professional process undertaken by the board of directors through the development of appropriate strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicating to the public the organisations function • enhancing the organisation professional profile • enable the organisation to exist as a reputable and well respected organisation processing expertise • enhancing the capacity of FATSILC to create an environment that is culturally conscious for all its members, staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities • promoting local, regional, state, national and international projects and initiatives whether directly or indirectly involved <p>Formerly, The first FATSIL Newsletter, Voice of the Land, is now known as the magazine, Voice of the Land (VOTL) which was established and published in April 1996 with the aim of informing and providing a link for those of you from all around the country, who share the goals of maintaining and reviving our indigenous languages. The newsletter contents were based on program news, publications and language research, initiatives and conferences, cultural events and displays and any actions on policy matters and items of general interest to all. These include language and cultural maintenance as this was recognised as an integral factor in the reconciliation process. It was identified that there was in adequate funding for grassroots programmes. Also there were little or no regards for rights and ownership of copy right for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regards to art and culture. There wasn't a sense of any real control of our languages', this contributed to the gradual loss which continues today. It was identified that with adequate funding for interpreting services this would increase social determinants and give equity and social justice for individuals, families and communities.</p> <p>There was a strong view that we must increase and widely promote the awareness of language and culture at every opportunity. To encourage and support the development accredited training and ensure interpreters receive the appropriate employment agreements on recognised of Australian workplace award structures. To protect the rights of our specialist language and cultural consultants and interpreters. To develop strategies and incorporate policies with government and non-government departments to strengthen and protect endangered languages and preserve our unique and valuable linguistic resources.</p> |
| <p>3.2</p> | <p>How long have you been running?</p> <p>About FATSILC was Established in 1991, and has been running for 20 years and 18 years as a corporation body FATSILC - Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages & Culture is the Peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australia. The organisation became a corporation on 03 December 1993 with a mandate to set national priorities for Indigenous languages. This mandate includes support for the maintenance, retrieval and revival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages through the support of community based language programs. A network of language centres, regional language management committee and community language projects operates across Australia and the Torres Strait Islands to provide to programs to research and record our rich cultural history, through a variety of projects using electronic media, storytelling, producing publications, DVD/CD's, TV programs and other multimedia activities.</p> <p>Through its advisory role, FATSILC provides a communication network to support information sharing between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander com FATSILC objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are considered as core issue in the development of all policy and legislation relation to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people in Australia ▪ Support and the maintenance of cultural practices and traditions so that they will survive for future generations ▪ Proved information and advice to government, non-government agencies and the general community relation to language issues ▪ Contribute to the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language policies and programs ▪ Provide consultative support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language management committees, language centres, community groups including individuals, families and communities ▪ Promote the recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language skills, experience and knowledge in languages, culture, arts and heritage through educational and employment programs ▪ Encourage the training and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers and specialist language speakers. Communities, government and relevant non-government agencies involved with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. |

