



The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation to appear at public hearing for languages inquiry

Canberra Public Hearing 12:15pm 22 September

The Founder and Chairwoman of The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF), Mary-Ruth Mendel will provide evidence at a public hearing in Canberra as part of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities. The ALNF is a charitable organisation dedicated to raising language, literacy and numeracy standards in Australia by the development, implementation and management of literacy projects aimed at individuals, families and communities.

The ALNF embraces the concept of ‘two-way’ education in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and works from the basis that first language proficiency is a pathway to proficiency in Standard Australian English. It provides several first language programs, including the Early Language and Literacy – English and First Language in parallel program. The ALNF has been at the forefront of teaching marginalised Australians to read and write since it was founded in 1999.

The Chair of the Committee Mr Shayne Neumann MP said, “Literacy and numeracy are essential for Indigenous people to be confident and successful in both worlds. The Committee welcomes the participation of The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation in this important inquiry. We look forward to learning about the innovative approaches the Foundation brings to improving Indigenous people’s competency in English, as well as in first languages”.

The Committee’s inquiry is interested in the links between Indigenous languages and improving education, community wellbeing, interpreting services and strategies to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. The Committee aims to find out about how the use of languages, including Indigenous languages, can assist in improving education and vocational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Indigenous languages policies of Australian governments, and the benefits and effectiveness of Indigenous language maintenance and revitalisation programs are being investigated.

The hearing will be broadcast live from Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra from approximately 12:15pm via: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Information about the inquiry 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