



Diversiónary measures result in positive outcomes for juveniles

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs will hear from the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) as part of its inquiry into the high level of involvement of Indigenous juveniles and young adults in the criminal justice system.

Australia has one of the highest incarceration rates of Indigenous people in the OECD. Currently Indigenous prisoners comprise 25 per cent of the total prisoner population and in the Northern Territory they are 82 per cent of the prisoner population. The early involvement of young Indigenous people in the criminal justice system puts them at much higher risk of further involvement as adults.

The Director of the AIC, Dr Adam Tomison and research analyst Dr Kelly Richards will discuss their findings on the extent of over-representation of Indigenous juveniles and young adults in the criminal justice system. The AIC has monitored juveniles in detention in Australia for nearly three decades.

Each year the AIC manages the Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards which recognise good practice in the prevention or reduction of violence and other types of crimes in Australia. The AIC will examine a number of best practice diversionary programs for Indigenous young people.

A study quoted in the AIC's submission shows that diversionary measures resulted in positive outcomes for juveniles. Importantly, the study found that continued contact with the criminal justice system is less common among those juveniles who participate in diversionary alternatives to court.

The Chair of the Committee Bob Debus MP stated: "Diversionary measures such as conferencing and intensive court supervision for Indigenous juveniles should be available everywhere if we are truly committed to closing the gap on Indigenous juveniles and young adults' involvement in the criminal justice system."

Public hearing on Thursday 11 February 2010

**Venue: Committee Room 1R2 Parliament House
12.15pm Australian Institute of Criminology**

To listen to the public hearing from your computer log on to:

<http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

For the full terms of reference and advice on making submissions see the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/atsia or contact the committee secretariat on **(02) 6277 4559**.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Hon Bob Debus on (02) 62774490.
For background information, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 62774559 or atsia.reps@aph.gov.au