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| | <p>FATSILC Corporation contains directors who possess the skills ability and capacity to work towards accomplishing its objectives. This membership currently includes the Directors and Alternative Directors, financial, non-financial and associate members from all over Australia and the Torres Strait Islands C Board</p> <p>Elections are held via postal vote every three years for positions on the FATSILC Board. Delegates and shadow delegates are elected from each State/Territory. The delegates are required to represent the interests and concerns of FATSILC members within their states and territories through participation in quarterly Board of Directors meetings and involvement on subcommittees as required.</p> <p>Membership of FATSILC is open to all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent and non-Aboriginal who are over 18 years of age, and are involved or interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.</p> <p>FATSILC now are in the process of undergoing a whole new restructure to focus on key outcomes</p> |
| 3.3 | What age group(s) are you working with? |
| | All ages groups |
| 3.4 | How many people are involved? |
| | <p>FATSILC has membership base of 400 plus and the total memberships include approximately 6690 refer to question 4. (Other membership VOTL, Facebook, Website etc.)</p> <p>Staff and Directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are conscious and aware of the expectations for this communications plan to be upheld and what their duties are in the process ▪ to identify and acknowledge the skills and experience within the organisation ▪ are to provide an environment that is culturally safe and secure to external organisations, communities or individuals ▪ to promote and make aware of current, new projects and initiatives that FATSILC is involved ▪ when attending external organisations, government departments and cultural events they must receive direct permission from the chairperson ▪ Feel supported by the organisation to attend cultural events. ▪ FATSILC is an organisation that maintains a culturally healthy and safe environment to staff, members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ▪ Key organisations and stakeholders are conscious that FATSILC has a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer ,Board of Directors, Staff, ▪ Volunteers, Contractors and Consultants that they can approach to acquire expert information on language and culture <p>Target Audience</p> <p>Local, Regional, State, National and International government departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ▪ Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet ▪ All language centres and regional languages maintenance committees and language projects ▪ COAG working group ▪ Media organisations-radio, TV, newspapers and internet ▪ Academic bodies and education institutions ▪ Professional bodies ▪ Office for the Arts ▪ Prime Minister Cabinet ▪ FAHCSIA ▪ AIATSIS ▪ UNESCO ▪ Philanthropic organisations ▪ Jobs Australia |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander State Language Organisations. ▪ ACARA-Australian curriculum assessment and reporting authority ▪ Interpreting and translating ▪ Reconciliation Australia ▪ The whole of the Australian public (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and culture is everybody's business) ▪ ATSI teachers and speakers and interpreting and translating of Indigenous languages who are delivering programmes in Australian schools and those wishing to deliver such programmes; ▪ Indigenous and school communities wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools; and ▪ Policy makers and programme officers from State and Territory education jurisdictions wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools. |
| Question 4 | <p>What activities do you do to record or encourage the use of languages, including local languages?</p> |
| | <p>In the last 25 years and more language centres around Australia have begun to address the alarming loss of ATSI language and culture since post colonisation. Our languages and cultures are now assisted with the development of new technologies that link language centres and communities both nationally and globally. These technologies have been utilised to digitise language, culture and arts preserving them for our children's future.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recording oral histories from language speakers ▪ Development of community based educational programs and curriculum coordination ▪ Inclusion of Indigenous language studies in education curriculums at local and state levels ▪ Development and implementation of tertiary education programs ▪ Development of the languages in written form ▪ Diversification of schooling programs to combine study of local language and culture with English teaching systems ▪ Development of print publication, video and CD production for both educational purposes and retail distribution ▪ Incorporation of Indigenous languages into art, entertainment, broadcasting and video production ▪ Mobilisation of new technology to record, store and share information and respond to reviews and articles. <p>Other activities and projects FATSILC are and have been involved in;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FATSILC and NSW Arts Law worked in partnership to developed the first edition of the community cultural protocols, community and consultants agreements and have once again completed the revised second edition which is available on the Arts law website and was developed to assist communities with model agreements that could use as a basis when employing Consultants, Linguist and other people. http://www.aitb.com.au/index.php/sample-agreements/entry/fatsil-language-agreements-and-protocol-guidelinesand for downloading and will be Available on the fatsil.org.au- very soon. • FATSILC Voice of the Land magazine (VOTL), and E-line Newsletter • ATSI Language database survey 2010 • Electronic: emails and website, compact disc, USB, audio & video • Facebook, YouTube, Skype conferencing, Google video conferencing, SMS • Radio, TV, Newspaper. Electronic media • Language publications • Indigenous language forums, round tables and meetings • Board of Directors meetings, sub committees and Staff • Attendance and presentations at events/conferences/seminars/workshops mobile phones • FATSILC Key note address at the WIPCE- world Indigenous peoples conference education, in Melbourne. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications, CD/DVD promotional materials, banners, brochures, key rings, fridge magnets, t-shirts, clothing, partnerships and other board representatives. |
| 4.1 | How are local schools involved? |
| | <p>Through our publications and participation of a variety of committees, boards, language and cultural events, forums etc. art, songs and dancing, performing we have actively involve schools to provide a cultural and language performance through the use of drums musical instruments in Alice Springs Kaurna plains Aboriginal school performs at an ATSI Language round table in Adelaide, young writer's initiatives for the voice of the land. Encouraging and supporting Language centres and Regional language maintenance committees and language projects to use community elders and people to go into school and teach language and culture through whatever means necessary. Encourage all educational institutions to use ATSI people to perform welcome to country and schools themselves to have acknowledgement to country at all events include children's regular school assembly, graduations. NAIDOC, reconciliation week, and various events. Sharing in other cultural events such as multicultural week, harmony week, world Indigenous people day and other significant events that can be celebrated by all.</p> |
| 4.2 | What help do you receive from the government or other organisations to carry out your activities? |
| | <p>We were funded by various language programs, ASELIP, ATSIC, endangered languages, DCITA, DEWHAR, OFTA through the MILRS program and this funding has now ceased due to unforeseen circumstances. Volunteers funding through Indigenous Community Volunteers, NAB, CBA in kind support Jobs Australia</p> |
| 4.3 | Can you describe how your project's activities may have helped the whole community? |
| | <p>FATSILC played a significant and important role in the development and representation on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FATSILC have developed a national Indigenous data base on the website to log details of language projects and language centres funded through MILR Programs. The information recorded will provide a valuable recording base from which a comprehensive report on language activities around Australia can be developed and implemented. The information used to establish the data base was collated from State reports presented at Fatsilc Annual General Meetings. 2. Hosted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Forums and Round tables to discuss and share language activities and information since 1997. 3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy 1997, ACT 4. Need analysis survey ATSIC 5. Intellectual copyright and property board representative participated on the cultural policy paper 6. In response to a recommendation contained in the 1995 report, Backing Australian Languages: review of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Program, a Survey of Community Language Needs was being co-ordinated effort through ATSIC. 7. Assisting on the funding decisions of allocation of funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in the early years 8. A joint partnership with AIATSIS ,The National Indigenous Languages Survey Report 2005 (NILS) to date provides the most comprehensive study of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages situation in Australia to date, and recommends some strategic explanations to restore the language decline. There are many challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language preservation, revitalisation, reclamation and maintenance of any languages. 9. Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). 2003-2005.committee representative 10. Submission to the House of Representatives standing committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, Reference: Needs of urban dwelling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples communities Wednesday, 1 November 2000, Canberra By the whole governing committee. 11. Fatsilc indigenous language policy and strategic plan 2000-2003 12. Western Australia, 2008, Languages Services Policy 13. Western Australia Indigenous Language policy 2008-09, pending Dept. Indigenous Affairs approval 14. NSW Arts Law joint project with FATSILC- first edition 2005 and second edition 2011. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14.1 Community Proposed Project Agreement 2011 for the Development and Use of Language Materials; 14.2 Consultant Proposed Project Agreement 2011 for the Development and Use of Language Materials; And 14.3 Consultant Proposed Project Agreement 2011 for the Development and Use of Language Materials for Education 15. NSW State language policy, 24 May 2004 16. NSW state Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre (The Languages Centre) 2003 |

