



Parliamentary Committee inquiring into Indigenous languages to hold public hearing in Brisbane

Indigenous language programs across Queensland will be the subject of a public hearing in Brisbane on Thursday, 6 October 2011 in relation to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs' inquiry into Indigenous languages. The Committee will hear a wide range of evidence from people who are actively working with communities to teach, maintain, revitalise or broadcast in Indigenous languages.

Nyoka 'Nicky' Hatfield, a Dharumbal woman from Rockhampton, will share with the Committee her experience in teaching Dharumbal language and culture in her local schools. In her submission to the inquiry, Ms Hatfield talks about the positive response her teaching has generated, particularly in terms of reconciliation.

Brett Leavy, Manager of the Brisbane-based National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS), will be speaking to the Committee about the important role the service plays in providing a hub for high quality entertainment and information distribution to Indigenous communities. Over 160 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasters currently use and contribute to the national scheduled program via satellite for the service. In the NIRS submission to the inquiry, Mr Leavy proposes that further development of the service should involve "fostering an archive of Indigenous language logs in each community" with "NIRS news bulletins produced at the top of the hour, reproduced by communities and re-played at the bottom of the hour in the local indigenous language".

The Committee will hear from representatives of the Queensland Indigenous Language Advisory Committee (QILAC), and the Eastern States Aboriginal Languages Group. QILAC is a state-wide body that was developed to advocate for Indigenous languages, while the Eastern States Aboriginal Languages Group was established to address issues which are common to Aboriginal language communities in eastern Australia. In addition, the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative, which auspices the Many Rivers Aboriginal Languages Centre, will give evidence at the hearing about their work with the local languages of the NSW north coast. Representatives of the Queensland Department of Education and Training, and the Murri Independent School from Acacia Ridge will also be speaking to the Committee at the hearing.

Program: Thursday 6 October 2011, 9:30am-3:30pm.
Venue: Speaker's Hall, Parliament House, Alice Street, Brisbane.

The hearing will be broadcast live from the venue from 9:30am:

<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