17. NITV in the initial stages of development has a representative on the board.
18. Formed alliance with the New Zealand Maori language commission 2003
19. First voices language program, British Columbia, Vancouver Island. Canada 2003
20. Regular annual Indigenous Language forums and Annual General meetings held in rotation between states and territories since 1996'
21. Indigenous Languages Petition Completed. To The Honourable Speaker, Members Of The House Of Representatives- February 13th 2009
22. FATSILC Key note address at the WIPCE- world Indigenous peoples conference education, in Melbourne.

FATSILC aims to;

- Advocate for the revival, maintenance and continued use of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander languages.
- Support and foster, for future generations, appropriate understanding and appreciation of the maintenance of cultural practice through Languages.
- Act as the peak Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander languages' advisory body by providing relevant advice and information to Local, State, Local, Regional, National and International Government, Non-Government and Community Agencies.
- Provide a supportive operational and administrative structure to assist in being an effective voice for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Language programs
- Support and foster the maintenance of cultural practices and traditions in a form that will be available for future generations
- Provide information and advice to government, non-government agencies and the general community relation to language issues
- Contribute with the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language policies and programs
- Provide a comprehensive consultative mechanism through regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language management Committees, language centres and community groups
- Promote the recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language skills, experience and knowledge in Language, culture and heritage through educational and employment program.

Encourage the training and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers and specialist language speaker making resourcing

FATSILC will achieve these goals by:

- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are considering a core issue in the development of all policy and legislation relation to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people in Australia
- FATSILC has directors who possess the ability and capacity to work towards accomplishing its objectives. This membership includes the chairperson, 8 directors and associate members.

This communications plan upholds the professional work of the governing committee through guidance with the development of appropriate strategies for:

- Communicating to the public the organisations function
- Enhancing the organizations professional profile
- Enable the organisation to exist as a reputable and well respected organisation containing expertise
- Enhancing the capacity of FATSILC to create an environment that is culturally conscious for all its members, staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Promoting local, national and international projects and initiatives whether directly or indirectly involved

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| Question 5 | How are your languages, including your local languages taught in school? |
| 5.1 | <p>Through Aboriginal studies in social studies, environment, NAIDOC week activities, reconciliation week, recognition, harmony day, multi cultural and other ethnic events, cultural and linguistically delivers cultural activities, events, forums and conferences.</p> <p>By elders and the own local areas and community where they practice their customs and ceremonial practices.</p> <p>Using local ATSI teachers, teachers assistants, language specialist, elders and specialist dance groups and also through events such as vibe alive, sports and recreational, religious activities, art and craft, cultural, home economics, health awareness and promotions in ATSI local languages, traditional foods, elders teaching and making</p> |

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| | <p>artefacts with all ages. More employment of ATSI staff and encouraging parents, careers and family to participate to schools environment and parents and family committees and school sports canteen.</p> |
| | <p>What difference has the teaching of local languages made to children's attendance and achievement at school?</p> <p>Children love attending school if they can speak and use their own languages including sign language, They very excited when guest speakers come to the school to participate in different cultural activities such as stolen generation, native title, customs & cultural protocols, bush tucker days and excursions., this can only enhances the schools cultural confidence and raises awareness and in particular raising of the ATSI flags is significant at important historical events, Mabo day, ATSI children's day etc.</p> <p>With the Introduction of the welcome and acknowledgement to country for each local area community Australia wide had a proven record of pride and self-esteem for children, who love to participate in these events.</p> <p>More focus should be on employment of ATSI staff and aware of the cultural sensitivity and diversity, encouraging parents, careers and family to participate in schools environment and involvement on parents and family committees, school sports and canteen rosters. .Using parents, family as roles models</p> <p>This encourages positive school life experiences for each individual and makes them feel important and demonstrates the importance of attending school. Literacy and numeracy development of language tools and resources at school i.e. talking pens, books etc. digital to assist and encourage use of one's own languages. This would benefit a greater number of students for encouraging and retaining young people to complete year 12 and go on to further studies, traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships</p> |
| Question 6 | <p>What interpreting and translating services are available in your local languages? How useful and effective are they?</p> <p><i>The Northern territory Aboriginal Interpreting Services (NTAIS) and the Kimberley interpreting Services (KIS) have guidelines on their websites to assist people to determine if an Indigenous Language Interpreter is required. Bothe Services provide scripts designed to test spoken English language understanding, although it is important to remember that some Indigenous Australians who are able to communicate orally in English, may not necessary be able to read English. In addition, a person ability to communicate or read in another language often reduces in stressful and emotional situations, any is the subject is not known or to complex.</i></p> <p><i>In 2010, Equal Opportunity relaunched a critical scoping paper, acknowledging the catastrophes faced by Aboriginal people when they are forgone their basic human right to understand and be understood. Aboriginal Interpreting Service Is There a Need. This outlines the crucial need to remodel KIS in the Goldfields, Pilbara and Perth and other states and territories.</i></p> <p><i>Currently there are no services to support Aboriginal interpreters outside the Kimberley, to support government departments and community organisations to communicate clearly with Aboriginal language speakers, or for community to understand language speakers.</i></p> <p><i>There is a dire need to provide training for Interpreters (Diploma of Interpreting), Training for government departments on understanding how to why to and when to work with Interpreters, and awareness raising for Aboriginal people about their right to an interpret, and also the role of an interpreter – the profession.</i></p> <p><i>Currently we only have KIS available in the state. This is insufficient and does not cover the languages our state requires. KIS is a perfect model but requires increased and continual funding and better access to training. Currently KIS supports the state the best they can. This is incredibly insufficient. More resources are required (need to be supported as AIS in NT).</i></p> <p><i>Currently community liaisons are volunteers from the reference group throughout the Kimberley. This is unsustainable.</i></p> <p><i>There is an urgent and critical need to use interpreters, although this differed between programs and sections within some agencies. There were varying levels of understanding as to who might be a suitable interpreter and what skills staffs require to make the best use of an interpreter.</i></p> <p><i>It is imperative that FaHCSIA ensure that government agencies are aware of the importance of using interpreters when delivering services in the NT, WA, and SA and inform them that KIS and NTAIS can provide guidance to them in the appropriate use of interpreters for service fee.</i></p> <p><i>FaHCSIA and DIA is well aware of this issue and not only is it responsible for the National Framework, it was involved in the negotiations to fund the NTAIS to establish permanent interpreters and Community Development Liaison Officers (CDLO) in remote NT communities. Recently, the Coordinator-General for Remote Indigenous Services reported on the importance of progressing the National Framework and the work being done to establish CDLOs in remote communities. See</i></p> |

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| | <p>http://www.dhlgrs.nt.gov.au/ais and http://www.kimberleyinterpreting.org.au/</p> <p>Centrelink and DEEWR explained the steps they have taken to improve their engagement with interpreters and thus their service delivery to Indigenous customers. Significantly, DEEWR has developed a single agency-wide instruction on the use of interpreters, including Auslan¹⁷ and Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Centrelink contracts a number of organisations to provide interpreter services, available daily in some service centres for walk in customers, and as needed for remote servicing teams. Centrelink is the most prolific user of Indigenous interpreters in the NT and usage continues to grow in line with the increased engagement required under the NTER. But interpreters are not always available or used during communication with Centrelink. This has been a source of steady complaints to this office, as illustrated by the following case study.</p> <p>Adelaide hospitals and health and housing, education and legal systems have process courts use interpreting, WA, SA, NT, TOP QLD AND TSI Extremely useful and is a high needs for out the critical to the survival of our people well being and emotional well being social, creates better access to services, assist in the self-confidence, self-esteem and self-development on all levels, safe keep cultural safety it creates equality through the means of being able to communicate effectively with all. Barriers, obstacles.</p> <p>Centrelink has advised us that, in order to address the increasing demand for Indigenous language interpreters, it commenced a Pitjantjatjara Indigenous Interpreters trial in April 2010. The trial aims to identify demand for Indigenous language interpreters and to recruit more contract interpreters. The trial will contribute to the Closing the Gap agenda and increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians. The outcomes of the trial will be used to increase the panel of interpreters across the country.</p> <p>Not all agency responses demonstrated the same level of awareness of the importance of using Indigenous language interpreters. One theme which was evident was the idea that interpreters are not necessary if the information being discussed is simple or at least some people present speak English and are willing to interpret for others. This is not appropriate. Apart from the complexity of the information, other issues to be considered are:</p> <p>Information that appears simple to an agency or service provider may be difficult for someone who is not familiar with government processes and terms</p> <p>Irrespective of complexity, an Indigenous person may need to use an interpreter so they can ask questions or provide information</p> <p>Knowledge of Indigenous languages provides opportunities for Indigenous people to be employed as translators and interpreters. In December 2008, COAG committed \$38.6 million towards interpreting and translating services as part of the Remote Service Delivery sites. The Remote Service Delivery National Partnership provides these funds for the COAG identified priority locations.</p> |
| <p>Question 7</p> | <p>What are the main difficulties facing your project?</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of equitable and realistic funding to be the peak body. • Lack of acknowledgement and recognition and awareness to be the peak body. • Long term commitments to funding always short term • Sustainable funding and commitment from government • 99% accountable and no time to address key targets and outcomes to meet demands. • People in positions government react on a personal level instead professional and too many changes with high staff turn over and not having regular project officers. Meeting the demands of directional • Not enough money available and no increase for a number of years for this MILRS program • Not enough recognition, acknowledge and awareness given from government and the wider community. |
| <p>Question 8</p> | <p>What are you aiming to achieve in the future?</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push for Long-term sustainable triennial ATSI specific funding to meet individual's communities and local language centres, regional language maintenance committees, language projects and program's needs. |

- Lobby Gov't and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to make changes to the Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) status and Rocco for cultural policy so that we are less reliant on government funding and be independent.
- Support all states and territories to developed Indigenous language policies from the community perspective.
- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are considering a core issue in the development of all policy and legislation relation to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people in Australia
- Support and foster the maintenance of cultural practices and traditions in a form that will be available for future generations
- Provide a comprehensive consultative mechanism through regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language management committees, language centres and community groups
- Promote and advocate the recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language skills, experience and knowledge in language, culture and heritage through educational and employment program
- Encourage and support the training and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers and specialist language speaker
- Contribute with the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language policies and programs
- Proved information and advice to government, non-government agencies and the general community relation to language issue as soon as possible

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Legend Key

| Acronym | Agencies | Acronym | Agencies |
|----------------|---|----------------|---|
| ATSI | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander | NTRS | Native Title Research Unit |
| ATO | Australian taxation office | DAIC | The Department Of Immigration And Citizenship |
| VOTL | Voice of The Land | AIS | Australian Interpreting Service |
| FATSILC | The Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture | NMA | National Museum Of Australia |
| OFTA | Office o The Premier and Cabinet | DAA | Department Of Aboriginal Affairs |
| DEWHA | Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts | NILS | National Indigenous Languages Survey |
| TSI | Torres strait islander | MCEETYA | Ministerial Council On Education, Employment, Training And Youth Affairs |
| AIATSI | Australian Institute of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Studies | UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific And Cultural Organization |
| DEEWR | Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations | JA | Jobs Australia |
| FAHCSIA | Dept of Families, Housing Community Service and Indigenous Affairs | LC | Language Centres |
| KIS | Kimberley interpreting service | COAG | Council Of Australian Governments |
| WAITI | The Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters | ACARA | Australian Curriculum Assessment And Reporting Authority |
| NTAIS | The northern territory Aboriginal interpreter service | DECS | Dept Education Children Services, SA |
| RLMC | Regional Language Maintenance centres or committee??? | VACL | Victorian Aboriginal Language Centre |
| NAATI | The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters | NAIDOC | National |
| NITV | National indigenous television | DIA | Dept Indigenous Affairs |